

# **Bristoletter**

**Newsletter of the United Church of Bristol  
A member congregation of the United Church of Christ**

**United Church of Bristol  
7177 County Road Two  
Bloomfield, NY 14469**

**“God is still speaking”**

Paula Dorn  
Treasurer

Catherine Joseph  
Moderator

**Rev. Thomas (Tim) Hamlin, Pastor   E-mail: [redcedar58@gmail.com](mailto:redcedar58@gmail.com)   Phone: 585-727-2938  
Church School -- during service   Worship -- 10:00 am   Fellowship Hour -- 11:00 am  
<[churchofbristol@gmail.com](mailto:churchofbristol@gmail.com)>   Church phone 585-657-7030   Web: [UnitedChurchofBristolUCC.org](http://UnitedChurchofBristolUCC.org)  
to receive Bristoletter by e-mail, contact [jschrader@cnbank.com](mailto:jschrader@cnbank.com)**

### Those Whom We Hold in Prayer

La Rue, Sally, Cc, Richard, Denise, Uncle Tom, Kali, Kailee, Tim, Lucille, Linda, Josephine, Wendy, Meredith, Kim, Steve, nephew Mike, Kay and Amy, Linda and Bob, Dorothy and family, and all the caregivers. Prayers of safety for the fire fighters. Prayers for Ryan, and for all those who are looking for work. For all those who are traveling by road, air and water, we offer prayers that they arrive safe and happy - Diane and Lance, Kim, Tom, Matt, Vicki and Peter, and all others. Prayers of hope for all those who struggle with the reality of the world as it is, and for the results of the election - bring Your calming and peaceful touch to our world. Prayers of compassion to bring light to those in the darkness. Prayers of thanksgiving for Wendy's holiday joy. Prayers of deep gratitude for the many blessings You bring within us both large and small.

### Deacons Report

Deacons are busy getting prepared for the upcoming holidays. Decorations will be changed out to Christmas, the tree will go up and be decorated with help from the congregation. Christmas gifts of poinsettias will be purchased and delivered to our members who cannot join us in the coming celebrations. November birthday visits are done and December's are set. If you are turning 80 next year, please let us know so we can add you to our list. We promise you will enjoy your visit with us. We are looking forward to new ideas for bringing the community into our church, which will be our goal in the New Year. Wishing everyone Peace,  
The Deacons

### Altar Flower Committee Report

Christmas is coming!! **Time to order poinsettias!!** Country Corners Nursery has been able to offer the same price as last year - \$8.00; with their as usual; no delivery charge!! Cash or checks made out to Country Corners. Sign-up sheets will be in the Fellowship Hall on Nov. 20<sup>th</sup>!! **Last date to order is Dec. 11** to allow us to enjoy the plants on the 18<sup>th</sup> and Christmas Eve. We are being traditional again this year, only red plants. And staying traditional; the congregation is invited to **bring an ornament to decorate the tree on 12/4!** The tree will be in church and lit on 12/3, after 11am on the 4<sup>th</sup> all are welcome to come and add ornaments!! Donut holes & a drink will be ready for our helpers!! Blessings for your Holidays!!

Questions? Diane Bassage 657-6609

### Christian Education Report

Our annual **Children's Holiday Craft Bazaar** will be held on **Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup> at 9am**, with the opportunity to 'spill over' during Sunday school. Crafts for the children to make, Christmas music to enjoy and cookies to frost, decorate and eat! The more the merrier!



## Pastor's Letter

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.”

Matthew 7: 7

“Truly, truly, I say to you, that I am the door of the sheep.”

John 10: 7

I have an electronic card that gives me access to the fire hall in Bloomfield, in order to open up the kitchen for the free meal there every Wednesday. For 2 years I enjoyed the privilege of waving that card in front of the sensor mounted on the outside door and hearing that delicious click that let me in. I was then off and running, starting the stove, unlocking cabinets, and brewing the coffee.

I felt immensely privileged to have this card. But like all things, with time I grew accustomed to this privilege and soon thought nothing of it - until the card malfunctioned. Wave as I might that morning, the outside door remained unimpressed and resolutely locked. Neither prayer nor profanity would avail me. I was shut out, and for a period of a couple weeks I was thrown back upon the mercy of others, needing to wait until someone else came along who was still possessed the magic.

Funny how innocuous a door can seem when you have a key. And how formidable it is when you don't. My own front door on my house is my friend. It renders me and my house secure, and strongly discourages intrusion and theft. But every so often, my lock and I have a falling out – usually when I've locked the door and left the key safely inside! Learning the hard way, I now have a second key carefully hidden in “an undisclosed location.” My door and I are now on much better terms. This time of year, we lean upon our doors - sometimes literally - as they provide a needed barrier between ourselves and the increasingly inhospitable elements. We want them tight and well-sealed. In fact, some of our more modern homes are so tightly sealed against the weather that you might blow out a window if you sneeze. (Not a risk in **MY** house. The inevitable

perforations of a 50 year-old structure allow me to sneeze with abandon!)

A good, strong door is a thing to be prized...when used wisely. However, as with all things, doors can be overused. This time of year, my thoughts naturally turn to classic Christmas stories such as “**A Christmas Carol.**” It wasn't until my 17<sup>th</sup> viewing of the movie that it struck me as odd that Ebenezer Scrooge had deadbolts between his living room and the rest of the house. I can count on one finger the number of living rooms I've seen with such security.

Not that I couldn't have **USED** such security, in years past, when someone waltzed into the room and changed the channel on the TV! But generally such safe-guards seem unnecessary. Of course, without the ominous bolts and latches, Jacob Marley's entrance would have been much less impressive. Locks did enhance the drama. Locks upon doors have their place. I suppose that locks upon our hearts do as well, especially if we've been hurt and refuse to be hurt again. The door to the heart may seem metaphorical and less substantial than a good old-fashioned oak door. But there may be nothing more forbidding, more impenetrable than a locked heart. And that seems to be precisely the door which the Christ-child offers to open.

By all accounts, the baby Jesus didn't even have a house upon which to **hang** a door! In fact, he didn't have a home-town or a home-country. He later said that “foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests...but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” Oddly, the One without a home...is the One who offers home to all. Motel 6 punctuates its ads with the tag line: “We'll leave the light on” – a warm and welcoming image to the weary traveler. Like the tiny child wrapped in cloth, we are all weary travelers of a sort...needing rest and warmth and welcome. This tiny child and his message of deep and everlasting hope will open doors like no magnetic card could ever do...even the door to the very heart of God. This season, when we hear the click, may we walk through...and be blessed.

**Merry Christmas...**

Tim

## Liturgist, Greeters, & Fellowship Hour – October/November 2016

| DATE        | LITURGIST                                    | GREET & FAREWELL                             | FELLOWSHIP HOUR                              |
|-------------|--|--|--|
| December 4  | Mary Ann Strasser                            | Richard & Norma Lyons                        | >> Lance & Diane Bassage <<                  |
| December 11 | John Faulkner                                | Faye Brocklebank & Mary Lynne Parmelee       | ** Bob & Stephanie Drayn **                  |
| December 18 | Diane Bassage                                | Bob & Diane Marcellus                        | Jim & Mary Lou Burgess                       |
| December 25 | Caroling at M. M. Ewing Continuing Care 10am | Caroling at M. M. Ewing Continuing Care 10am | Caroling at M. M. Ewing Continuing Care 10am |
| January 1   | Diane Marcellus                              | Joan Hall & Sheila Hudson                    | >> Pat Pestle & Sally Ess <<                 |
| January 8   | Pat Pestle                                   | Bob & Stephanie Drayn                        | John & Rena Faulkner                         |
| January 15  | Rena Faulkner                                | Pat Pestle & Sally Ess                       | ** Lance & Diane Bassage **                  |
| January 22  | Stephanie Drayn                              | Ellie Babcock & Cathy Joseph                 | Jan Schrader & Edie Thomas                   |
| January 29  | Mary Lynne Parmelee                          | The VanStralens                              | Don & Pat Sanford                            |
| February 5  | Deb Footer                                   | The Babcocks                                 | >> Paula Dorn & Joan Hall <<                 |

- **“Greeters”**: Please try to remember to have one or both of you be a “fareweller” at the end of the service by the front door to wish those people well who may not be staying with us for fellowship hour. Thank you for adding this task and making everyone feel welcome all the time at UCB! Your other duties are to be at the door by 9:20, remember to wear your name tag, ask guests to sign our guestbook, hand out the Sunday bulletins and any other hand-outs, count all attendees and enter the total in the book, take up the collection when called by the Pastor. Headsets are now kept in the Pastor’s office and should be returned there after the service.

-**“Fellowship Hour”**: You will need to provide juice for children and non-coffee drinkers. Pick up the cake if it is **\*\*Cake Sunday\*\***, Pat and Sally order it. The cake is picked up at Wegman’s **catering desk**. Check with Pat or Sally about payment for the cake.

**\*\*** These represent “Birthday Cake Sundays”. If you are new to this, please see Pat or Sally.

**>>** These are “Pot-luck Sundays”. A light snack for fellowship hour is all that is needed on these Sundays. Please, all are welcome to join in for a pot-luck luncheon after our light refreshment during fellowship.

~ Please find your own substitute if you are unable to fulfill your appointed task. THANKS!

~ If you would like to be added to this list, please let Pat or Sally know.

## United Church of Bristol Calendar for December 2016 and January 2017

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>November 26</b> | <b>Boy Scout Eagle Award Ceremony</b> for Noah Van Stralen <b>3pm</b> at UCB  |
| <b>November 27</b> | First Sunday of <b>Advent</b> – <b>HOPE</b>   |
| <b>November 29</b> | Pastor Tim singing with friends <b>10:30am</b> at MM Ewing Continuing Care  |
| <b>December 4</b>  | Second Sunday of <b>Advent</b> - <b>LOVE</b><br><b>Children's Annual Holiday Craft Bazaar – 9am</b><br>Christmas tree decorating – bring an ornament<br>Pot Luck and Holy Communion |
| <b>December 11</b> | Third Sunday of <b>Advent</b> – <b>JOY</b><br><b>Christmas Caroling</b> with Bob Green <b>11:30am</b><br><b>Birthday Cake Sunday</b><br><b>Deacons Meeting 9am</b>                  |
| <b>December 12</b> | <b>Cabinet Meeting 6pm</b>  |
| <b>December 15</b> | <b>Blue Christmas Service of Compassion</b> 7 pm at South Livonia UCC   |
| December 18        | Fourth day of <b>Advent</b> – <b>PEACE</b>  |
| <b>December 24</b> | <b>The Christmas Candlelight Service of Story, Song, and Light - 5pm</b>  |
| <b>December 25</b> | <b>Christmas Caroling</b> with Pastor Tim at M. M. Ewing Continuing Care Center, meet in the lobby at <b>10 am</b>  |
| <b>January 8</b>   | <b>Cabinet Meeting</b> after service<br>Committee reports due   |
| <b>January 29</b>  | <b>Annual Meeting</b> after service   |

### Happy Birthday in December to:

Don Sanford – 12/6  
Carolyn Jenks Odell – 12/7  
Ethan T. DiBiase – 12/7  
Evelyn Wallace – 12/8  
Marie Bennett – 12/9  
Joe Stoltz – 12/15  
Tom Ensman – 12/17  
Carlyn Coe – 12/30

### Happy Birthday in January to:

Priscilla Cratsley – 1/2  
Jack Fagan – 1/3  
Wendy Wheeler – 1/7  
Tyler Chappell – 1/8  
Kim Bolcarovic – 1/23  
Jenna Babcock – 1/24  
Nancy Green – 1/28  
Peter Fletcher – 1/31  
Elizabeth Strasser – 1/31