

# THE VOICE

December 2017



*Glory to God*

IN THE HIGHEST,  
AND ON EARTH

*peace,*

GOOD WILL  
TOWARD MEN.

LUKE 2:14, KJV

*Eastminster Presbyterian Church*

*1315 Abbot Road*

*East Lansing, MI 48823 (517) 337-0893*

*[www.eastminsterchurch.org](http://www.eastminsterchurch.org)*



## Pastor's Keynotes

It has probably not escaped your attention that Christmas is but a few weeks away. Our liturgical season of Advent begins the first Sunday of December, a march of four Sundays that builds in anticipation and celebration of the gift of the Messiah.

A crassly commercial “advent” has long since begun, however. I should be used to it by now, but I’m still startled when I see Christmas ornaments and Halloween costumes displayed simultaneously in store aisles. Likewise, on a recent trip to northern Wisconsin in mid-October, I was taken aback by the sight of evergreen trees being loaded and shipped. If you find yourself wondering why lots of needles are dripping off your Christmas tree, perhaps the reason is it was harvested three months earlier.

Black Friday (an infelicitous term if I ever heard one!) aggressively begins the commercial version of advent. A season proclaiming the dubious importance of excess is loosed upon us. It comes complete with scripture readings and hymns in the form of commercials.

Might I suggest that if we can’t reduce our participation in the market version of Christmas, could we at least increase our participation in the missional aspects of the season? The *Christmas Joy Offering* is one of four denominational mission campaigns supporting education and leadership development at Presbyterian-related racial-ethnic schools and colleges, and support for needy retired church workers.

Or, consider looking through the *Presbyterian Giving Catalog* which lists dozens of ways gifts small and large can make a big difference in the lives of subsistence farmers in Uganda, or provide water filters in Flint, or heating fuel for Syrian refugees, or address any number of needs throughout the world. Copies of the catalog are available in the Green Room, or look up information on the internet at [presbyterianmission.org/specialofferings](http://presbyterianmission.org/specialofferings).

In fact, consider tithing your Christmas spending. Total up what you spend on gifts to your family and friends this season, and give an additional 10% (or more) of that total to the church’s mission programs.

It’s ironic and contradictory how we respond to God’s giving us what we need in the great gift of the Messiah by giving stuff to one another that (often) we don’t need at all. I appreciate Frederick Zydek’s poem *Praying for Stuff*; it puts this whole commercial advent habit in a new perspective.

*Sometimes I forget to consider the lilies of the field which neither toil nor labor for their keep.  
Part of me is always searching for stuff instead of seeking ways to improve the merchandise of  
gratitude and prayer.*

*Some mornings, rather than fall to my knees to give praise, I scan the want ads for stuff.  
Cheap stuff. Stuff for nothing. Stuff enough to crowd out the emptiness I know it brings....*

*...I have urges that want to walk the corridors of divine mysteries but spend my time gathering  
glitter.*

*Once I had a dream. I stepped before the throne of God. He asked only one question: “Did you  
become who you were supposed to be?”*

*“I’m not sure,” I told him. “But when I died, I had so much stuff, it took three days to find me.”*

Meanwhile, I wish you a blessed Christmas, one that fills you with joy, hope, the knowledge of God’s love, and the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ.





## Advent Workshop on Sunday, December 3 Immediately following the worship service

The Advent Workshop has been a beloved tradition of Eastminster Presbyterian Church for several years. Continue this tradition by celebrating the first Sunday of Advent with your Eastminster Presbyterian church family after worship! We'll begin in the Fellowship Hall with delicious food, participate in a mission project, use our creative skills in different ways, listen to beautiful seasonal music, write cards to our home-bound members, and stroll through nativity displays from around the world!

*Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>*

*Christmas Choir Program with Brass Quintet*

*Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup>*

*10:30 a.m. Worship*

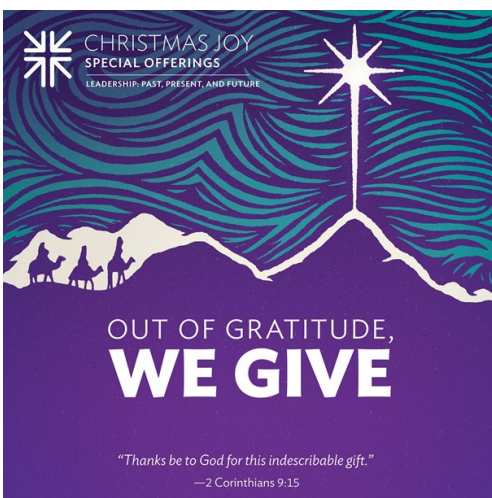
*Christmas Eve*

*7:30 p.m.*

*Candlelight Service - Lessons & Carols*

*Sunday, December 31<sup>st</sup>*

*10:30 a.m. Worship*



## CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING—2017

Presbyterians have long given generously at Christmas to help those who've devoted their lives to the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). On December 24, churches throughout the denomination will again receive the Christmas Joy Offering, providing a way to express gratitude for, and walk with, those who serve the Church.

The receipts of this Special Offering are shared equally by the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions, which provides crucial assistance to PC(USA) church workers and their families in need, and Presbyterian-affiliated racial ethnic schools and colleges, which enable students to develop their gifts and find their calling.

Every congregation's gifts to the Offering are critical to the future of these ministries, especially now when the need for funding is at its height. If you don't already do so, please make the Christmas Joy Offering part of your Advent and Christmas tradition.

**Sunday School**  
**Sunday Mornings - 9:30 - 10:20 a.m.**  
**Children and Youth—Lower Level**



**Ages 4-Grade 2**

***Holy Moly*** is designed to ignite a biblical imagination that lasts a lifetime for young children. Each week participants see a video and use their gifts of observation to become theologians in their own right. It is amazing to get their insight!

**Dec 3** Ezekiel

**Dec 10** Daniel

**Dec 17** Jonah



**Ages 4—2nd Grade (during worship)**

***Children's Worship*** was created to make a special place where children can come to encounter God, to be still with God and to listen to God. It is a place where they come to nurture their spiritual life.

**Dec 3** The Prophets Show the Way to Bethlehem

**Dec 10** Mary and Joseph Show the Way to Bethlehem

**Dec 17** The Shepherds Show the Way to Bethlehem



**THE OPEN DOOR**

**for all ages**

What is the Open Door? It is our new weekly Intergenerational Sunday Morning experience that meets downstairs in fellowship hall beginning at 9:30am. All ages from 3rd grade through adult are invited to participate. A wonderful opportunity to build relationships across age lines and learn and explore our faith in the process. Each week will offer something different!

**ADULT**



**Sundays at 9:30 a.m. - Green Room**

Advent means coming so our Adult Ed theme is: "What's coming?"

**Dec 3** "What's Coming in Christian Education/Formation?" with Neil Myer, Director of Discipleship.

**Dec 10** "What's Coming in Ethical Issues Regarding End-of-Life Decisions?" with Dr. Devan Stahl, Assistant Professor, Center for Ethics and Humanities in the Life Sciences at MSU.

**Dec 17** "What's Coming in Interfaith Relations?" with Rabbi Amy Bigman, Congregation Shaarey Zedek in East Lansing.



### **Haven House Adopt-a-Family 2017**

All the members of our two families have been “adopted.”

Haven House asks that all items get dropped off at Haven House the week of Monday, December 4<sup>th</sup> with the final drop off day being Friday, December 15<sup>th</sup>. Do not drop the gifts off at the church! Wrapping the gifts is up to you, but if you don’t wrap them, we ask that you supply wrapping paper and tape for the family to wrap them. Be sure to label each item with the assigned number/letter located on the top right of your information sheet.

If you’d like to purchase gift cards for clothing or shoes for any child you’ve adopted, that is a great option. If you want to call Haven House for answers to questions about the program, ask for Chequoya at 517-337-2731. Haven House is located at 121 Whitehills Drive, near the East Lansing Post Office.



### **Salvation Army Christmas Food Baskets 2017**

We have committed to providing 20 Christmas dinner food baskets, each including a ham. As of November 27, there were two baskets left.

If you are interested in contributing \$25 toward the cost of the hams (with or without a grocery basket), note that on the sign-up sheet as well, and put your check in the lock box outside of the Church Office, made out to Eastminster Presbyterian Church and noting “Hams” in the memo line.

If you are able to help re-assemble and deliver the baskets to the Salvation Army offices on South Pennsylvania on the morning of Tuesday, December 12, 2017, between 9 and 11 a.m., please note your commitment to help with that on the sign-up sheet as well.

The filled baskets should be delivered to Eastminster on Monday, December 11, between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., or early on Tuesday, December 12, between 9 and 9:45 a.m. If delivering on Monday, remove perishables from your basket and place them in the refrigerators, either on the main floor of the church or in the kitchen in the lower level. If delivering early on Tuesday morning, just leave your filled baskets in the church kitchen on the main floor.

If you sign up to provide a food basket but find you cannot provide one after all, please contact Sam O’Neill before Monday, December 11, at 517-243-2669, so that provisions can be made to fulfill our commitment to the Salvation Army of 20 baskets.



### **Greeter Greetings!**

Thank you to all who have served as greeters this Fall 2017. Greeters are doing a good job and the two-door greeter pattern will continue into 2018. If you would like to greet, and Deacon Barbara Moss is not recruiting you fast enough, please contact Barbara at church, e-mail (bjmoss@juno.com) or cell phone text or voice mail (989.292.0389)

**SPECIAL REQUEST:** Are there two people who would like to be greeters at the EVENING SERVICE Christmas Eve, Sunday, December 24? The Sunday morning service has greeters, but the evening does not. Please let Barbara Moss know, 989.292.0389. Thank you for considering this request. General Notice: Please don’t be surprised to be contacted to serve as a Greeter. Everyone is welcome to be a Greeter. Barbara may contact you at church, by e-mail or phone. Thanks again to all who have helped out already. And thanks in advance to everyone else.



**Presbyterian Women**  
**Bible Study**  
**Tuesday, December 19**  
**11:30 a.m.**

- ♦ The EPC PW circle will meet on **Tuesday, December 19 at 11:30 a.m.** in the Green Room for our annual Christmas luncheon. All are asked to bring a sandwich to share (please bring the sandwich already cut into quarters). Other lunch foods will be supplied, as will drinks.
- ♦ The luncheon will begin with a brief business meeting at 11:30 a.m. to discuss final budget items and any other issues as necessary. If you have any item(s) you would like discussed, please let Suzi Moss know before December 14, 2017.
- ♦ After catching up with friends during lunch, which will begin at 12:00 noon, the Reverend Shirley Paxton will lead the Christmas sing-a-long and also Lesson 4 of "Cloud of Witnesses – In Community with God's Messengers". Please pre-read the lesson and related scriptures.
- ♦ Annual Thank Offering  
Thank you to all who contributed to the 2017 annual thank offering. More information will be in the January 2018 voice.

**2018 Calendar of PW meetings**

Please remember to mark your new 2018 calendars with the following dates:

January 16

February 20

March 20

April 17

May 15 Annual Meeting



Follow Eastminster on **Facebook**. We are under Eastminster Presbyterian Church East Lansing. Updates, reminders, and other information is posted regularly. Stay informed! Please "like", comment or share our posts to ensure they show up regularly in your timeline. When you share our post, it is also a great way to reach out to your family and friends who may be looking for a church home. If the church is closed due to weather, it will be listed on our Facebook page and website.



**Church Women United**  
**of Greater Lansing**  
**Monday, December 11**  
**1:00 p.m.**

Calvary Lutheran Church  
6301 St. Joseph Hwy., Lansing  
Theme: "A Program of Christmas Carols"  
1:00 p.m. Celebration  
Questions? Contact Sandra Hassen  
517-721-1368  
Website: [www.churchwomen.org](http://www.churchwomen.org)



Our "Live Simply" stewardship campaign for 2018 has concluded, but there are still a number of people who have not yet pledged for 2018 and they will be called in December. We have a challenge budget of \$385,000. The final budget for 2018, approved by Session, will be announced at our annual meeting in January. If you would like to pledge and have not yet done so, pledge cards can be found under the names tags in the Narthex.

# OCTOBER 2017 MONTHLY FINANCIALS



RECEIPTS	\$ 27,380.97	ANTICIPATED PLEDGED INCOME	\$ 23,666.67
EXPENSES	\$ 23,270.23	PLEDGED GIVING RECEIVED	\$ 26,820.00
		DIFFERENCE +/-(-)	\$ 3,153.33
ENDING BALANCE	\$ 4,110.74	PLATE OFFERING	\$ 906.00

**ELEVATOR LOAN BALANCE AS OF 11/26/2017 \$ 118,146.20**

PER CAPITA IS \$26.75 - RECEIVED AS OF 11/26/2017 **\$2,002.79**

**GIFTS TO ELEVATOR LOAN FUND AS OF 11/26/2017 \$ 9,760.00**

## SESSION DIGEST— NOVEMBER 2017

- A motion for approval of teachers in the education program: Cindy Nixon, Abby Nixon, Bev Bonning, Brian Heitman, Heather Heitman, Heather Myer, Amanda Lanier, Sam O'Neill, Mary Lou Clifton, Linda Hardenbergh, Matt Phillips, Devan Stahl, Neil Myer, John Temples, Sara Weeden, Ann Bloxom; Rev. Shirley Paxton and Dr. Fred Graham. The motion for approval of the teachers carried.
- The Presbyterian Giving Catalog is available in the Green Room, with many ideas of special offerings that members can help make a big impact, even with a small gift.
- A motion was made to allow for the collection of signatures on political petitions, at the church, however the motion failed.



This year the poinsettias will be limited to a smaller number, but not the memorials and honors that will be acknowledged in print. The amount you give is up to you. Any amounts over the cost of the plants will go in the flower fund to ensure flowers are at every Sunday worship service. To donate please use the form below and leave the completed form and check in the secure drop box outside the office. With much appreciation from your Worship and Music Team.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Your Name(s))

\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount

In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of \_\_\_\_\_



### Many thanks to...

...the following people who gave so generously of their time and effort on behalf of Eastminster for the monthly meal at Advent

House on November 11:

#### Cooks:

Jan Coye  
Barb Dalzell  
Judy Dunn  
Linda Hardenbergh  
Sue Kalvonjian  
Jeff Lapinski  
Mary Ann Merchant  
Cindy Nixon  
Susan Smalley  
John & Trena Thornburg

**Servers:** Abby, Cindy, Matt & Sam Nixon and Jim Robertson



12/2 Rachel Giddings  
12/4 Mary Harvey  
12/4 Shannon Johnston  
12/7 Darlene Bullerdick  
12/10 Emmanuel Yewah  
12/11 George Miller  
12/12 Judy Karandjeff  
12/14 Corey Bloxom  
12/14 Bruce Taggart  
12/15 Terry Graham  
12/19 Anna Phillips  
12/20 Bob Olien  
12/22 Sally Dustan



12/8 Ross & Barbara Lowes  
12/27 Doug & Betty Hall (60<sup>th</sup>)  
12/28 Jim & Nancy Robertson



#### Flicks with Friends **Wed., December 20** **10:00 a.m.**

Our dinner and a movie has changed to movie and lunch on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month. **All persons** are invited. The movie is picked the weekend before and by what is playing the afternoon of that day. An email list has been formed to notify persons who are interested. Our first movie "Sully" was attended by 7 people and the November movie was "The Accountant". Let Barb Stowitts ([barbstow@yahoo.com](mailto:barbstow@yahoo.com)) know if you would like to be included on the movie email list. Lunch is decided by the people attending.



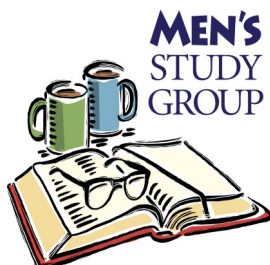
#### Supper Club **Friday, December 1** **@ 6:00 p.m.**

Join us on the **first Friday** of the month for a gathering of good food & fellowship. This month our hosts will be **Mim Bethards** and **Chase & Suzanne Hunt**. Please bring your own table service and a dish to pass. Tea and coffee provided. Come enjoy a casual potluck meal in the Green Room. All are welcome.



#### Midweek Bible Study **Tuesdays @ 1:00 p.m.**

Join us weekly on Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m. in the Green Room. All are welcome.



#### Men's Breakfast Bible Study **Wednesdays @ 7:00 a.m.**

This study group meets every Wednesday at 7:00 a.m. in the Green Room. Continental breakfast is always available.

## Eastminster Page Turners



### Book Club Next Meeting: January 6

All are welcome to join EPC's book club that meets once a month in the Green Room to discuss a book that members have read prior to the meeting. The selections are varied and interesting! We hope you'll join us! [Note: No December meeting]

**Saturday, January 6, 2018 10 a.m.**  
"Evicted - Poverty and Profit in the American City" by Matthew Desmond.

**Saturday, February 3, 2018** - "On Gold Mountain: The 100 Year Odyssey of My Chinese-American Family" by Lisa See.



### Faith & Film

**Will not meet in December.**

**Next gathering: Mon., Jan. 22**



Eastminster has always been a welcoming place to worship. Many current members say they returned and joined because of the warmth they felt on their first visit. Our doors have always been open to everyone. We as a congregation have been proud and, dare we say, boastful about how we are a caring church.

Sadly for all of us, the world is changing. Recent incidents have caused concern among all places of worship. At its November meeting, your session discussed the need to improve church safety. It was decided that three elders should take the lead in an initiative to improve the security of our building. Norm Mackay, Robin Bell and Dave Duryea as well as deacon Heather Myer accepted the task. They will be seeking guidance from law enforcement professionals such as East Lansing Police and Ingham County Sheriff's departments. The initiative will result in adjusting some of what we have done in the past. The goal is to provide a safe place to worship while maintaining an open and welcoming experience for all who attend.

Some changes will be noticed right away while others will be more subtle. Initially you may find doors that used to be open are now locked. People might be posted at entrances. A direct emergency line of communication with police is already in place. There is a plan to replace all exterior door locks with state of the art electronic surveillance equipment. The distribution of building keys will be under tighter control. Other needs will undoubtedly be revealed as we proceed into this new venture.

Unfortunately, current events have deemed these steps to be necessary. This is uncharted territory for all of us. We ask for your understanding as we move forward together in our effort to keep Eastminster a welcoming and safe environment in which to worship the Lord.

Norm Mackay, Elder, Building Team



The sympathy of the congregation is extended to the family and friends of the following members who have died and entered the Church Triumphant: **Abe Leinbach**, October 7, and **Sally Hartley**, November 23. Abe's memorial service was on October 28. A memorial service will be held for Sally Hartley at the House of Prayer in Haslett on Monday, December 4. If anyone will be going to Sally's memorial, please contact her daughter, Mary Ann Cooley (896-2934).



**Gwendolyn Marriane Lewter**, daughter of **Kelly & Julianne Bender Lewter**, received the sacrament of Baptism on October 29.

**Hillary Turner**, daughter of **Jesse & Robin Turner**, married Anthony Bradon on November 11. Hillary always wanted to get married where her Mom and Dad did, 38 years ago!



# DECEMBER 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					<b>1</b> 6:00 p.m. Supper Club	<b>2</b>
<b>3 1st Sunday of Advent</b> 9:30 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Worship <b>Children's Worship</b> 11:30 a.m. Advent Workshop	<b>4</b> 9:00 a.m. Staff Meeting	<b>5</b> 1:00 p.m. Bible Study 7:00 p.m. Bells	<b>6</b> 7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Hope Closet 7:00 p.m. Session 7:00 p.m. UKirk@MSU	<b>7</b> 9:00 a.m. Cultured Purls Knitting 9:30 a.m. Finance/Admin 7:00 p.m. Choir	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 9:45 a.m. Advent House
<b>10 2nd Sunday of Advent</b> 9:30 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Worship <b>Cents-ability Offering</b> <b>Children's Worship</b> 11:30 a.m. Fellowship 11:45 a.m. Deacons	<b>11</b> 9:00 a.m. Staff Meeting	<b>12</b> 10:30 a.m. Worship & Music 1:00 p.m. Bible Study 7:00 p.m. Bells	<b>13</b> 7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Study 7:00 p.m. UKirk@MSU	<b>14</b> 9:00 a.m. Cultured Purls Knitting 7:00 p.m. Choir	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>17 3rd Sunday of Advent</b> 9:30 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Worship <b>Children's Worship</b> 11:30 a.m. Fellowship	<b>18</b> 9:00 a.m. Staff Meeting	<b>19</b> 11:30 a.m. Presbyterian Women 1:00 p.m. Bible Study 7:00 p.m. Bells	<b>20</b> 7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Study 7:00 p.m. UKirk@MSU	<b>21</b> 9:00 a.m. Cultured Purls Knitting 7:00 p.m. Choir	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24 4th Sunday of Advent</b> 10:30 a.m. Worship <b>Children's Worship</b> 11:30 a.m. Fellowship  <b>CHRISTMAS EVE</b> 7:30 p.m. Candlelight Service	<b>25</b>  <b>CHRISTMAS DAY</b> Offices Closed	<b>26</b> 1:00 p.m. Bible Study	<b>27</b> 7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Study 7:00 p.m. UKirk@MSU	<b>28</b> 9:00 a.m. Cultured Purls Knitting	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>31 Communion</b> 10:30 a.m. Worship 11:30 a.m. Fellowship	<b>1</b>  <b>New Year's Day</b> Offices Closed	<b>2</b> 1:00 p.m. Bible Study	<b>3</b> 7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Hope Closet 7:00 p.m. UKirk@MSU	<b>4</b> 9:00 a.m. Cultured Purls Knitting	<b>5</b> 6:00 p.m. Supper Club	<b>6</b>  <b>Eastminster Page Turners</b> 10:00 a.m. Book Club

**EASTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
**1315 Abbot Road, East Lansing, MI 48823**  
**Phone: (517) 337-0893**

**Church Office Hours**  
**Monday – Thursday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Closed Friday**

Interim Pastor.....Rev. Dr. Jeffrey S. O'Neill	revoneill@eastminsterchurch.org
Director of Discipleship.....Neil Myer	neil@eastminsterchurch.org
Adult Choir Director.....Chelsea Berner	berner.chelseann@gmail.com
Bell Choir Director.....Heather Myer	heather.c.myer@gmail.com
Organist.....Tamar Mikeladze	mikeladz@msu.edu
Office Administrator.....Sam O'Neill	office@eastminsterchurch.org
Parish Advisor.....Dr. Fred Graham	
Parish Advisor.....Rev. Shirley Paxton	
Nursery Attendant.....Audri Bello	

CHURCH OFFICERS				
ELDERS		Class	DEACONS	Class
<b>Administration &amp; Finance</b>			<b>Moderator</b>	
David Duryea	339-1404	2020	Heather Myer	2019
Barbara Stowitts	256-3316	2019	<b>Secretary</b>	
<b>Building &amp; Grounds</b>			Barbara Moss	2018
Mike Foster		2020	Sherri Blanchard	2019
Norm Mackay	604-6003	2019	Judy Dunn	2018
<b>Christian Education</b>			Heather Heitman	2020
Beverly Bonning	290-8674	2020	Sue Kalvonjian	2019
Brian Heitman	897-0490	2019	Sue Miller	2018
<b>Mission</b>			Tom Moss	2018
Robin Bell	489-1468	2020	John Temples	2019
Sam O'Neill	243-2669	2018		
<b>Worship &amp; Music</b>				
Terry Graham	332-3418	2018		
Brenda Ramsby	281-2718	2019		
<b>Communications</b>				
Ruth Foster	881-9713	2018		
Susan Smalley	402-1057	2018		

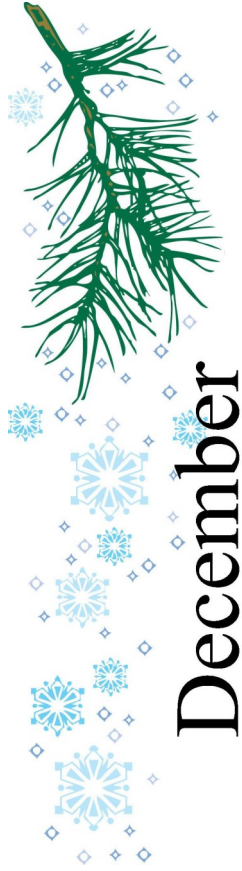


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# December