



# The Messenger



**A Newsletter of the**

**Genesee 1<sup>st</sup> Congregational, United Church of Christ, Inc.**

**January / February, 2014**

Volume 8, Number 5

## Notes from a Manger

*"And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."*

*- Luke 2: 52 - NIV*

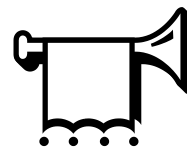
The manger is empty. Mary, Joseph and the rest of the cast have left the building. They have taken the "baby Jesus" with them. The audience is gone. They, too, have left the Sunday morning worship service. They, also, have taken a bit of Jesus with them. It is the morning after the Christmas program.

Ask people you know. The Birth of Jesus (The Christmas Story) is the most familiar Bible story most of us know. We first learned about it in Sunday School or, perhaps, our parents shared the story with us as a small child. As children, some of us became Mary, Joseph, shepherds, angels, wisemen, ... We acted out the story on stage in front of a supportive audience. Some of us have even turned to Luke, chapter 2, and read the story for ourselves. It seems that more people are familiar with the account of Jesus' birth than, perhaps, any other Bible story – even the accounts of Creation and the Resurrection.

Is this really a surprise? More people know about the birth account because Christmas is the most likely time they will be in church to hear a Bible story. Polls have indicated that, on any average Sunday, only about one of every six (17%) of Americans, who call themselves "Christians," will actually attend a church service. In a nation founded on Biblical principals we have lost most of the discipline of our founders. We have more instant access to worldly and temporal information than our founding parents could have ever dreamed of. We know far less about eternal things that would make long-term differences in our lives.

A friend of mine once observed that Christianity, at its core, is very basic. If someone were taught nothing

**Please see Manger, page 4**



*Hear ye! Hear ye!*

Official call-to-order...

**171<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting**  
of the **Genesee 1<sup>st</sup> Congregational,**  
**United Church of Christ, Inc.**

*Sunday, January 26*

**During the 9 AM Worship Service**  
**- at church**

The official call-to-order for the 2014 Annual Meeting of the Genesee 1<sup>st</sup> Congregational, United Church of Christ, Inc. will take place during the 9 AM worship service on Sunday, January 26. Our church government is one of the purest forms of representative democracy. The meeting is a great opportunity for everyone in the congregation to have a voice and make important contributions to the life of the church. Annual reports from the pastor, moderator, secretaries and church boards and committees will be reviewed. You will also have an opportunity to vote on the slate of officers who will represent your church in 2014. Perhaps you have a calling to fill one of the empty slots and serve your church! The all-important 2014 Church Budget will also be reviewed.

Please highlight the date of  
**Sunday, January 26** on your personal calendar.

**HAPPY NEW YEAR !***"...Behold, I make all things new. ..."**- Revelation 21:5 - RSV*

We welcome both well-seasoned members and new friends to this January / February, 2014 edition of the Messenger. Our Sunday services are held at 9 AM, with Sunday School during the worship time. Services continue to have a combination of traditional and contemporary elements.

*"From the Pastor"*

Dear Genesee Church:



Here is a lesson on the opportunity of having a new start.

My Granddaughter Ava was complaining she had nothing to write on, but she did. What she was really complaining about was none of her coloring books, or what she calls "papers," was clean, new and had never been written on. So, as the good Grandfather I am - I like to think so, I went to my office and retrieved some new, small note books I had in storage. When I came back to give her one, she gave me a big smile and thanked me. When the other Granddaughters witnessed my gift to Ava, they, too, began to complain they had nothing to write on. I had anticipated this dilemma and had brought extras to pass out to each of them. They were all overjoyed, jumping up and down; not because they had nothing to write on, but because they now had new, clean paper to write on. Ava said to me, "Papa Joe this is how I like my paper, new!"

I know some may think it could be a waste to give out new paper to write on when there was still paper left with only a little writing on it. I can understand that argument, but it was New Year's Day! Everyone likes a new start, a new, clean piece of paper, one without errors; to be given an opportunity to start anew. I was able to provide this gift to my Granddaughters on this day. If I could do this for them, how much more can God do for all of us? God has given all of us a new clean start this new year, to live out a journey that I hope is for His glory!

I found this quote, I am not sure whom from, "New Year Day is the first blank page of a 365 page book. Write a good one!"

Happy New Year to our church,

Pastor Joe

E-mail: [emailpastorjoe@yahoo.com](mailto:emailpastorjoe@yahoo.com) 262-951-6932**A STAR IS BORN**

**Our 2013 Christmas Program**  
**Sunday, December 15, 2013**



**CAST:** Tyler Carlson, Axel Meith, Mason Meith, Marissa Roddy, Lily Schmidt, Maddie Schmidt, Capri Whiteley. **PRODUCTION CREW:** Amber Carlson, Veronica Medina, Paige Meyers, Alexis Sickels. **CHOIR:** Annabelle Geller, Ava Groskreutz, Sadie Groskreutz, Anna Medina, Ava Medina, Paige Sickels, Zoe Steffen, Lelu Zivney.  
 (also shown: Pastor Joe)  
**DIRECTOR:** Amanda Roddy (inset)

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to Amanda Roddy for directing this year's Christmas Program "A Star Is Born." The purpose of the musical was to teach us to "get down" in humility and allow God to use us for His glory. The children sang many wonderful songs, such as "The Greatest Story Ever Told," "We Three Kings," and the heart-warming testimony of "My Life's Review." The character Sophia was hired to play Mary; and the director, Miss Amanda, and the other actors, tried to help her understand that the "Star" of any Christmas production is Jesus Christ, not her. The children did a WONDERFUL job with the help of Veronica Medina and the confirmands, Capri Whiteley, Paige Meyers, Alexis Sickels and Amber Carlson. If you missed it, or would like to see more performances by the children, stay tuned for news about the Children's Easter Program – which will be announced in February!

Thank you,

Yolanda Medina

E-mail: [ymedina@carrollu.edu](mailto:ymedina@carrollu.edu)

262-951-6128

**REMINDER**

If you are an "active" member, and have not yet turned in your 2014 Pledge Card, please get it in on Sunday or mail it to the Genesee Church Office, W306 S5075 Church St., Mukwonago (Genesee), WI 53149. Your active support of your church's 2014 budget is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

## Service Opportunities

### CLEANING GOD'S HOUSE

A special thank you to the Zivneys for cleaning our church in November; and to the Kingerys for cleaning in December. A list of the job duties, as well as a sign-up sheet, is posted in the church entrance. You and your family will sign-up to clean for a ONE-MONTH period. Glenda Williams, **968-2047**, has a key and can answer any of your questions. Thank you in advance for your service!

**January** – Debbie Chesney  
**February** – YOUR NAME HERE  
**March** – YOUR NAME HERE

### JANUARY – FEBRUARY – MARCH USHERS

The following teams are scheduled to usher on Sundays in January, February and March. If you are unable to fulfill the commitment, please notify Diane Sickels at **968-3954**. Arrive by 8:30 AM, hand out bulletins, greet people, light candles and take collection. Bring treats for those who stay to visit after the service.

January 5	Mary Beth O'Neil / Jamie O'Neil
January 12	Greg & Debbie Chesney
January 19	Ron & Kris Kingery
January 26	Pat & Cindy Cain
February 2	Brent & Carrie Fintel
February 9	Marleene Bloom / Mary Ann Ludtke
February 16	OPEN
February 23	Dick & Barb Calland
March 2	OPEN
March 9	Diane Sickels / OPEN
March 16	Dennis & Marilyn Michaelis
March 23	Karen McCuaig
March 30	Jen Bachmann / Veronica Medina

### HOPE CENTER DATES FOR 2014

A special thank-you to those who served meals at Hope Center, in Waukesha, on our two appointed dates in 2013. Our 2014 serving dates are: Wednesdays, March 12 and October 22. Hope Center is located at 502 N. East Av., in Waukesha. Our church is one of 46 congregations, throughout the county, that serve meals at 5:30 PM on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Servers are to arrive by 5 PM. Dessert trays of brownies, cookies, etc. are always welcome. Thank you!

***"Thought is the blossom; language the bud; action the fruit behind it."***

**-Ralph Waldo Emerson**

**Coming... Saturday, March 8**  
 4 – 7 PM, Genesee Church Ed. Center

## Potluck and Movie Night

Between the dinner and the movie, we will transition with a brief Comedy Show – put together by Mike Whiteley. Watch your Sunday bulletins and weekly e-mail updates for further details.

### HEIFER PROJECT

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month, a special offering is taken for the Heifer Project. When the children are taking the offering, give generously. What animal(s) will our Sunday School children choose? Come to church and find out!

### A SPECIAL MESSAGE TO OUR SHUT-INS

It has come to our attention that those who are shut-in may like to have communion served to them. If you are a shut-in and you would like communion, contact our church deacons, Pastor Joe or the church office.

Diane Sickels, deacon -	262-968-3954
Pastor Joe Medina -	262-951-6932
Church Office -	262-968-3849

### PRAYER CIRCLE

***"For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them."***

- Matthew 18:20 – RSV



Carol McCormick.....	262-968-2388
Donna Engnath.....	262-968-3839 (h); 262-909-3839 (c)
Pastor Joe / Yolanda Medina.....	262-951-6128
Diane Sickels.....	262-968-3954
Marilyn Michaelis.....	262-968-2360
Marleene Bloom.....	262-968-3893
Kim Sussek.....	262-968-2570
Barb Whitmore.....	262-392-4197
Glenda Williams.....	262-968-2047
Scott Burdette.....	262-968-3830

### 2013-2014 CONFIRMATION PROGRAM

All youth in the Confirmation class are to refer to weekly e-mails from Rhea Whiteley in regards to any new updates to the Confirmation Program. Rhea's phone number is 262-617-8512. Thank you!

**Manger – from Page 1**

more than John 3:16 – and believed and took action on it – that alone would be sufficient for salvation. So, why learn more than that. First, it is our curious human nature that would lead us to learn more. Secondly, knowing only one story very well is like opening up a book – anywhere, reading a few pages and then noting that we have, in fact, read the book. Yet, in the words of the late Paul Harvey, do we really know “the rest of the story?”

Jesus grew up. The gospel of Luke continues immediately from the birth of Jesus to his presentation in the temple at eight days of age. Then there is a gap of almost 12 years and we learn nothing about his childhood. At age 12, we read the account of Jesus in the temple; after which there is a longer gap until his baptism by John the Baptist and the beginning of three years of ministry. Jesus gathered together his 12 disciples and taught them, using parables, about his mission on Earth. That mission? Know John 3:16. The parables? Come to church and learn. Read the gospel accounts. The religious authorities did not understand Christ’s true mission. The government rulers were “threatened” by it. False accusations of blasphemy and treason abounded. Like a common criminal, they crucified our savior. Nailed to a cross, on a dark Friday afternoon, Jesus died a painful death for our sins. Story over.

Wrong! On Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene – and others (Luke 24) – took spices to the tomb to prepare Jesus’ body. The rock in front of the doorway was rolled away. Even as the manger could not hold Jesus, neither could an earthly tomb. The tomb is empty. Jesus is alive!

Eleven of the disciples would live on to spread Jesus’ message. They would carry it out to the known world. Now it is our turn. Let us resolve, in this new year, to awaken to our full potential as “Christians.” Read the gospels. Take action. Come to church on Sunday and learn “the rest of the story.” Share your joy with others. Like the early disciples, and our Christmas play cast, carry “Jesus” with you.

Scott W. Burdette  
Genesee Church Ed. Center - the morning after

**CHURCH VISITORS****Sunday, December 29**

Joshua & Samantha Curtis; and Godparents Jonathan Ilding and Stephanis Dahnke; and friends  
– for the baptism of their daughter Peyton Evelyn Curtis.

**JANUARY–FEBRUARY EVENTS CALENDAR**

Listed here are the dates of meetings and events in January and February. All events are at the Ed. Center, unless otherwise specified.

**JANUARY**

- WE 1** **NEW YEAR’S DAY**
- SU 5** **EPIPHANY SUNDAY**  
9 AM Service at Church w/ communion
- SU 12** Heifer Project offering
- MO 13** **DEACONS – 5:45 PM**  
**EXECUTIVE BOARD – 6:30 PM**
- MO 20** **DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY**
- SU 26** **171<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting** – following worship  
**OUTREACH – 10 AM**  
(following Annual Meeting)
- FR 31** **CHINESE NEW YEAR**

**FEBRUARY**

- SU 2** 9 AM Service at Church w/ communion  
**GROUND HOG DAY**  
**SUPER BOWL SUNDAY**
- SU 9** Heifer Project offering
- TU 11** **DEACONS – 5:45 PM**  
**EXECUTIVE BOARD – 6:30 PM**
- FR 14** **VALENTINE’S DAY**
- MO 17** **PRESIDENTS’ DAY**
- SU 23** Newsletter Copy due

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***“So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.”***

***-Psalms 90: 12 - RSV***

**A WORD FROM THE EDITOR**


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The deadline for the March / April edition is Sunday, February 23. To submit an article, event information, or to receive your newsletter via e-mail, send e-mail to: [LTLBURD@aol.com](mailto:LTLBURD@aol.com). Articles submitted in person need to be typed or written legibly.

- Scott W. Burdette ■

# Puzzle Changers

## ACROSS

- 1 January 1 greetings (pl.)
- 10 Chem. symbol for iridium
- 11 Tic-tac-toe win
- 12 Each (abbr.)
- 13 River in northern Italy
- 14 Oyster jewel
- 15 To fall back into illness
- 18 Letter addition (abbr.)
- 19 Poi source
- 21 City in Oklahoma
- 22 J-shaped holiday treat (2 words)
- 24 Find fault angrily
- 26 "Who cares?" "\_\_\_\_ what."
- 27 "Thank God It's Sunday" (abbr.)
- 29 Printer's measure
- 30 A morning hour
- 32 Street (abbr.)
- 34 State south of MO
- 35 \_\_\_\_\_ Cabana
- 37 One less than "X"
- 39 Ceremonial acts
- 42 Native of Australia
- 45 Restaurant food lists
- 47 City in Iowa
- 48 Lawrenceium—chem. symbol
- 49 England, Wales, Scotland, N. Ireland: Great \_\_\_\_\_
- 51 Dark, reddish-brown
- 52 Satellite of Jupiter
- 53 Roman "1050"
- 54 Steamer (abbr.)
- 55 Not off
- 56 January 26 church event (2 words)

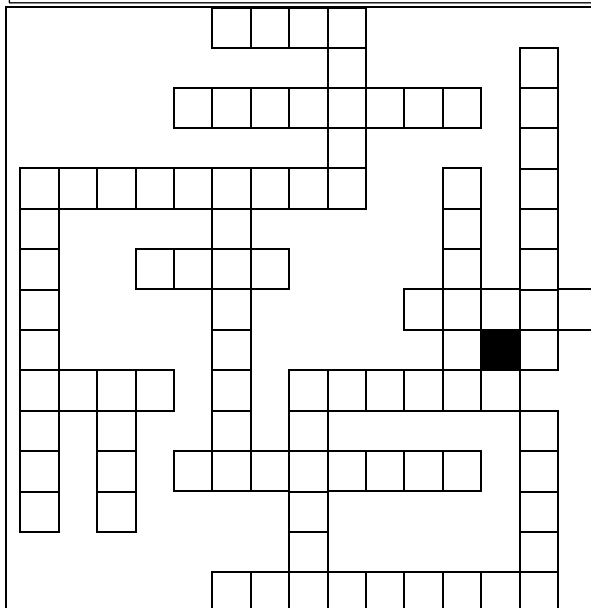
## DOWN

- 1 "Short" hippopotamuses
- 2 Ram constellation
- 3 Doorway, entrance
- 4 One of the Medinas
- 5 Yes. Not!
- 6 Very small, tiny
- 7 1945 Conference site
- 8 Surname of Clarice and Jerome
- 9 Glue stick brand
- 15 Belonging to Mr. Tennes
- 16 Mother's sister
- 17 Hearing devices
- 20 Road (abbr.)
- 22 Associate, comrade
- 23 Trig. Function
- 25 Company "head cheese" (abbr.)
- 28 Anger, wrath
- 31 Russian space agency
- 33 Northern Italian city
- 35 Hair grooming device
- 36 Join end-to-end
- 38 City in northern China
- 40 To add in extra bulletin items
- 41 Leaped
- 43 \_\_\_\_\_ Bin Laden
- 44 General Motors (abbr.)
- 46 Poetic name for Ireland
- 48 Large jungle "cat"
- 50 Not well
- 54 Direction opposite NW

## RESURRECTION

Word Fill-in

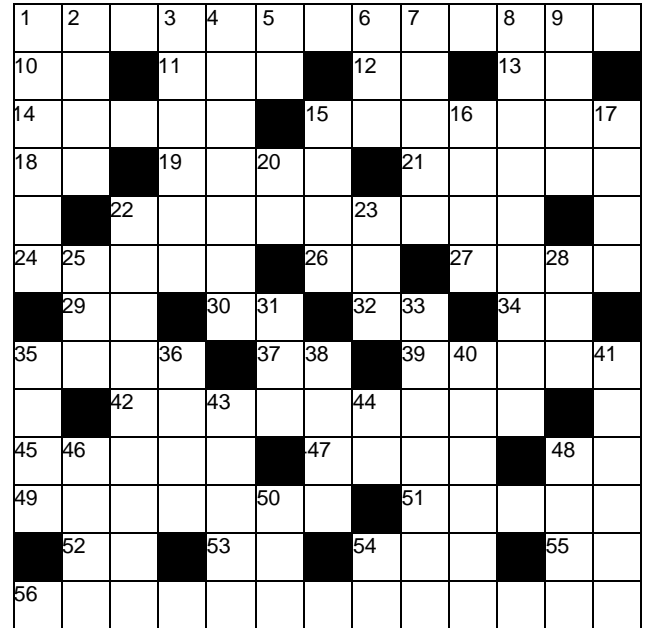
Fill in the empty grid below with 17 words related to the Resurrection. The Word List is at the right.



## WORD LIST

BETRAYED  
BLOOD, BODY  
CENTURION  
CHRIST  
CRUCIFIED  
DISCIPLES  
FORSAKEN  
GOLGOTHA  
INNOCENT  
JESUS, MARY  
RISEN, ROBE  
THIRTY  
THORNS, TOMB

## Genesee Church Crossword Puzzle



Answers to previous puzzles  
In November-December Messenger

