

**Peckville and Bradley Memorial United Methodist Charge
Christmas 2011 News Letter**

From The Pastors' Pen

A Christmas Thought... Rev. Michael
Shambora

Years ago, to the delight of my church music-director, a woman, with remarkable talent, joined the Christmas Cantata Group. This woman, to our amazement, was able to ascend and descend the vocal ladder like a New York fireman, effortlessly. There was no straining, no bulging neck-veins, no reddened face, no big gulps of air, no sweat.

Moreover, no musical score, regardless of how intricate it was, could confound her. Smooth as silk was the best phrase to describe her timbre of voice. But the woman with remarkable talent didn't fit in. She got irate, and left.

A retrospective of why the woman abandoned ship before she knew the shipmates, is simple. Miss vocal-cords refused to accept the fact that musicians must subjugate indigenous talent for the sake of the group. And there's no short-cut around this. No choir functions satisfyingly when a high priestess serves at the altar of – **DO YOUR OWN THING.**

So, when the choir stood tall to sing on Christmas Eve, guess who's swelling strains we heard? Guess who stuck out like a sore thumb? Miss lungs. She was as conspicuous as Rudolph's red nose. And since the rest of the choir was lost, I was asked to speak to her about it after the holidays.

Although I spoke gently and measured my words, she got miffed. Unwilling to tone it down, or make any

concessions, she stood up and told me, "Then I quit!" And without so much as a word of apology, the woman with remarkable talent walked-off in the middle of January, to nobody's dismay.

Listen. No choir, no church, or no business for that matter, works well when a self-aggrandizing individual purposely, or inadvertently, high jacks it.

I asked this woman to do one thing. **I ASKED HER TO BLEND IN.** She refused. And feeling the spotlight wouldn't focus on her, the woman with remarkable talent – joined the Baptists, and then, from what I heard, the Pentecostals. Who knows where she is in 2011?

It's both strange and sad, isn't it, that the woman's **BEST ASSET**, her voice, became her **BIGGEST LIABILITY.**

Folks, it's Christmas. And the message of Christmas is that of "Blending In." God's desire to blend in with mortals is called the incarnation. In Bethlehem of Judea, God gave up power – and became one with us. Too bad this talented woman was unable to understand this concept.

Christmas is Giving

Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call Him Immanuel. – ISAIAH 7:14

She will give birth to a Son, and you are to give Him the Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins. – Matthew 1:21

Advent

Advent is the beginning of the Church Year for most churches in the Western tradition. It begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day, which is the Sunday nearest November 30, and ends on Christmas Eve (Dec 24). If Christmas Eve is a Sunday, it is counted as the fourth Sunday of Advent, with Christmas Eve proper beginning at sundown. Originally, the Advent season was a time of strict fasting, observed in anticipation of the festival marking the birth of Jesus Christ. Christians believe that Advent is a time to prepare our hearts for Christ, just as we prepare our homes for Christmas.

Christmas Food Donations

We are at present collecting non-perishable food items for the area food basket program. Please bring non-perishable food items to any of our church programming or worship during the month of December

Please do your part to help those less fortunate than us.

Bradley Memorial United Methodist Women

Greetings from the Bradley UMW, We have been very busy preparing for the upcoming Advent season. Our new roof is on, and the tower has been painted. In September, we held a very successful Welsh cookie bake. We wish to Thank everyone who helped with this project. We are purchasing new Christmas boughs for our Sanctuary, and decorated the walls "with boughs of Holly"! We dedicated the Advent brass wreath, given by Pastor Art

Davis' family and friends on November 27, 2011, in memory of his wife, Carol Bambach Davis. Again this year, we are sponsoring a family from the Women's resource center, and feel blessed that we are able to do that. A project in the making for a long time has finally come together. In October we began our first children's Sunday school class, taught by Mrs. Robin Youngblood. This was a major goal for our church and we are blessed that it was accomplished. We wish to extend to you and your families a Blessed **Christmas** season, remembering that **Christmas** begins with **Christ**. Peace on Earth. Bradley Memorial UMW.

A Word from Peckville's Finance Chairman

Dear Friends,

By now most of us are beginning to get our Christmas decorations in place and also making our lists of special people in our lives for gift giving. Our church is beautifully decorated with wreathes, garland, candles, and a new Christmas tree.

Advent season has begun and will culminate on Christmas Day with the celebration of the birth of the Baby Jesus.

We will have a special bulletin of memorial gifts and poinsettias in honor or memory of loved ones.

Please include a gift to our church on your shopping list. There are so many people in need with all the tragedies that have happened locally and throughout our country and world.

Christmas is truly a time of giving.

God Bless, Bob Elvidge, Finance Chairperson.

Christmas is Music

Suddenly a Great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests." – Luke 2:13-14

Christmas Memorials and Honoriums

Christmas gifts in memory of or in honor of may be given to the following funds.

Memorial Fund – Bill Llewellyn

Organ & Renovation – Sue Lucas or Sue Snyder

Warring – Fendick Scholarship fund – Sue Lucas or Sue Snyder

Music Fund – Bonny Taylor

To insure that your memorial or honorium is listed in the Christmas booklet, please have them in to the designated funds by Wednesday, December 14. This is a big help to the charge secretary and she thanks you for your cooperation.

Living Nativity

Peckville will be presenting a living nativity on Sunday, December 18 from 6:00pm to 8:00pm. We need a commitment of at least 20 people who are willing to stand. Right now 6 people have come forward to help. If you would like to make a donation or help in any way please let Beth, Bonny or Pastor Sharon know. We are in need of people of all ages to stand in the nativity; help in the kitchen to provide refreshments, also needed are the refreshments themselves. Thank You in advance for all your help.

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The very purpose of Christ's coming into the world was that He might offer up His life as a sacrifice for the sins of man. He came to die. This is the heart of Christmas.
Billy Graham
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Christmas Eve Services

Christmas Eve services this year will be at Bradley Memorial church at 9:00p.m. and Peckville at 7:00p.m.

Peckville Christmas Cantata

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The Peckville United Methodist Choir will present the cantata on Sunday, December 18 at 11:00am. All are welcome.

Peckville December Food and Fellowship

Our December food and fellowship will be held following worship on December 18. It is Chili day! If you have a favorite chili you make please bring it along!! If not come and chill out with the great food and greater fellowship!!

Peckville Church Envelopes

It's time to prepare church envelopes for 2012. Several have told me they do not want envelopes because they use checks instead of cash. If you are one of those who prefer not to use envelopes, would you please let me know as soon as possible. You may call and leave a message 489-6093. Envelopes have become expensive and I do not want to order them if they are not used. Thank You.

Bonny Taylor
Financial Sec'y PUMC

PECKVILLE SUNDAY SCHOOL

Peckville's Sunday school is up and running!! A great big THANK YOU to Sue Lucas and Emily Fabri for their dedication to the children. Also a great big thank you to the parents for loving their children and being dedicated to getting them to Sunday school each week.

Practical Strategies for a Peaceful Christmas

What is your heart's desire for Advent? Whatever it is, does it depend on you doing each and every thing on your to-do list? This year, evaluate your list realistically. Highlight the things you truly love doing. Circle the ones that exhaust you the most. If some of your highlighted items are also circled, then they're probably worth your effort. But are all of the items you circled really necessary? What would happen if you simply didn't do them? Would Christmas grind to a halt this year?

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Sky Lake Winter Retreat

February 3 -5,2011

Ages 3 - 11 \$49.00

Ages 12 and up \$96.00

being a part of God's wonderful creation
seeing His outdoor sanctuary
singing together in worship
and listening to the sounds around you
enjoy a warm fire place in a beautiful lodge
playing games, singing and dancing with
the young and the young at
heart
cooking hot dogs and smores on an open
fire
being served and taking turns serving
meals

3 delicious, well balanced meals (and not having to fix them)
ice skating, sleigh riding, walks around the lake or just sitting in
the
warm lodge and watching this all happen.

Come and be a part of this GREAT time
This is open to ALL ages
Every year we get at least one or two new people.
Maybe this year it will be YOU!

You will never regret it.
For more information call Ron or Karen at 383-1611 or Tom or Beth at 383-2119.

Hope to see you there.
Love in Christ
Ron

Christmas is Hope and Love
For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over His kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this. – **ISAIAH 9:6-7**

**Mission statement of the Peckville/
Bradley Memorial Charge**

**To glorify God by sharing
The gospel of Jesus Christ,
Nurturing disciples,
And reaching out to a world in need.**

Calendar of Events

December – Food basket collection begins

12/18 – Christmas cantata at Peckville 11:00 am worship service

12/18- food and fellowship following worship. CHILI DAY(Peckville)

12/18 – Living nativity 6:00pm – 8:00pm with enough help(Peckville)

12/24 – Christmas Eve Services; Bradley Memorial at 9:00p.m.

Peckville at 7:00p.m.

1/5 – Peckville Ad Board @8:00pm

Everyone from both Peckville and Bradley Memorial are welcome and encouraged to attend any or all events that interest them. Come and bring a friend!

***“Freely you have received, freely give.”
Matthew 10:8***

The charge Secretary (Beth Taylor) can be reached at 383-2119,
edt1157@yahoo.com

Rev. Shambora can be reached at 371-8123.

A Childs Perception

***“You know what the Baby Jesus is?”
my six year old asked me this
Christmas.***

***“What?” I asked absently, struggling to
get our Christmas tree lights evenly
distributed.***

***“The Baby Jesus,” she announced, “is
what God’s love looked like when He
turned it into a person.”***

***I don’t know if theologians would agree
with all the ramifications of her
statement. But I do know that my
children often seem to have instinctive***

***insight into spiritual things that wakes
up my grown-up understanding.
At Christmastime, children play an
essential part in our celebrations. So
much of what we do is intended to
please them – and all the while our
hearts keep hearkening back to the
Christmas memories of our own
childhoods. On Christmas Eve,
sometimes we can’t help but envy our
children the stars in their eyes,
especially when our own eyes are dull
with exhaustion.***

***Christmas is so much simpler for a
child. Can we open our tired adult
hearts to that same simplicity?***

Community of Prayer

As of the first of the year we will be refreshing both our community of prayer in the bulletin and our phone prayer list. Please inform any member of the phone prayer group or Pastor Sharon of those needing to be kept on. Thank You.

E-Mail Addresses

As we continue to be good Stewards of all that God has given us, we are still trying to compile e-mail addresses to send out as many newsletters as possible. If I don’t have yours please send it to me at edt1157@yahoo.com and please put church e-mail in the subject matter. Please remember that your e-mail will be used only for church mailings and we will blind copy the mailing so your e-mail address is safe.

Thank You for your help and

stewardship.

Beth

Your Advent Gift to Your Church

As we strive to be good stewards of what God has given us and try to cut back on some expenses within the church, we have not sent out Advent Envelopes this year. Please remember your advent gift to your church, you may place your gift in an envelope marked Advent Gift with your name on it. Thank You for Your Help.

**My advent gift to my church
Peckville_____
Bradley Memorial_____
Advent gift for 2010 _____**

**Peckville address:
723 Main St. Peckville Pa.
18452**

**Bradley Memorial address:
106 Lincoln St., Dickson City,
Pa. 18519.**

**Christmas is Joy & Peace
And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the Glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord." – Luke 2:8-11**

**Christmas is Faith
The word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.
– John 1:14**

**A Christmas Blessing
God grant you the light in Christmas,
which is faith;
The warmth of Christmas,
which is love;
The radiance of Christmas,
which is purity;
The righteousness of Christmas,
which is justice;
The belief in Christmas,
Which is truth;
The all of Christmas,
Which is Christ.**

- Wilda English