
~FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE~

Volume 18 Issue 1

January 2025

The Pastor's Pen -

Dear Church Family,

First and foremost, I have to wish everyone a very happy and blessed New Year! It seems, I know, difficult to believe that we're starting another new year already. However, as with the start of any new year that has come along, we think about the year that was, wondering if any lessons have been learned, and then wonder what the coming year may be holding in store. In this past year, my first full year with West Milford Presbyterian, I believe that we've made some wonderful strides with not only taking care of some jobs around the church that have needed doing, but have also done some things to help build the community into an even more caring and warm one. What comes to mind first is the Movie Night that we did back in August. If you'll remember, the weather was particularly uncooperative, but even with the rain, we still had around 70 or so folks come out and enjoy the film we showed on the large screen set up on the property where the manse once stood. But then there was also a wonderful piano concert performed by Dr. Fran Covelesky, the organist at ORPC, and the joint services and efforts with Oak Ridge church. And of course, the church has also continued with all of the many events and ways that the community has been cared for for years, and I thank everyone involved with whichever effort it may be!

I've also been impressed and gladdened by what I've found as an eagerness to learn about our faith. Bible studies have been well attended and are often filled with great questions and conversations, many folks take copies of the sermons from Sunday services, and many a person has stopped by the office to ask and discuss questions of the faith that are swirling around their minds. I ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO DO THESE THINGS!!! For when anyone puts in the effort to dissect, discuss and debate Scripture and Scriptural ideas and notions, the benefits are obvious to everyone involved, but especially the person seeking answers.

And then there are the questions and wonderings about what 2025 has in store for us. I know that many a person that I've spoken with have some serious anxiety about how this year seems to be setting up; whether it be the continuing hostilities in the Ukraine, the Middle East, the Sudan, a new presidential administration beginning in a few weeks, environmental issues, economic issues, justice issues; the list can go on and on. But to those who are anxious, I remind them of what the Apostle Paul told the church in Philippi when they were filled with anxieties about the realities that they were living in, and that simple message of his was, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

As we will be learning more deeply about the ministry of Paul in the coming weeks as we delve back into the Book of Acts, we'll see that Paul did not have it easy! He had to confront human doubt, greed, ignorance, threats of violence and violence itself, but he always knew

that Christ was standing beside him and would see him through, and always bring him closer to God.

A well-known Turkish playwright by the name of Mehmet Murat Ildan wrote, "The New Year is a painting not yet painted; a path not yet stepped on; a wing not yet taken off!" And so how will this year ahead look? And how will we meet it? Personally, I'd suggest that we all need to learn from the Apostle Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, about the strength available to us through Christ, and then we must be brave, open minded and loving, as Paul really was, even in the face of challenge. And, if we are like Paul, we'll get through 2025 just fine, AND, maybe even come out of 2025 stronger, wiser and closer to our God.

May this year of our Lord 2025, be one of blessing and peace!

Be Good & Do Good,

Pastor Chris

Save
the
Date

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

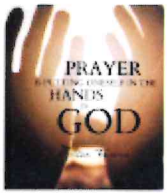
SUNDAY, JANUARY 26

11 AM WORSHIP

LUNCH AND MEETING FOLLOWING

IN FELLOWSHIP HALL.

Joys and Concerns



Joys:

- *Bill Connolly-Went to their grandson, Liam baptism in Ogdensburg .
- *Betsy Engelhardt-Took a trip to Longwood Gardens and it was breathtaking and just what she needed.
- *Ruth- Happy her grandson, Daniel and his girlfriend are visiting from Colorado.
- *Karen is happy that Alexi and his new wife Amanda were able to be here for a week to celebrate Christmas.
- *Cheers that Barbara will not need chemotherapy.
- *Congratulations to Rich and Irene who are happily celebrating their first anniversary.
- *Chris and Jonathan both expressed everyone's joy watching the children tell the Christmas story and to Kathi and Dale for their hard work in arranging it. They all did a great job.
- *Kathy Holley is happy to say her brother's surgery was successful and he is already working in his wood shop.
- *Thomas is happy his Uncle Andy came here from Florida.
- *Audrey was happy that her son, Don came to visit from Maine.
- *Barbara and Chris sang a beautiful duet that gave some of us goosebumps.
- *Chris hopes everyone had a lovely holiday
- *A joy that Judy from our choir got married yesterday.
- *Jonathan is happy that he has moved in with John in the Hudson Valley but he still needs a place in the city. He found a place for January but needs one for February, let's all say a prayer for him.
- *Darius from Franklin has moved to our town and is happy to have found a local church. He may also sing in the choir.
- *Zack and Natalie Humerick had a baby girl on December 27th. Her name is Danica Star. Welcome little girl.
- *Diane McKernan is happy to be back. She's had some car problems and also has classes. She actually changed her major to religion but doesn't plan on preaching.
- *Rich Hepp said Irene over celebrated her birthday yesterday and that's why she isn't here today. Happy birthday Irene!
- *Linda -A joy that #7, Sara got engaged to Damian.
- * Rich- Troop 44G was started 7 years ago and Saturday they held their first Eagle Court of Honor.
- *Jonathan is happy that he no longer needs to be tethered to an O2 tank

Concerns:

- *Michaela Knapp was very sad to tell us that a classmate, Emily died. She had a ten month old son, Bryson. Prayers for all.
- * Riley is wondering about the drones over West Milford.
- *Leah- Prayers and joy for the swift rebuilding of Notre Dame.
- *Chris-Prayers for Syria a country in upheaval and for other countries in turmoil.
- *Prayers that John will continue to be strong while helping Jonathan on his healing journey.
- *Prayers for Jane who had a serious car accident in Martha's Vineyard. She is in critical condition in Boston.
- *Prayers for Zack and Natalie's friend Tom who has been diagnosed with leukemia.
- *Kathy is praying for safe travels for her brother and all others.
- *Cyndy would like us to pray for Kathy who is suffering with depression.
- *Prayers for the world.
- *Chris asked for prayers for the world and that everyone will not be stressed during the busy holiday season.
- *Sadness that Jill Canty's husband Ray died at home on Christmas Eve.
- *Sue- Her cousin, Dan has Stage 4 brain cancer.
- *Fran-"baby Ed" who is now 8 years old had another surgery on 12/26 and it turned out the problem was not as severe as expected. He had a small hole in his heart and is now home.
- *Sandy Prayers for her friend Kevin on the loss of his wife and Sandy's good friend.
- *Chris asked for prayers for the Pettersen family in Jefferson. He will be doing the funeral today for Brianna a 12 year old who died from cancer.
- *Ann Thuneel a member of this church who moved when she became ill has died. All arrangements are private. Prayers for the family.





SESSION'S REFLECTIONS

JANUARY 2025

*Happy
New Year*

SUBMITTED BY BETSY ENGELHARDT, CLERK OF SESSION

Finishing out 2024, we are thrilled that our Elder roster for 2025 shows 8 Elders continuing to serve another year's term on Session. I am the only Elder completing the 6-year term of service commitment and must rotate off in 2025. Having no volunteers to fill the position of Clerk of Session, I have agreed to serve that role for another year. I will have no voting power but can fulfill all the obligations required as Clerk throughout the year. This does leave my Elder spot vacant for 2025 for other committee work. Please see Pastor Chris or any Elder if you would like to try a place on session for one year.

We also ended the year adding 8 new members to our membership rolls. Pastor Chris hopes to schedule another new membership class in the Spring since there is continued interest by some to officially become part of our church family. Our hope is that everyone will consider West Milford Presbyterian church a welcoming home.

Mark your calendars for Sunday, January 26th for our annual congregational meeting. Worship time for this date has been changed to 11 AM with lunch following service. Our meeting will be held in Fellowship Hall while we enjoy a bite to eat. This is a great meeting where yearly reports are submitted from all the committees and church organizations detailing all that was accomplished throughout the past year. It is also a time where members vote on the church budget for the new year. We hope to see everyone in attendance.

During the month of January, we will be hearing from our Legacy Campaign Committee on very substantial and sustaining ways our congregation can contribute to the ongoing financial needs of our church. We'll learn how we can plan ahead and make our wishes known when we may no longer be around to do so. We hope to schedule a guest from the Presbytery Foundation to more clearly explain how simple a process this can be.

Although it remains a work in progress, our Property Committee is exploring affordable options for installing a chair lift for easier access from Fellowship Hall to the side sanctuary door. It's been discovered that since this is public space, we must contract for a more industrial installation which raises the cost. We have hopes we can make this project a reality sometime in 2025.

HAPPY & HEALTHY NEW YEAR TO ALL!!!

SUNDAY SCHOOL DOINGS

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

May God be with you and yours now and through out the year!

Our annual Christmas pageant was held on Sunday December 22, 2024. Mary, Joseph, shepherds, angles, wisemen and even a donkey and sheep told of the joyous news of the birth of Jesus! The children had so much fun, and Miss Dale and Miss Kathi were so proud of all and relieved that it went so well!

As the new year begins, January finds Sunday School tracing the teachings of Jesus. We start with the importance of John the Baptist and learn of the beginnings of Jesus' preaching.

IMPORTANT DATES:

January 5th-Communion Miss Kathi's classes will come into the sanctuary to receive communion.

January 26th-11:00am Service and Church School. Congregational meeting with brunch to follow. Children will be brought to the sanctuary before the congregational meeting, so that Miss Dale and Miss Kathi may attend the meeting.

Thank-you for your continuing support of our Church School program.

Submitted by:

Kathi Ening



Deacon Happenings


January 8, 2025

Deacons ended the year by setting the sanctuary for the season of Advent. Garlands were hung, Chrismons were placed on two trees, the nativity was set on the communion table, windows were decorated. New, large wreaths were hung from the windows. Two of the windows displayed the two glass angels that were created by Pastor Janet. Poinsettias adorned the scene for Christmas eve. Luminarias lit the walk to the sanctuary. Candles were distributed for the evening service. Deacons decorated with the assistance of Senior Saints and other volunteers.

On Christmas Eve, a quartet of brass and a harpist played. It was a beautiful scene, a time for reflection and celebrating the joy of the birth of Christ.

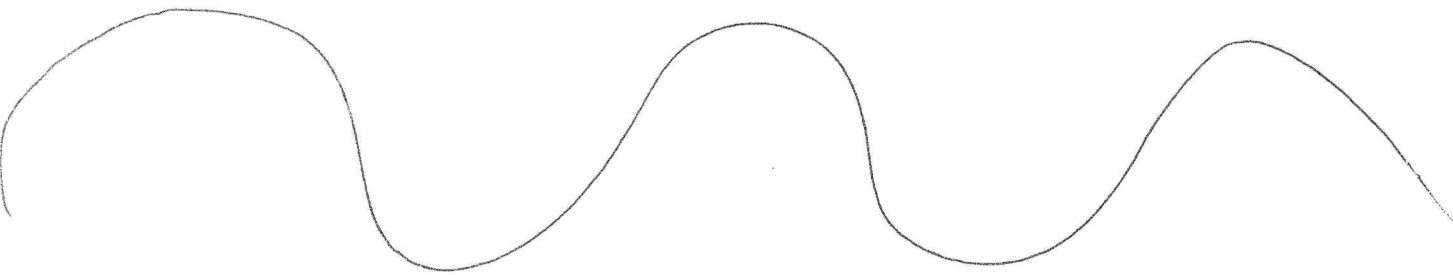
Soon the season ended. Advent was packed in boxes. It was time to decorate for Epiphany. The ending of 2024, entering 2025. Deacons reflected on the many jobs done, mostly behind the scene but results seen by all. We will begin the new year with joy and anticipation.

Marty Tappan, moderator



**Our Congregational Meeting is on Sunday,
January 26th at 11:00AM.**

We ask if you could please bring a Side Dish, Salad, Deviled Eggs, or Dessert to go with our Lunch we would appreciate it. Please see the sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall.



WA January News

Sleigh bells ring. Can you hear them? Makes you think of a chilly, peaceful and relaxing sleigh ride in the winter. However lately things have been anything like peaceful or relaxing!

We have been VERY busy. Emptying Aunt Jenny's Attic for the Christmas Bazaar, planning the layout of vendors, answering the vendor questions. Then the actual bazaar. Then putting everything back, taking down the fall decorations in church and putting up the Advent decorations, restocking Aunt Jenny's Attic again. It is full of Christmas items with more in the shed so we can bring stock in when we sell what we have. The cold weather has not been a friend to our endeavor's nor has the much needed rain.

We are now working on our Sip and Paint that will be held later in January.

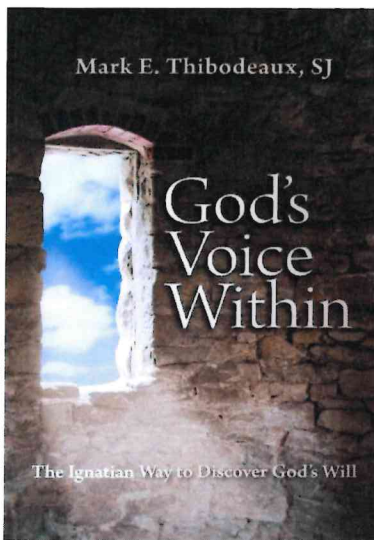
There is always something going on and we would love to have you join us. Many hands lighten the work.

Praying that 2025 will be a wonderful year for all.

Blessings to all!

Linda and Pam

HAPPY
NEW YEAR



The OR/WM Church Book Group

Our church book group, begun at the beginning of the Covid pandemic is going to start meeting again on January 23rd and everyone is encouraged to be a part of this one. We meet via Zoom.

The book is available at Amazon for \$12, paperback or Kindle.

Many of us do not trust our own thoughts, feelings, and desires when it comes to discerning God's will. Instead we look outside ourselves to determine what God wants from and for us. In *God's Voice Within*, spiritual director Mark E. Thibodeaux, SJ, shows us how to use Ignatian discernment to access our own spiritual intuition and understand that the most trustworthy wisdom of all comes not from outside sources, but from God working through us.

God's Voice Within is intended for people who know that there is more to the spiritual life than they are currently experiencing and are ready to take the next step in their walk of faith by making effective discernment—specifically Ignatian discernment—a daily practice.

Ultimately, *God's Voice Within* teaches us to discern what is at the root of our actions and emotions, which in turn allows us to respond to God's promptings inside us rather than unconsciously reacting to life around us.

WEST MILFORD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Wine & Design!

JANUARY 24TH • 7- 9:30 PM
FELLOWSHIP HALL

Design, Sip and Nosh!
Enjoy the fun and create your own
wine glass masterpiece !

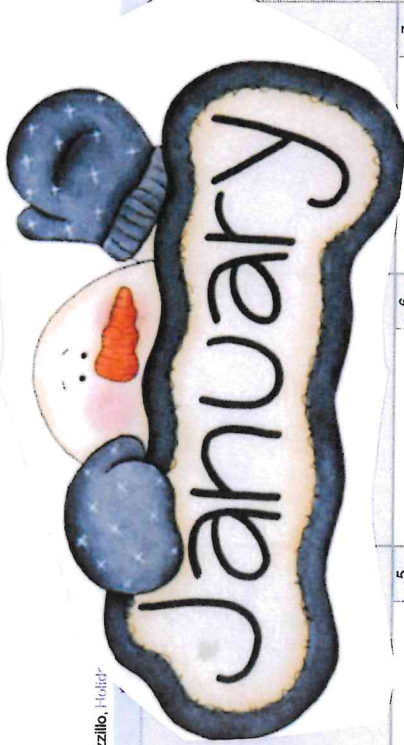
\$15.00

Price includes all art supplies,
wine glass and delightful appetizers!

BYOB

To Purchase Tickets
Call Church Office
973-728-3081
or Aunt Jenny's Attic
Wed, 1-4 PM
Fri & Sat. 1-3 PM





	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 New Year's Day 11am - Bible Study @ WMPC	2 9am - Community Food Pantry 9am - Sr. Saints	3	4
5 9am - Worship 6pm - Scouts	6 7:30pm - Zoom Bible Study	7 9am - Community Food Pantry	8 11am - Bible Study @ WMPC 1pm - Aunt Jenny's Attic	9 National Day of Mourning for 9am - Community Food Pantry 9am - Sr. Saints
11 9am - Community Food Pantry 9am - Winter Farmers Market 11am - Aunt Jenny's Attic	12 9am - Worship Service 6pm - Scouts	13 7:30pm - Zoom Bible Study 6:30pm - Session	14 9am - Community Food Pantry 6:30pm - Session	15 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 11am - Bible Study @ WMPC 1pm - Aunt Jenny's Attic
17 11am - Aunt Jenny's Attic	18 11am - Aunt Jenny's Attic	19 9am - Worship Service 6pm - Scouts	20 Integration Day (regional) Martin Luther King Jr. Day 7:30pm - Zoom Bible Study	21 9am - Community Food Pantry
23 9am - Community Food Pantry 9am - Sr. Saints	24 11am - Bible Study @ WMPC 1pm - Aunt Jenny's Attic	25 9am - Community Food Pantry 9am - Sr. Saints	26 11am - Congregational Meeting 11am - Worship/Congregational 6pm - Scouts	27 7:30pm - Zoom Bible Study
29 11am - Bible Study @ WMPC 1pm - Aunt Jenny's Attic	30 9am - Community Food Pantry 9am - Sr. Saints	31 11am - Bible Study @ WMPC 1pm - Aunt Jenny's Attic	1 2025	2 9am - Community Food Pantry 9am - Sr. Saints
3 9am - Community Food Pantry 9am - Sr. Saints	4 9am - Community Food Pantry 9am - Sr. Saints	5 9am - Community Food Pantry 9am - Sr. Saints	6 9am - Community Food Pantry 9am - Sr. Saints	7 9am - Community Food Pantry 9am - Sr. Saints