

Chapel Chimes



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*50 Years of Growing a
Faith That Must Be Shared*

Giving Life to the Word

Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” (Luke 1:38a)

Dear Friends,

Christmas is so often thought of as a time for family and fun. And it *is* that, but it’s also more than that.

Christmas is a time to witness the light of Christ which glows in our midst, particularly in the dark places where grief, heartache, illness, and anxiety can abide. It’s a time of giving thanks for the good news that the light of Christ shines without fail and that God’s love is revealed to us in some very special and very incredible (even incomprehensible) ways.

Christmas is a time of celebrating the very moment in which God breaks into the structures and boundaries of our human plane with an act of divine revelation so profound (and so unlikely!) that it takes the shape of a helpless, vulnerable baby born to a humble family of moderate means.

Christmas is also a time for considering the courage needed to bring the plan of Christ’s incarnation to fruition. It took courage for the Creator to “don” a cloak of human flesh and enter into earth’s history to redeem us from sin’s domain—knowing full well that such an act could only lead to a collision with the powers and principalities of this world. Such an audacious love God has shown us that the Lord would put our need for reclamation ahead of God’s own concern for self!

It also took courage for Mary to willingly say to the Lord’s messenger, “Here am I...let it be with me according to your word.” Mary was invited to be a part of a life-changing event in the history of believers everywhere; but she couldn’t have known what the result of her decision would be. Nothing like this had happened before, and nothing like it would happen again. Yet she was called to serve in holy fashion and she gave her life over to God’s purpose. What a gift! Where would we be if Mary had said “no” and walked away in fear? God would have brought some “Plan B” to life, no doubt, but it would not have been in the form of Jesus of Nazareth.

The Lord calls each of us to serve the God’s purpose as well. While we are not asked to give life to the Christ-child, we *are* asked to *give life to the Word* by keeping the message of Jesus Christ alive and by giving ourselves in service to the Lord as a holy offering. As you prepare your homes for Christmas, I encourage you to prepare your hearts as well. It may take some courage and a leap of faith to do as you are called to do—especially if the outcome of your actions, while quite clear in God’s eyes, may seem a bit fuzzy in your eyes. But God will give you spiritual eyes to witness the claim of the Living Word upon your soul and the faith to fulfill your calling as well.

There is a story about a gypsy family that was part of a traveling circus in Poland during World War II, a time when many were being persecuted by the Nazis: Jews, gays, the disabled, and gypsies. During one of the family’s acts, the teenage daughter would jump from a high wire with no net below and her father would catch her. One morning, the father went out early and the young girl was alone in the apartment. A stranger came to the door with a message from her father. The Nazis had come to town and they had to escape. Since it was too dangerous for her father to return by daylight, he would stand at the northwest corner of the apartment building at 2 a.m. and she was to jump into his arms. He would catch her. The messenger left and the young girl was alone and confused. Could she believe the stranger? Were the instructions really from her father or was someone trying to trick her? Which was the northwest corner of the building, anyway, and whom could she ask? The day went on and her father didn’t

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return, but she received word that the Nazis had, indeed, come to town. Having only the word of her father's promise, she went to what she thought was the northwest corner of the building at the time that had been foretold and she whispered into the darkness: "Father, are you there?" She heard no answer. But she jumped. And her father caught her.

We, too, have a Father's promise: that Christ has been revealed to us in holy love and that this love makes all things new. So while it may take some courage to share this good news with others, even at Christmas, you can be assured that God *will* give us voices with which to speak and hands with which to serve, in Christ's holy name.

May it be with us according to God's word,

Pastor Rhonda

Music News

Christmas Eve Services

(All services will include candle lighting)



- **5:00 p.m. Family Service** — an informal, family-friendly worship service with Pastor Rhonda delivering a Christmas Message for children. Music will be provided by the Children's vocal and chime choirs.
- **7:00 p.m. Festival of Lessons and Carols** — a service featuring traditional readings from scripture with familiar carols and more! Come and listen to the story of salvation as it unfolds in scripture and song with music provided by the Chapel Lane Choirs and Musicians.
- **10:00 p.m. Candlelight Communion Service** — a service of Holy Communion with a Christmas message from Pastor Rhonda and a variety of musical offerings with instruments and singing.

We hope to see you on Christmas Eve!

Christmas Concert "Carols by Candlelight" December 18, 2011.

Hopefully your Family Christmas Traditions will include attending our Annual "Carols by Candlelight" Christmas Concert on **December 18th at 7:00 p.m.** This concert will feature all of the sights and sounds of Christmas as all of the Chapel Lane choirs participate in this festive evening. Please be our guest and attend the reception immediately following the concert and invite your friends and neighbors!

Chancel Choir –

A reminder that there is a 10:00 a.m. rehearsal on Saturday, December 17 to prepare for the "Carols by Candlelight" concert. All musicians should be present!

Christian Education Happenings

Christmas Pageant

Mark your calendars now! Chapel Lane will present the Church School Christmas Pageant, "The Gifts of Christmas" by Karen H. Whiting, on Sunday, December 11. Parts are available for all children age 3 through sixth grade. There are speaking and non-speaking roles. Rehearsals will be during the Sunday School hour on December 4 and 11, and on December 10 from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon. This rehearsal will be followed by a pizza lunch. We could use 2 or 3 adults or teens who are willing to help out "backstage." Contact Chrissy Westbury at 839-0198 or education@chapellane.org if you are interested.

Christmas Pageant Mission Project

Once again, the children are undertaking a mission project to go along with the Christmas pageant. As we prepare for Christ's birth, we would like to help families in our community celebrate their children's birthdays. The Midland County Emergency Food Pantry Network collects birthday kits for families in need. The children will be collecting birthday kits on Sunday, December 11 as they present this year's Christmas pageant.

A complete list of the items needed for these kits can be found on page 3

Kits should include:



- a boxed cake mix
- a can of frosting
- a box of small birthday candles
- a package of party favors (can be found at the dollar store, or the stationery dept. of Kroger, Meijer, Wal-Mart, K-Mart)

Kits may also include birthday napkins and/or plates, but this is optional. Donations for the Birthday Kit drive may include parts of the kits or entire kits. There will be a box to collect these donations in the gathering area on Sunday, December 12. If you wish to donate, but will not be at church that morning, please contact Chrissy Westbury for other arrangements.

Children's Fellowship –

Christmas Party – December 10, 12:00 p.m.– 2:00 p.m.

Calling all children!! On December 10, after the Christmas Pageant rehearsal, plan to stick around to eat pizza, play games, and decorate Christmas cookies. Bring a small gift (under \$5) for a gift exchange game. Please let Ms. Chrissy know if you plan to attend.

Sunday Christian Education Hour

All classes meet on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. Contact Chrissy Westbury, Director of Christian Education, for more information on any of the following classes. All are welcome!

Meeting in the Activity Room

Bible Explorers (Preschool and Kindergarten Sunday School Class)

The R.O.C.K. Rotational Sunday School for 1 - 6 grade

These classes are currently studying the stories of the prophet Elijah through Cooking, Art, and Games.

Christmas pageant rehearsals will be held on December 4 and 11.

Meeting in the Youth Room

Confirmation Class for grades 7 and 8

Meeting in the Library

Youth Forum for 9– 12 graders. Taught by Harry White, this class encourages teens to look at issues that are important to them with a faith perspective.

Meeting in the Parlor

“God in America,” taught by Dr. Paul Teed, a history professor at SVSU, is an adult Sunday School class using the PBS series which studies the tumultuous 400 year history of the intersection of religion and public life in America.

Thursday Afternoon Bible Study

Our Thursday Bible Study meets at 1:00 p.m. in the Church parlor. We will continue to study the **Gospel according to Matthew** throughout the month of December. Please join us! (Please note: there will be **No Bible Study** 12/29.)

Holiday Schedule

Just a reminder that there will be no Sunday morning Christian Education classes on December 25 or January 1 due to the holidays.

The 4th Monday Book Club will not meet in December.

Youth Group

Adopt-a-Family

The Youth Group will again adopt a local family in order to make their Christmas a little brighter! There will be a poster in the foyer with our family's wish list. Please sign up to help us make sure this family has a Christmas to remember!

December 3

Christmas Tree Hunt & Adopt-a-Family Shopping

11:00 p.m.- 4:00 p.m. - Meet at the church

We will meet at the church, then head out to a local tree farm to choose a live tree for the church gathering space. After setting it up and grabbing lunch, we will head to the mall to shop for our Adopt-a-Family. Then we'll go back to church, decorate the tree and wrap presents. Ms. Chrissy will bring Christmas cookies, hot chocolate, and cider!

December 16

Beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Youth Christmas Party for 6 – 12 grade at the church!

The party will involve dinner, caroling, games, and a gift exchange. Watch for more details coming soon.

Expense and Income through October 2011

For the first month since May, our income exceeded expense. This increase is consistent with our yearly pattern – low income June – September and higher income the balance of the year. We are still approximately \$19,000 below budgeted income for the year. The boards continue to be within their budgets for expenses. The available cash reserve is now at \$50,817.

		<u>Income</u>		
		YTD	YTD	% of
	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Plan</u>	<u>Plan</u>
Pledge Income	\$ 20,702	\$ 198,397	\$ 217,529	91%
Loose Offering	\$ 1,903	\$ 10,246	\$ 13,333	77%
Other Income	\$ 1,564	\$ 10,049	\$ 6,740	149%
Total Income	\$ 24,169	\$ 218,691	\$ 237,602	92%
		<u>Expense</u>		
Total Expense	\$ 21,658	\$ 243,331	\$ 247,848	98%

Summary of November Stated Session Meeting

The Session met on November 8, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the Chapel Lane parlor. In addition to receiving the regular monthly reports from the clerk, finance and other boards, the session highlights are as follows:

- *Received* a report on the PC(USA) New Form of Government.
- *Reported* that during the 10:45 a.m. worship service on October 23, 2011, the following new church members were presented to the Chapel Lane congregation: Howard (Butch) and Judy Brauer, Sara Clark, William (Bill) Coats and Sally Ginter-Coats, Carol Rowe, and Paula Ulmer.
- *Approved* that a four-drawer fireproof file cabinet be purchased to hold the church's Register and Permanent Minutes books, as well as other important church records.
- *Reported* by Nominating Committee co-chairs, Ernie Caldwell and Dan Veresh, the slate of proposed church officers and Board members for 2012.
- *Approved* that a Special Congregational Meeting be called for Sunday, November 20, immediately following the 10:45 a.m. worship service. The purpose of the meeting will be to receive the report of the Nominating Committee and to elect officers and Board members for service to begin in January 2012.
- *Approved* that the Wedding Consultant title be changed to Pastor's Wedding Assistant, and that the fee be raised to \$75.00.
- *Approved* that communion be served during the Christmas Sunday morning worship service.
- *Approved* that the offering received at the "Carols by Candlelight" concert on December 18 be used for the Summer Camp Scholarship Fund.

The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 10:10 p.m. The next stated meeting will be December 13, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the church parlor.

Suz Miller

Clerk of Session

Stewardship Drive – Growing a Faith that Must be Shared

Our stewardship drive theme this year has been Chapel Lane’s vision – Growing a Faith that Must be Shared. During the fall we have heard from our Church Boards about many opportunities we have to grow our personal faith and how that is shared with ourselves and throughout the community and beyond. It is our pledge of support that enables these many ministries to do God’s work here at Chapel Lane.

Consecration of our gifts and pledges was held November 13th with an update of campaign results announced November 20 at the Thanksgiving dinner. If you missed this service and would like to be part of this year’s stewardship campaign please know that we would love to hear from you. Pledges can be received at any time. Also, if anyone does not have a pledge card, they are available in the kiosk in the Foyer under the Membership and Growth section, or you can stop by the office and request one.

Completed cards may be turned in to the office, placed in the offering plate on Sunday morning (envelopes are available in the kiosk) or mailed directly to our Financial Secretary, Erlene Carmody. Her address is 2007 Wilmington, Midland, MI 48642.

If you do not wish to complete a commitment card, but would like to have envelopes for your use or if you have other questions about how we handle giving here at Chapel Lane please contact Erlene.

Thank you to everyone for your pledge and we ask for your prayers and guidance on the use of these gifts so we can continue to



Grow a Faith that Must be Shared.

Please Note

Please Note

Please note there will be one worship service only – at 10:45 a.m. – on the four Sundays of December, plus January 1. This decision to have no 8:30 service on these dates was based on a variety of factors including the Children’s Program on December 11; Carols by Candlelight the evening of December 18; and (unfortunately) anticipated low attendance on December 25 (following the three services on Christmas Eve) and January 1.

Please note, also, communion will be served on December 4, December 25, and January 1, plus on Wednesday evening, December 7 and January 4, at 7:00 p.m.

10:45 Service Worship Leaders:

Dec. 4: Fran Martin
Dec. 11: Ronald Hynds
Dec. 18: Paul Schmidt
Dec. 24 at 10:00 p.m.: Fran Martin
Dec. 25: Sally Ann Sutton

December Ushering Schedule

Dec. 4: Tom and Linda Kennedy, Shirley McCutcheon, Kelly Buell
Dec. 11: Holly Roenicke, Butch Brauer, Kate and Bob Mass
Dec. 18: John and Carol Ostergren, Tom and Linda Kennedy
Dec. 24: 5:00 Dan Veresh, Sarah Clark, Kate and Bob Mass
7:00 Vickie Irving, Mike and Cathy Starch
10:00 Linda Langrill, Mike Woodley, David and Christina Druskins
Dec. 25: Fran and Betty Martin, Kate and Bob Mass
Dec. 18: Carols by Candlelight: Kerry Buell, Carol Rowe, Mike and Cathy Starch

Office Closed

The Church office will be closed on December 26 in observance of Christmas holiday and on December 30 and January 2 in observance of the New Year's holiday.

Newsletter Deadline

Please note that the newsletter deadline for the January newsletter has been moved up to the second Wednesday of the month, Wednesday, December 14 (this is just for the January Newsletter, future newsletter deadlines will retain the same deadline of the third Wednesday of every month).

Deacons' Doings

Highlights of the Deacons' October Meeting

The Board of Deacons held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, October 25, 2011, in the church library. The highlights of the meeting are as follows:

1. The total Peacemaking offering was \$654.00. The 25% portion (\$163.50) retained by our congregation was designated for Shelterhouse of Midland.
2. The Toni and Trish House in Fisherville was designated as the recipient of the offering from the 2011 Christmas Eve services. This home is a residence for the terminally ill, with no charge to the guests.
3. Midland Area Homes is the recipient of the 4Q Emergency Relief of \$500, with the money designated for a local family who needs shingles for their leaking house roof. The family was recommended by Midland Area Homes; the roof will be shingled by Habitat for Humanity with no charge for the labor.
4. Pastor Rhonda and Beverly Moyer serve communion to 5-7 homebound church families each month. Pictures are being taken for the church directory during these visits.
5. The Mobile Food Pantry (MFP) served 245 families (740 individuals) at West Midland Family Center on October 12, 2011. The next MFP is in January 2012 at the Midland Civic Arena.
6. Four prayer shawls have been made for this ministry to comfort the seriously ill.
7. Cookies will be mailed to 19 college students this week.
8. A proposed Deacon budget for 2012 was prepared for submission to Session.
9. Disbursements during the period of September 23, 2011, through October 21, 2011 were: \$375 for 4Q11 Emergency Food Pantry Network; \$250 for 4Q11 Midland Area Homes; \$132 for stamps for card mailing ministry; \$225 to Presbytery of Lake Huron for 2-Coins-A-Meal (\$109.79 for August and \$115.21 for September); \$600 for Congregational Care of two families; \$915 for Pastor Emergency Fund (PEF) expenses from the budget account and \$297.85 for PEF expenses from the equity account; and \$12.72 for Easter cards for card mailing ministry.

The next meeting of the Board of Deacons will be on Tuesday, December 13, 2011. The Board will meet first with Session at 7:00 p.m. There is no meeting in November; the Share Fair is on November 20, 2011.

Christmas Eve Offering

At its October meeting, the Board of Deacons designated the Toni and Trish House as the recipient of the offerings of this year's Christmas Eve worship services. The House, located in Fisherville, is a residence for the care of the terminally ill from the Tri-City area. Since there is no charge to the guests, the operating expenses are met with donations from individuals, churches, businesses, and other local groups.

4Q Emergency Relief to Midland Area Homes

At its October meeting, the Board of Deacons voted to send the 4Q Emergency Relief of \$500 to Midland Area Homes to meet a specific need of a local family. The family needs shingles for the replacement of its leaking roof. Habitat for Humanity will be installing the roof at no cost for labor. The total cost of the shingles was met by several sources. We are grateful for such partnership opportunities.

Presbytery Meeting at Memorial

The Presbytery of Lake Huron (our presbytery) will meet at Memorial, here in Midland, on December 6, starting at 9:30. You are encouraged to stop in, if only for part of the meeting. Advent worship will be led by our neighboring pastor, the Rev. Matt Schramm, from Bay City Westminster. (Rumor has it that, along with others, the Rev. Dave Myers will be performing in a worship band!)

The December presbytery meeting is traditionally a special one, with the installation of the presbytery Moderator and Vice Moderator for the following year. Another aspect of the meeting will be an educational segment on how the presbytery budget is financed that will explain per capita and shared mission dollars, sometimes a confusing concept. Please plan to attend!

T'is the night before Christmas and what will you give?

*As you open presents on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day
what will you appreciate,
what will you re-gift,
what will you receive but not need or want?*



What can you give and also receive during the coming year?

The gift of warmth – *The pastor's fund is used to help subsidize utility bills.
The clients continue to have warmth in their shelter.
Feel that warmth in your heart as you contemplate those you will assist.*

The gift of shelter – *The pastor's fund is used to help with rent and mortgage payments.
Mary and Joseph found no room in the inn but made do with a stable.
Feel that security knowing that your family has a place to sleep.*

The gift of healing – *The pastor's fund is used to help with prescriptions.
Just as Jesus healed the sick, medicines help alleviate illness.
Feel that comfort of knowing that healing is underway.*

The gift of transportation – *The pastor's fund is used to help with gas for transportation
to work and medical appointments.
Feel that sense of providing for essential needs.*

The gift of meeting needs --
Gifts that we can only begin to fathom for needs we can only imagine.

Christmas Eve Offerings will be designated for our Pastor's Benevolence Fund which is use to provide emergency support of basic needs for individuals and their families all through the year.

A Question For All Women: Is Your Life Balanced?

If your answer is NO, then do we have a time for you!*

**SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, January 14, 2012
9:30 to 2 p.m.**

Join Pastor Rhonda as we learn, discuss, and plan how our lives can be more in balance. Take some time for yourself as we begin a new year. We'll look at several different aspects of balance and learn how relying on God can help you find more balance in your life. You'll explore the truth about personal life balance, recognize when you are juggling too many balls in the air, learn how to adapt to change, and discover that living a balanced life with God is about living beyond your limits...and soaring like eagles! This day is just the start of a new beginning for a new year. Decide now to make the time so you can take time. Watch for more details in the January newsletter and upcoming bulletins.

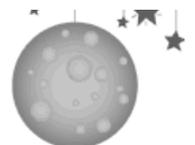


**MAKE TIME
TAKE TIME**

****If your answer is YES, join us and share your story
MAKE THIS A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION!***

Looking Ahead: January Fun In Faith Adult Activity

Save Saturday evening, January 21 for a program at Delta College Planetarium in Bay City. The program begins at 7:00 p.m. so we will leave the church parking lot by 6:30. More information will be provided in the January issue of Chapel Chimes.



Fun In Faith

Join the Fun in Faith adult fellowship group at the BOAR'S HEAD FESTIVAL at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Saginaw on Sunday afternoon, December 3. It is an awe-inspiring Christmas program involving a cast of hundreds with music, beautiful costumes and pageantry.

We will gather in the parking lot to form carpools and leave no later than 2:15. The program begins at 3:45, but we need to get to the church early to get a seat. Directions to the church will be provided. Address of Bethlehem Lutheran Church is 808 Weiss St.

After the program, we will stop for dinner at Riverside Family Restaurant in Freeland.

W.O.W.



Don't miss the opportunity to be wowed at Worship On Wednesdays. The new services will commence on Wednesday, **November 30, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.** The new service will rotate a series of four different worship formats on the first through fourth Wednesdays of every month.

Come check it out and experience another way to commune with your God. The first Wednesday of the month will be a more meditative style worship in the Taize manner with instrumentalists, a small choral group and communion by intinction. The second Wednesday will be a praise and worship style service with contemporary music and an alternative means of presenting the message through drama, dance or other arts. The third Wednesday will be a service of wholeness and healing. Finally, the fourth Wednesday, and the format that will kick off the first service on November 30 will be an intergenerational service with hands on experience of the message. Take advantage of this mid-week opportunity to reconnect and rejuvenate, and if you feel so moved, to use your own gifts and talents to participate in any one of the monthly service formats!

Quotes to Note:



“And there were shepherds living out in the fields near by, keeping watch over their flocks by 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 Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”



“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 2:8-12; 13-14

“Go, and the Lord be with thee.” 1 Samuel, 17:37

“Christmas, children, is not a date. It is a state of mind.” Mary Ellen Chase

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.” Jeremiah 29:11

Check It Out

What's the Least I can Believe and Still Be a Christian? (A Guide to What Matters Most)

by Martin Thielen

Author Thielen says it's okay to question commonly-held Christian beliefs. He has compiled a list of ten things Christians need to believe, and ten things they don't, in order to "qualify" as Christians. This lively book will enlighten and comfort you as you seek a faithful stance.

Sue Lane
Librarian

Afternoon Ladies' Circle



The afternoon ladies' circle will have its fourth study of the 2011-2012 season on Tuesday, December 13, in the church library. We will meet from 1:00pm to 2:30pm. This lesson focuses on the fourth beatitude in Matthew. (Blessed are the hungry...) Please join us! Questions? Please call Sally Ann Sutton at 835-2428.

Birthdays



2 Sally Ginter-Coats
10 Christine Down
12 Jennifer Hynds
15 Ingrid Schwartz
17 Jacob Kristal
19 Karen White
22 Nancy Ott
22 Ann Dull
26 Julian Longlet
31 Joshua Cull
31 Brad Martin

Presbyterian Women

AN INVITATION TO ALL OF THE WOMEN OF CHAPEL LANE!

WHAT: A Christmas Devotions and Dessert Party

WHEN: Monday evening, December 12, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.

WHERE: Chapel Lane Presbyterian Church

WHO: The women of Chapel Lane and their friends

WHY: A time to enjoy a holiday program with the women of Chapel Lane.

The evening will include an inspirational program, music, and a delicious dessert buffet.

Many of your friends will be sharing their talents for all of us to enjoy.

Please sign up on the Presbyterian Women bulletin board in the foyer.

Your PW board is looking forward to sharing this evening program with you as we approach the birthday of Jesus Christ.

Prayer Concerns for the month of December

Changes are underlined below. No changes in the missionary listing.

For All Our Military and Law Enforcement Personnel, especially:

All Chaplains; Eric Arrants, Fort Leonard Wood, Army basic training, grandson of Vander Wouldes; Parker Buell, Qalat, Afghanistan; Timm Dopp, Afghanistan; Cory King, Fort Knox; Timothy, MaryLouise & Larry Adams' grandson; Ray Nelson, police officer and Chris Gagne, Secret Service agent, Ida Nelson's son and grandson; Stephen Papesh, returned from Afghanistan in November 15th to Fort Hood, Texas; Dustin Risk, Fort Campbell, Susan Hillman's nephew; Chief Martin Thompson, USN, Vickie Irving's son; Ben Weymouth, Vander Woude's grandson in Coast Guard

Chapel Lane Presbyterian Church
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December
2011



January newsletter deadline — **Wednesday, December 14**

Newsletter e-mail address — newsletter@chapellane.org