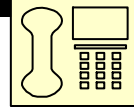




*"We have this hope as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul" Hebrews 6:19*

## Receiving a Call



In my grandfather's rural Appalachian hometown named Headwaters, Virginia, there existed exactly one phone. It was located in the only store in town. In order to make a phone call, you had to walk to the store to do it. If someone called you, a townspeople would walk to your house to tell you about the call. Then you would walk to the store just so you could answer the phone call. Communication to the outside world worked a bit slower in those days so phone calls were a rare and special thing.

The third chapter of 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel begins with the words "In those days messages from the Lord were very rare and visions were quite uncommon." The writer does not offer to tell us why this is happening, they simply state it as a fact of life. It was hard to hear God's voice calling in those times. This apparent absence of God's voice sets the stage a great surprise, Samuel's call from God.

With the explosion of cell phones and Internet, we rarely ever have any problems being connected with the world around us. We can get our emails, surf the web day and night or connect with a friend that lives in Hawaii all through a small phone. We are constantly connected to something and we like it that way.

What about our connection with God? How often are we hearing God's voice? Do we see God's vision for our lives? Like my grandfather having to walk to the store to answer a phone call, connecting with God requires some work. It is not instantaneous like our cell phones or house phones. It's not something we can simply open up and push the power button to activate. Patience is a necessity in connecting with God. Patience to turn off the side of us that is always going. Patience to put aside distractions. Patience to pray without demands. Patience to open your ears to God.

When Samuel was sleeping, he heard a voice say "Samuel! Samuel!" He thought it was Eli, the temple prophet calling him. Samuel went to Eli and said "Here I am. What do you need?" But Eli didn't call him and sent him back to bed. It happened once again with the same result. The third time that Samuel heard the voice and woke Eli up again, Eli realized that it was the Lord calling.

***What we need to hear takes time to sink in.*** It is a process of discernment, of figuring out what the Lord is saying. This is something that we as church need to continue to do. We as a church must take the time to hear God's voice in this community. This may require us to take a step back from our daily activities and think about where God is calling this church. What vision is God giving us for this church?

Like Samuel and Eli, this will take some time to figure out. There are several practices that will help us along the way to hearing God. One is prayer. Pray for yourself. Pray for the church. Pray for the world. Pray for clarity and vision. The second is reading scripture. Read the book that has brought us all here together. Read the confusing parts, read the familiar parts. Take the time to get out of yourself and all the distractions and read God's word. Finally, talk with each other and your neighbors. Hear those voices around you, the issues and the struggles that they are dealing with. Listen for God's call amongst those you know and those you don't know.

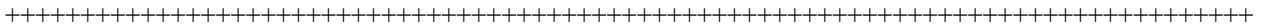
***Dare to say to God "Here I am. What do you need, Lord?"*** Dare to approach God with a dreamer's heart and practical mind. Dare to receive the words of calling to your life and the life of this church.

**We hold up in prayer:**

Sally Michell  
Jean Jensen  
Ed Hawkins  
Kay Bostrum  
Nancy Glass  
Lucile Moore



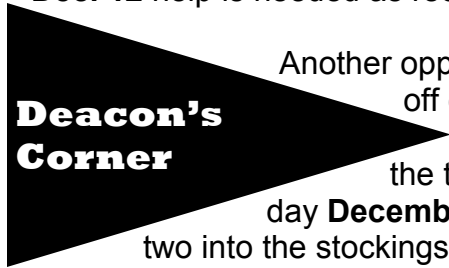
Our prayers and sympathy are extended to the family of Keith Moore who passed away in November.



**PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

Once again the Board of Deacons is sponsoring giving to the Christmas Basket Program at Westminister Neighborhood Ministries. As last year, Hope UPC is collecting peanut butter of any kind, any size, and any brand. Our goal is "200" jars by **December 6**. All donations have to be dropped off at Westminister by Monday, Dec 7.

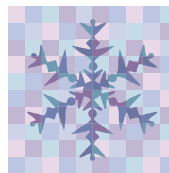
If you wish to help assemble food baskets it will be done on Friday, **Dec. 11** or on Saturday, **Dec. 12** help is needed as recipients pick up their gifts and wrap their presents.



Another opportunity to serve God thru charitable giving, is to take a tag off of the Christmas Giving Tree found in the Narthex of the church. Purchase what is on the tag, wrap it up and place the tag on the front of the gift then return to the church by Sunday **December 20**. You may also slip a stocking stuffer or a dollar or two into the stockings that are hung and we will see that three Plainfield families with 8 children in total have an abundant Christmas! The young adult group in our church will be delivery the goodies to the three families the week of Christmas.

Please help us reach out, with love and hope, to these people who live in an area of poverty. Any questions, please contact Shirley Jones.

**Soon the snow will fall!**



If you should have a need to have your walks, driveway etc. cleared this winter, please contact Ken Lavenberg, 272-3917, for a service quote. His company will be willing and able to help you.



## Hope United Presbyterian Church News for December 2009

**Advent began on November 29<sup>th</sup>.** This is our opportunity to prepare our hearts and minds to the coming of Christ. Approach this time of worship with humbleness and self-reflection. Think about how we set our gaze towards the coming Messiah during this Advent season.

There will be Session meeting on **December 14<sup>th</sup>.**

Christmas Cantata will take place on **December 20<sup>th</sup>.** We still need folks to participate and would love to have you be a part of this special service be it singing, narrating, a small acting part, constructing a set, helping with costumes etc. If you are interested, talk with choir director Rebekah or Pastor Gray.

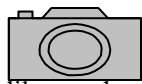
January Newsletter Articles due to Glenda on **December 20** for newsletter distribution on December 27. Place in red folder on desk in office or email her at : [glendat09@yahoo.com](mailto:glendat09@yahoo.com)

The Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will take place on **December 24<sup>th</sup>** at 8:00pm. We will be celebrating Communion during this service. This is a time to reflect on the amazing glory of the birth of a small child 2000 years ago. We hope that you can attend and bring your family to this wonderful day in the life of the church.

### New Address to note:

Lloyd and Grace Moughler  
Heritage Park  
2111 Heritage Park Dr.  
Fort Wayne, IN 46805

**Treasurer's Report:** Count Your Blessings campaign for stewardship 2010 budget is ongoing. We have received **19 pledge cards for a total of \$45,616.** Thank you to all who have pledged and to those who want to support Hope United Presbyterian Church. If you haven't filled out a pledge card, prayerfully consider doing so. You may mail it to the church, drop in the offering plate or hand to me. Our congregation continues to succeed as everyone pitches in when there is a need.  
Sincerely, Janet Frank



Got any **digital photos** you would like to share on the overhead during service? Ken Lavenberg would be happy to include them as background for everyone's enjoyment. Contact him with questions at 272-3917 or submit to: [lavenberg@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lavenberg@sbcglobal.net)

## Sermon Topics for December

**December 6<sup>th</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday**  
of Advent

Malachi 3:1-4

Philippians 1:3-11

Luke 3:1-6

Sermon Focus: We must seek to be refined and purified by the words of God.

**December 13<sup>th</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday**  
of Advent

Zephaniah 3:14-20

Philippians 4:4-7

Luke 3:7-18

Sermon Focus: We must be aware of who is in charge.

**December 20<sup>th</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday**  
of Advent

Choir director discretion for scriptures.

**December 24<sup>th</sup> – Christmas**  
Eve Service

Isaiah 9:2-7

Titus 2:11-14

Luke 2:1-14

Sermon Focus: The incarnation closes the chasm between creator and creature.

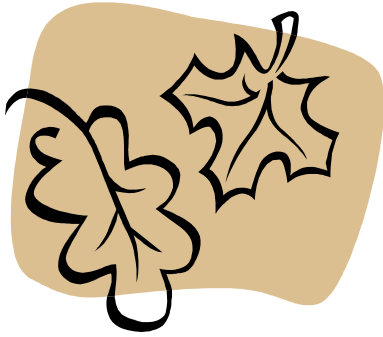
**December 27<sup>th</sup>**

1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26

Colossians 3:12-17

Luke 2:41-52

Sermon Focus: Just as Samuel and Jesus grew in wisdom so we must grow in our faith.



# PW News

On behalf of the Presbyterian Women I want to "thank" all those who helped in any way with the Harvest Dinner which was very successful. A very special "thank you" to Jo Wier and Bea Shaffer who work so hard at putting this dinner on every year.

Also, to Gary Shelton, Chuck Maxwell, John and Jody Harvey and to our God who made this all possible.

Shirley Jones, Moderator

## From the Property Committee

Through the generous donations of several members, we were able to replace two major items recently.

The first was the replacement of the original drinking fountain in the east-west hallway. The unit still cooled water but the stream was so weak it was hard to obtain a drink. Since this unit was installed back in the 60s, it had served well. The cost of the new unit was \$850 installed. It was necessary to upgrade to a little more expensive unit in order to match the existing water supply and drain. This would prevent breaking open the wall. We had to also install a shut off valve which the original unit did not have.

The second item was the replacement of the mower. Best guess, the old mower was 15-16 years old. The manufacturing company went out of business some time ago and parts were almost impossible to obtain. It had served well when you take into consideration that it had an estimated use of 2304 hours. The new unit is a Hustler brand commercial mower. It has a 60 inch cut that is 2 inches less than the old mower. It has a four year warranty and a 25 horse Kawasaki engine. It was obtained from a local company, Plainfield Equipment, who will give us any necessary support. The new mower is a zero turn which means it has steering levers rather than a steering wheel. Some of the volunteers had to take a little extra time to get used to this type steering. This type of steering cut the mowing time required in about half, but, the speed of the mower also accentuated how rough our yard is. We were able to add a flex fork kit to the front wheels which made a big difference in the ride. Initial cost of the mower was \$7204. Cost to the church, \$5954. We want to thank all who donated and all the volunteers who no longer have to spend the better part of the day...mowing.



*Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise; be thankful unto him, and bless his name. Psalm 100 1,2,4*

Hope United Presbyterian Church  
1331 Section Street  
Plainfield, Indiana 46168  
Phone: (317) 839-2797

Office Hours: 9:00am-12:00pm, M, W, F  
Email Address: [hopechurch@hopepresplainfield.org](mailto:hopechurch@hopepresplainfield.org)  
Website: [hopepresplainfield.org](http://hopepresplainfield.org)  
Pastor: Gray Marshall



*And while they were there, the time came for her baby to be born. She gave birth to her first child, a son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no lodging available for them.*

Luke 2:6 New Living Translation of the Bible