



“GLAD TIDING’S”

Wysox Presbyterian Church

December 2013

Faith Is Not About Right or Wrong



**A Message From
Pastor Jira
Albers**

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

Mark 12:30-31

One day someone in the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.” In other words, the person wanted to know if it was right or wrong for his brother to withhold from him a part of his family’s inherited money. More to the point, he wanted Jesus to tell his brother that he was wrong.

It seems fair that the family inheritance should be split up between the survivors. Maybe, we could debate about the worthiness of some of the family members. Were they good to the father before he died? Are they honest people who will not waste the money? No matter how we proceed with this story from Luke 12, this becomes an argument about whether it is right or wrong to divide up the money.

Interestingly, Jesus does not respond with a “right or wrong” sort of answer. Instead, Jesus said to him, “Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?” And he said to all gathered, “Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.”

The keen eyed modern reader will notice that Jesus does not engage in right or wrong arguments. Instead, Jesus cares about the purpose. In this case, what is the purpose of wealth in your life? Life is more than gaining possessions.

What is the purpose? More and more I am seeing that this sort of response (one that Jesus uses all of the time when confronted with “right or wrong” and “yes or no” questions) is much more helpful in the life of discipleship and in the life of the church.

For example, is it right to save the extra money that the church gains for the use of future disciples of the church, or is it right to spend it right now on ministry that is needed to day? Which is right? Which is wrong? I would just like to point out that both are right! Both are a fair way to use the money. The question about right or wrong then is the incorrect question to ask. The question should be, “what is our purpose as a congregation to day?” When the purpose is understood, then it would be clear what to do with the money.

Right or wrong debates are rarely helpful, and most often lead into endless cyclical arguments. I encourage you (in your life and in your various groups) to ask: “What is the purpose?” This is a gospel question.

The Question Box

(Questions About Our Christian Life)

“Please help me, how do I deal with difficult people in the church?”

I know that I have addressed a similar question in the recent past, but this question is asked repeatedly, so I would like to try to answer it in a little bit different way. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, WWII era theologian, once wrote about the difficulties of living together with other Christians. He called the difficult person a “gift” to faith. A gift? Really? Yes! The difficult person does two things: they remind us that we are gathered together, not for our own peace and fulfillment, but so that sinners might hear the good news of Christ; and our inability to accept the difficult person reminds us that we too fall short of the mark and are in need of God’s forgiving grace found in Jesus Christ. So, I instruct you to quite literally, stop, breath, cool down, and give thanks to God when confronted with the difficult person. They remind us of the precious gift of grace found in Christ. The difficult person may not be fit for leadership, but they are right where they need to be: in Christ’s church. – Pastor Jira



Christmas Cantata



The Christmas Cantata will be performed on December 22nd during the 11:00 am services. The Lutheran choir will be joining with the Wysox Choir for the Cantata—“Bethlehem Morning”. The Wysox choir will also be joining the Lutheran Choir on the 22nd to perform the cantata at 9:30 am at the Lutheran Church. Following the 11:00 am service, there will be a Christmas breakfast brunch in Ferguson Hall sponsored by the Wysox Sunday School/Youth Group.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

We will be having a special Christmas Eve Candlelight Service on December 24th at 6:00 p.m. During the service, there will be lighting of the candles, communion by intinction, special music and a variety of lessons and carols followed by meditation. Please plan to join us for this beautiful celebration. There will not be a worship service on Christmas Day.



Christmas Memorial Flowers

Enclosed in this newsletter, you will find an envelope for Christmas flowers. If you wish a memorial plant during this season, please fill out the envelope and drop it in the collection plate or drop it off at the office. Please make sure that when you're filling out the envelope, to write your name and the name of the loved one(s) that you wish to remember. A listing of the memorial donations will be in the bulletin for our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service.



Christmas Breakfast

The Youth Group and Sunday School will be hosting a Christmas breakfast, Sunday December 22nd following worship in Ferguson Hall. Please plan to stay for some yummy food and fellowship. A donation will be collected for the Hot Ladies.

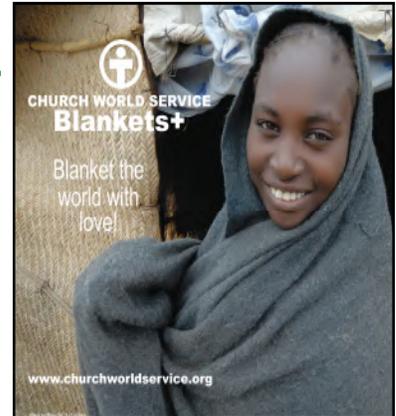
2014 Church Offering Envelopes

The 2014 church offering envelopes will be available for pick up in the rear vestibule on Sunday, December 15th. Anyone who does not normally receive the envelopes and would like to have them, please contact Margaret Montgomery at 570-265-5358.



Mission News

- The Operation Christmas Child boxes are collected and will be delivered to Community Alliance Church. Thank you all for making this a success.
- Can you imagine what it would be like to not have a hot meal or a warm blanket? Well, we are so blessed and we don't always think about what we have and what some people are going through. That being said, the shopping cart is being filled with tasty foods for TACO and money is being collected for the annual Blanket Fund. Please consider giving to these important causes.
- The Christmas tree is up and ready for you to help a needy family from Grace Connection. Please take a card and head out shopping for this family
- The St. Pauley clothing box is doing very well. We have been averaging \$100 a month in donations. The money will be returned in some way to our community at the discretion of Session. So please keep the clothing donations coming. Because of our affiliation with St. Pauley, a family in the Towanda School district was given a gift card to purchase food for a Thanksgiving Dinner.



Property Committee

The fire extinguishers were recently updated. We are looking at updating our main exit door in Ferguson Hall with a break away door. This is something that we feel is important in the event that there be an emergency and the need to exit the church quickly.

As soon as enough money has been collected, we will get started on the wiring for the air conditioners that will be installed in Ferguson Hall.

Sewing Society

We served 102 chilly people a delicious ham dinner. Thanks to all who helped, especially our hard working Don and Andy. Our next dinner will be Tuesday, December 10th. We will be serving Swiss steak. Hope to see everyone there!





Prayer Circle

We are still in Genesis and have covered the blessing passed to Abraham and Sarah. We continue to be amazed at all the information which we once studied and had forgotten. Pastor Jira makes our study very special.

We continue to send many cards and pray for those in our thoughts and on the Prayer List. We are very few in number; however, we will continue this important ministry. Please plan to join us in the conference room on Wednesday mornings at 9:30. See you there!

The following were remembered on our Prayer List October 23rd thru November 13th Prayer Circle Listing

Angel List

Makayla Evans
Mason Barto
Ashley Weed
Marisa Ivey
Betty Miller
Nancy Irvine
Andrew Pardoe
Deb Mathers
Shawn Mastrantonio
Abbriella Brown
Caiden Irvine
Carolyn Russell
Jim Christini

Current List

Whitney Rockwell
Hunter Shaw
Danny Schmeckenbecher
Marion Lent
Robert Allen
Otto Brown
Gladys Derr
Colleen Close
Elsie Zurn
Our Nation
Bill Bub Anderson
Marty Coates
Beverly Buffington
People of the Philippines
Clara Hauser Family
Brooks Eldridge Martin
Donald Smith

Carol Clark
People of Syria
Virginia Anderson
Dody Savercool
Gladys Groover Family
Jim Allen
Wilbur Beers
Prudence Wilson
Sally Allen Family
Lucille Pennay
Jim Wygralia
Millie Hollenback
Helen May Vanderpool Family
Rusty Eddy
William Griffis
Sandra Niuman
Mike Randall





CHRIST THE CHILD

Written by Clara Wizelman

On that cold night so long ago
When all the world was still.
There were shepherds watching over their sheep
On a high and windy hill.

A star came and shone around them.
They were so afraid
Until it led them to the manger
Where the little child lay.
He lay upon a bed of hay,
Wrapped in cloth so snowy white.

The Christ Child had come to Earth
On that cold and stormy night.
The shepherds stood and watched in awe
To see the marvelous sight.

And so we have a Savior to whom
We say our prayers,
And when our souls are troubled,
We go to the man upstairs.





**WYSOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
SESSION MEETING
OCTOBER 14, 2013**

The regular meeting of the Session of the Wysox Presbyterian Church was called to order by Pastor Jira Albers on October 14, 2013 at 7:00 PM at the Wysox Presbyterian Church.

Opening devotions and prayer led by Elder Ron Irvine

Elders Present: Kim Barnes, Dave Blascak, Lori Blascak, Mary Bruce, Betty Conner, Michelle Irvine, Ronald Irvine Jr., Julie Palmer and Loretta Stevens

Elders Excused: Deborah King and Dody Savercool

Elders Absent: None

Guests Present: Lora Schmieg and Crystal Babcock

ORDER OF THE DAY:

1. The Docket for the meeting was approved on a motion by Elder Ron Irvine and seconded by Elder Julie Palmer.
2. On a motion by Elder Mary Bruce and second by Elder Dave Blascak the minutes of the Session Meeting on 09/09/2013 were approved.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- 1 Transfer of Membership letter for Connie and Carl Covey
- 2 Various thank you cards and letters of appreciation

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Music & Worship: Elder Stevens reported on behalf of Elder Savercool:
 - a. Oct. 27th Membership Sunday: presentation of membership certificates and 50 year + plaque
 - b. Nov 3rd All Saints Sunday and communion
 - c. Consecration Sunday set for Nov. 10th; presentation on "Giving Intent" with catered dinner.
 - d. Nov 24th Blanket collection
 - e. Nov 27th Thanksgiving Eve service to be held at 6pm
 - f. Dec 1st Hanging of the Greens
 - g. Christmas Cantata being done jointly with Trinity Lutheran choir to perform at both churches.
2. Membership & Evangelism: Elder Stevens reported:
 - h. Visits and outreach efforts continue
3. Christian Education: Elder M. Irvine reported:
 - i. Destiny Barto has stepped up and is leading Sunday School for the elementary age group, and Barb King is assisting with crafts. The High School class is on a hiatus due to the out of town work schedule of their adult leader Deb King.
4. Mission: Elder M. Irvine: Christmas Child boxes are being filled and will be collected by Nov 18th
5. Memorial: Elder Bruce reported that \$580 has been received in memory of Rodney Montgomery.



6. Property: Elder Ron Irvine reported:
 - j. Some issues with cloudy water; new municipal water system “bugs” being worked out
 - k. Researching cost for panic bar on downstairs door
 - l. On a motion by Elder Barnes, with a second by Elder Conner, it was approved to provide \$1,000 from the general fund toward the purchase of air conditioning units for Ferguson Hall.
7. Personnel: Elder Ron Irvine
 - m. A motion by R Irvine, with a second by M Irvine, and unanimously approved to continue our contractual agreement to retain the services of Pastor Jira Albers. All agreed that Pastor Jira is doing a wonderful job and we are grateful that God sent him to us.
8. Finance & Investments: Elder Lori Blascak
 - n. Presented and reviewed the report prepared by committee member Frank Hoffman.
9. Recognition: Elder Mary Bruce
10. Nominating: Elders M. Irvine, Savercool and Conner, along with church members Margaret Gordon, Renee Arnold, and Mark King make up the Nominating Committee. Recruitment for new session members is underway.

SPECIAL REPORTS

1. **Treasurer’s Report:** Presented and reviewed the report submitted by Lora Schmieg
 - a. The monthly financial report was accepted on a motion by Elder M Irvine, seconded by Elder Palmer.
 - b. Motion by Elder Barnes, seconded by Elder R Irvine to direct 25% of our Peace Making collection to Grace Connection for their continuing flood relief projects
 - c. Motion by Elder M Irvine, seconded by Elder Palmer to direct our St. Pauly income through Nov. for use for our Grace Connection Christmas families’ project.
 - d. Agreement to direct Property Committee to spend the remaining Outwater funds on grounds beautification.
2. Pastor’s Report: Pastor Albers shared his report of activities for the past month.
 - e. Upon a request from Pastor Jira, a motion by Elder R Irvine, seconded by Mary to provide \$700 in financial support to the Missolua Children’s Theater, in conjunction with other area churches.
3. Lackawanna Presbytery:

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Bank accounts: After a lengthy discussion, a motion by R Irvine, second by Elder Bruce, and unanimously approved to consolidate all of the bank accounts of the church as soon as possible. Elder Barnes agreed to draft a memo to all committee treasures detailing the procedure to be followed. It was also agreed that a church credit card would be obtained to facilitate ordering supplies and paying bills, with the same safeguards as the bank account in place. The intended result is to simplify our process and procedures, save time and money, and present a more accurate financial picture for the church as a whole.
2. Deacon status: Motion by R Irvine, seconded by Elder Barnes, to recommend to the congregation at the annual meeting to continue the suspension of the position and duties of deacons for another one year period.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. 2014 Budget: email from Finance Committee member Sonny Warburton reminding session of the need to review and approve the budget at the November meeting.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm.

Closing Prayer lead by Pastor Jira Albers

Next Session Meeting: December 9, 2013 @ 7:00pm

Respectfully recorded and submitted by:

Kim D Barnes, Clerk of Session



This is Mary and Charlie Bruce's autumn project. Come by and check it out! It's located at the bottom of their Driveway. Look for a winter snowman next!