

# Clare Congregational Church

## Newsletter

**December 2022**

### **Comments from Pastor Connie**

“Merry Christmas” Happy Advent. Advent means arrival. The arrival at Christmas refers to Jesus being born. Why was this birth important? A little over 2,000 years ago, God stooped down from Heaven and sent His Son as a baby, a human being. God did this as a way of letting everyone of us know God loves us.

Christmas teaches us about miracles. Mary, a virgin, became pregnant. Even as a young girl, she responded to the angel God sent to her, I believe. With God nothing is impossible.” Christmas teaches that people who are often looked down upon, the shepherds, were visited by a heavenly angel to hear the News of Jesus being born and were invited to be the first guests at the stable. The birth of Jesus caused a great deal of stress in the life of a powerful King. He was so threatened that he had all the baby boys in his kingdom 2 and under killed. The birth of Jesus gave hope to Godly men and women who had been praying for years to meet the Messiah—the Prince of Peace.

Christmas offers numerous opportunities to share the love of sharing, feeding the hungry, clothing those who are cold and reaching out in numerous acts of kindness shares the message of Christmas.

Think about this. God gave His son to demonstrate how much He loves us. We should follow God’s example in celebrating Christmas as a time to love one another. I'm thankful for each of you and pray you will know how much you are loved.

Merry Christmas,

Pastor Connie

## **From the Moderator's Desk**

**Moderator— Karen Jones**

I am so thankful for such a giving congregation. Time, talents, tithe and special giving's. You are a blessing!

The annual church meeting will be held on the 3rd Sunday in January, to elect officers. January 15, 2022. If you're interested in holding a position or have worthy information, please contact me, or please attend the January meeting on the 3rd. There will be more information at that time. Along with the end of the year quickly approaching, please remember if you are in charge of a committee, end of the year reports will be due.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

As always—Thanks be to God!

Your moderator, Karen Jones

### **To contact church office:**

office@clarecongregational.org

989-386-7582

Office Hours: Tuesday through Thursday, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.

To contact Pastor Connie: 989-506-6659

Church website: [clarecongregational.org](http://clarecongregational.org)

## **Pioneer School (Deodorant Needed)**

The Pioneer school students are in need of unscented deodorant for both the girls and the boys. If anyone would like to donate, please leave in the office or give it to Pastor Connie.

## **Baby Pantry Buckets**

75 buckets were delivered to the Clare County Baby Pantry. Each bucket was full of cleaning supplies. The buckets will be given to patrons for Christmas. Many of the mothers had requested cleaning supplies. Angie and Dr. Allen did most of the leg work. There were a few members of the congregation who helped pack the buckets and load them onto vehicles. Isn't there a saying, "Cleanliness is next to Godliness?" The buckets are the perfect Christmas gift!!

## **Successful Bake Sale**

Thank You to everyone who baked and worked at the bake sale at Jays. The Women's Fellowship received \$665.00 from the donations. Hurrah!

## **New Stable**

Thank you to everyone who helped provide funds for the stable placed on 5th street in front of the church. The manikins inside are beautiful. Thanks to Barb Kuse for making them look real. Also the animals in the stable are inviting for people to stop and see the "story of Christmas". Another Miracle on 5th street!

## **New Speakers**

New speakers have been added inside and outside of the church. Music can be played in the halls, fellowship room and outside. Christmas music will be played outside for the enjoyment of those passing by.

## **Women's Meeting**

Women of the church are all invited for soup and salad at the Doherty on December 15 at 12:00 noon. Lunch will be paid by the Women's fellowship as an appreciation to say "thank you." Reservations are necessary. Please notify Wanda by the 10th of December if you plan to attend. Wanda: 989 240-0717 or call the office at 989 386-7582 and leave a message.

## **Annual Christmas Party**

To those who signed up for the Christmas Party on December 2nd, we look forward to seeing you. Dinner will be served at 6:00 pm. Decorations are going up as we write this newsletter. Naughty or Nice, I can't wait to see.

## **To Our Congregation**

Please! If you know of anyone in our congregation who is suffering for any reason and needs our help or prayers, please inform us or reach out to Pastor Connie. We cannot help if we don't know there's a problem, and no one should suffer alone. We are a family and families help each other.

## **Pack Gift Bags**

Tuesday November 29th 110 Christmas bags need to be filled for the children at Three lakes Academy in Curtis, Michigan where Sarah Bongard teaches. If you are willing to come to the church at 1:00 to pack, please let Pastor Connie know. Jim Colville will be delivering them to the school in December.

## **Hanging of the Greens**

Thank you to everyone who helped decorate the church inside and outside. A special "thank you" to Wanda and Kourtney for weeks of preparing beautiful decorations. Walking into the church puts smiles on faces and joys of Christmas on hearts.

## **Cookies Needed**

10 dozen cookies are needed to take to the "Drive Thru Bethlehem" production overseen by Pastor Scott Harper. Cookies need to be prepared for the 16th of December delivery. If anyone is interested in donating please see Pastor Connie.

## **Advent Readings**

Thank you Lynn and Steve Schumacher for reading the 1st Sunday of Advent. December 4th Don and Karen will be reading, December 11th Angie and Dr. Allen will be reading, and December 18th Barb and Ron Kunse will be reading.

## **Christmas Drama**

December 11th worship service will be a drama of the Christmas story. After service, there will be a Christmas brunch. Please bring your favorite breakfast casserole or food. Sign up outside Wanda's office or see Phyllis Carrigan.

## **Coffee Hour**

December 18th please bring a plate of your favorite Christmas cookies. Also thank you to everyone who has provided wonderful and delicious coffee hours through out 2022. Thank you Phyllis Carrigan for your willingness to make sure all the Sundays were filled.

## **Sunday School**

Sunday school classes are offered at 9:30—10:15 every Sunday morning. Adults meet in the parlor. Pastor Connie teaches this class.

The young adult class meets in the youth room with Bill Newkirk teaching. Children meet in the children's classroom with Frank Bongard teaching.

## **Free**

We have a shredder and a 5 drawer file cabinet. If you want either one please call Wanda 989 240-0717.

## **Christmas Outreach**

A million “thank yous” to everyone who has or is helping to share with others. 110 Christmas bags are being delivered by Jim Colville to Three Lakes Academy in Curtis, across the bridge. Gifts are also being delivered to the staff. Hats and mittens will be included in the gift giving.

New Hope girls will be receiving snacks, treats, a pizza party, cookie baking supplies and Christmas gifts due to generous, loving people in the congregation. They truly are grateful for everything the congregation does.

Pioneer students were served a delicious Thanksgiving dinner with all the trimmings. Many of the students shared, the meal served is their only Thanksgiving dinner. Paula Newkirk also delivered candy gift bags at Halloween. A Christmas dinner is being planned for them also. Again “thank you” for those who donate, prepare, serve and clean up at the dinners.

## **Christmas Eve**

There will be a 7:00 candlelight service on December 24th. Communion will be offered. The service is “Kid friendly.” Praying the sanctuary will be full.

## **Christmas Sunday**

There will be no service on Christmas morning. The council decided not to have service so families can celebrate together in their own homes.

## **Unwated Christmas Items**

If you find you have decorations that you no longer want, use, or need. Please donate them to the church. If we don't use them they will be going in a sale next year that we will be putting on. Thank you.

# Happy New Year! Can you believe it?

## December Birthdays

Deborah Bicknell 12/02

John Allen 12/11

Wanda Agle 12/11

Angela Allen 12/12

Alex Forsberg 12/13

Bill Newkirk 12/14

Doris Bicknell 12/20

Jim Smith 12/24

Allyson Thompson 12/27



## December Anniversaries

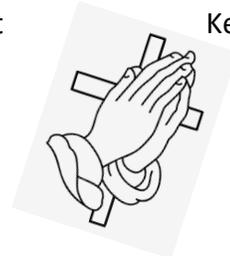
Connie & Frank Bongard 12/27

## Facts & Figures: Month of November

Date	Attendance	Offering
Nov. 6	29	\$ 1245.00
13	25	\$ 1107.00
20	32	\$ 1511.00
27	33	\$ 1561.00

## Serving: Month of December

Officiating:	Pastor Connie Bongard
Accompanist:	LuAnne Humphrey
Liturgist:	Dr. Kurt Keppner
Ushering:	Don & Karen Jones



## REMEMBER IN PRAYER

### Nursing Home/Assisted Living:

Dick Snyder: 401 Orchard Ave. Clare MI. 48617

### Health/Healing & Other Needs:

Bill Franklin	Tom Johnson	Christopher Jackson	
Sean Gallagher	Patty (Humphrey) Hazen	Scott Taube	Mike Humphrey
Dave Stevens	Holly Kwiatkowski	Dan Finney	Jim Bertley