

SP&SA UPDATE

December 2012

Passion for Christmas

K Karpen

There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth passion among the nations. Luke 21:25

The other day a teenager walked into her apartment, tossed off her coat, and announced, "I'm bored." Her nearby sibling tried to explain to her that the only possible explanation for being bored in New York City is that you're boring. That didn't help very much.

When Jesus said, "I have come that they might have life, and have it in abundance," he didn't mean we'd have a lot of stuff. He meant we'd have a lot of life. A life full of Spirit. He meant we'd have a lot of passion!

Abundance comes from two Latin words which mean "to rise in waves," or "to overflow". Jesus wants a life for us that rises in waves! That overflows with passion! That's his purpose in life. That's the reason for his birth. That's the reason for the incarnation; to be the incarnation of a passionate God. To embody God's passion for us. And to teach us to have that passion for each other. To have that passion for life!

It's God's hope and desire for us to be passionate about our lives. Most of us are granted a handful of decades to spend here. It's enough. It's abundant.

There is plenty of time for passion. But there's no time to be bored!

All I really want for Christmas is passion!

ADVENT

AT ST. PAUL & ST. ANDREW

Sunday, December 2 ADVENT I
11:00 Advent Communion
12:45 Holiday Gift Sale

Wednesday, December 5
7:15 Advent Vespers

Saturday, December 8
1:30 Hanging of the Greens

Sunday, December 9 ADVENT II
11:00 Christmas Pageant

Wednesday, December 12
7:15 Advent Vespers

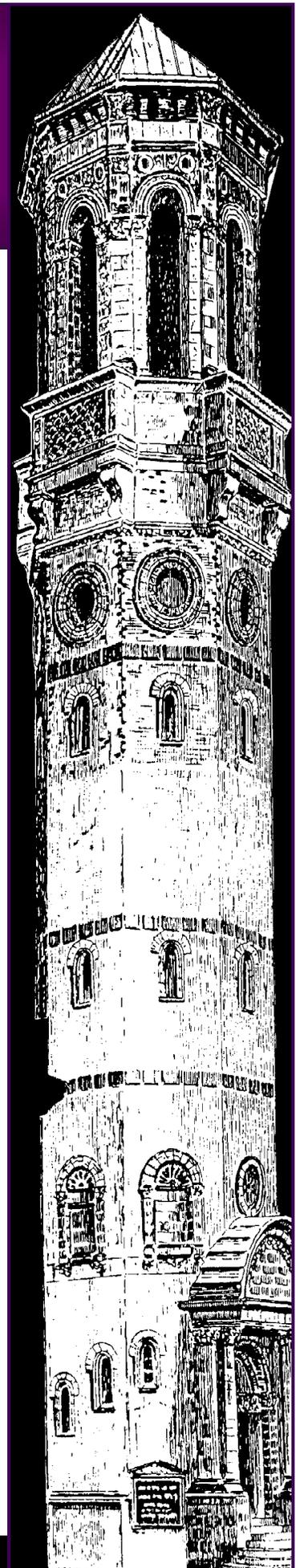
Thursday, December 13
7:30 A Holiday-ish Concert with Suzzy & Maggie Roche

Sunday, December 16 ADVENT III
11:00 Service of Lessons & Carols
5:00 Caroling at St. Luke's Hospital
114th & Amsterdam

Wednesday, December 19
7:15 Advent Vespers
8:00 Caroling at the Parsonage

Sunday, December 23 ADVENT IV
11:00 Advent Worship

Monday, December 24 CHRISTMAS EVE
7:00 Family Service
8:00 Open House at the Parsonage
10:45 Candlelight Service



MEET OUR NEW COVENANT MISSIONARY, HILLARY TAYLOR

Hello SPSA! I would like to introduce our new covenant missionary, Hillary Taylor. Some of you may remember Hillary from July when she spoke to the congregation along with her fellow young adult missionaries. Hillary is from South



Carolina where she attends Shandon UMC in Columbia, the church of former SPSA-er Rev. Julie Songer Belman. Below is a letter to SPSA from Hillary, who has been in South Africa for three weeks now! Hillary will spend the next 18 months there and then finish her service in the US.

Included is Hillary's email and blog address. Feel free to follow along on her blog to learn more about her adventures, or just email her to say hello and show your support. You can read more about her on her Global Ministries bio page here: <http://www.umcmission.org/Explore-Our-Work/Missionaries-in-Service/Missionary-Profiles/Taylor-Hillary>

Global Ministries missionaries do not have to raise salary support prior to leaving for service and or raise their salary once serving, but Global Ministries must raise around 30% of each missionary's salary through The Advance, the accountable and designated giving arm of The United Methodist Church. When donating through The Advance 100% of your gift will go to the mission and ministry you choose, which in this case would be the entire missionary community in honor of Hillary Taylor. If you would like to support Hillary and her fellow missionaries, you can donate through the link at the bottom of her bio page. -- Amanda Mountain

Dear Members of SPSA,



Greetings to you from Pietermaritzburg, Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa! For those of you who don't know me or didn't get a chance to meet me back in July, my name is Hillary Taylor and I am a Mission Intern from Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church. For the next three years, I will be serving as a young adult missionary, with half of my time in South Africa and the other half in the U.S.

While I never anticipated becoming a United Methodist missionary, I have felt a call to ministry ever since I was a teenager, largely due to a warm, inviting home congregation (much like your congregation). When I was 13, my mother lost custody of my two younger sisters and me because of alcoholism and a violent second marriage. Thankfully, I went to live with my father and stepmother, who insisted that if she was to become a part of my family, we would join her church (Shandon UMC) so that we would grow up in a community promoting the idea that a life connected to God and to one another is the most meaningful life there is. And that's just what happened. When I moved from my mother's house, it was Shandon UMC that provided space for us to reformulate what it meant to be a blended family. The congregation helped me foster a passion for service, social justice, and providing space for those in need.

Because of their support today, I am answering a call to ministry as a Mission Intern, and later as a local pastor in the

South Carolina Conference. As a mission intern, I am serving as the Field Education and Ministry Coordinator for Seth Mokitimi Methodist Seminary (SMMS), the only Methodist seminary in Southern Africa for six countries. My job involves going out to field education placements with seminarians. As they serve people with HIV/AIDS, orphans, refugees, people with various physical/mental disabilities, prisoners, and hospital/hospice patients, I journey alongside them, helping them to reflect and process what it means to be in ministry with people of various different identities and circumstances.

I've been in South Africa for three weeks, and slowly but surely, things are beginning to gain a sense of normalcy. The seminary grounds are absolutely gorgeous. I live in one of the seminary-owned apartment complexes. Every morning, people from all ethnic backgrounds (including myself) ride the bus to the seminary for 8 a.m. worship in Christ the Servant Chapel. The worship experience is one that involves all ethnicities and languages: Xhosa, Zulu, Afrikaans, Swazi, Sotho, Tswana, etc. Everybody sings each other's language, and even the most talented of Broadway stars would be astounded by how well all of these students can harmonize!

So far, I've visited six of the 13 agencies with which we work: a hospice center, a school for children with learning differences (e.g., Autism), a home for severely disabled children, an HIV/AIDS orphanage, a Mental Hospital, and a community program for people living with HIV/AIDS that includes house visits, food parcel deliveries, and a community garden. I've also helped to grade workbooks that seminarians fill out to spiritually reflect their field education experiences. Despite the many hours of grading, the whole process has been lots of fun! I've really loved reading the reflections of the seminarians, how they've grown in their understanding of ministering to those marginalized by society. Some big changes are coming to the FEM program, but I feel confident that the program will always be an open space for transformation in Christ!

I pray as my service continues that I will be able to support you with prayers and petitions as you continue to support me. SPSA was the first church to hear my story as an official missionary, and I am excited to continue my journey alongside you as we strive to create a world where "Open Hearts, Open Minds, and Open Doors" becomes a reality for all of God's Children. If you are interested in following my journey, you can reach me by e-mail contacting spsa or follow my blog at <https://therebemethodtomadness.wordpress.com>. I would love to connect you even more to the work that God is already doing in the world!

Thank you again, SPSA, for all of your support thus far! I look forward to being in communication with you now and in the future! As we say here at SMMS, "May the Grace of Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all now and forevermore!"

Paz,
Hillary Taylor

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[Therebemethodtomadness.wordpress.com](https://therebemethodtomadness.wordpress.com)



JOIN UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

December 2 Christmas Sale

By Christie House, President

December 2 during coffee hour the UMW will host a fair-trade Christmas sale. Come and buy, and give a double gift back to the artisans and coops that make the gifts and UMCOR, which receives a portion of the sales.

The last meeting of 2012 will take place in the parlor after church on December 9. We will celebrate the year, finalize the budget and officers for next year, take care of the pledge, and fellowship together.

Coming up January 13 we will kick off the year with the annual UMW luncheon. And in February, UMW New York Conference president Susan Kim will join us for

UMW Day, February 10. The second half of our Haiti study, led by Anele Heiges, will continue after church on February 24. Come join us.



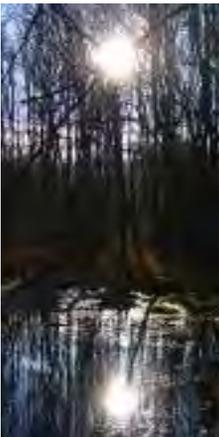
SPIRITUAL CORNER: **Waiting & Words**

By Barbara Wheeler-Bride

Welcome to Advent! This month is a countdown to Christmas – four weeks of waiting for the birth of Jesus, for the entrance of God’s gift of love in our lives. As Christmas music plays and Christmas decorations go up (ok, this has probably happened well before Advent!), we in the Church spend this month preparing our hearts to welcome God’s love into the world.

This year, take your cue from the prophets whose readings we’ll explore in December– Jeremiah, Malachi, Zephaniah, and Micah – and look ahead to the promises of God’s presence in our lives. God is sending love to the world to live, breathe, and walk among us. That’s pretty exciting!

Each week, read the messages from the prophets and think about the words and phrases they use to describe Jesus and God’s love:



- Week One – Jeremiah 33:14-16
- Week Two – Malachi 3:1-4
- Week Three – Zephaniah 3:14-20
- Week Four – Micah 5:2-5a

What message does God have for you in these prophecies?

If you’d like to contribute to the “Spiritual Corner” contact Barbara Wheeler or spsa.

SHARING OUR SECRET ON ELECTION DAY !

By Liz Schoen Swavola

On Election Day, thousands of New Yorkers cast their votes at SPSA. Some have voted here for years. Some were reassigned after Sandy ravaged their neighborhoods. Others sought refuge from standing in long lines in the cold at their usual polling sites. All were greeted with a hot cup of coffee or tea, homemade goodies, and the smiling faces of SPSA volunteers.

More than thirty-five volunteers generously donated their time and their kindness, many for several hours. Young adults directed voters as they entered the building. Youth escorted those with questions to nearby poll workers and helped voters to look up their districts on their smartphones. SPSA members and friends directed voters into the sanctuary, showed them where to sit, and patiently answered the million-dollar question: "How long will I have to wait?"

Despite the potential for confusion and disorder, SPSA contributed friendly and welcoming organization. Voters were delighted to have free snacks, a warm place to sit while they waited, and

kind people to answer their questions. When one voter asked to speak with those in charge, she remarked that this was the most pleasant voting experience she had ever had. She was not the only one whose day was brightened.

To anyone familiar with SPSA, it wouldn't be surprising to hear such positive feedback, but as we have said in the past, we must share our secret with our neighbors and the greater community. On Election Day, we did just that.



Some of our Election Day volunteers.



Above: Hurricane Sandy blew away our retreat plans, so instead we gathered in the parsonage. 5000 of our neighbors came to SPSA to cast votes in the Presidential elections.

Left: Rev. Richard Rice and Daisy Khan address the Interfaith Story Feast.

Below: from left, SPSAers Susan Marchand, Annah Heckman, Shirley Struchen, Jo Karpen, Erna Daniel, Dorothy O'Hanlon, Dahlia Bender, Fatima Bae and Marybeth Murphy produce 171 pies for hungry New Yorkers! Thank you to Don Sofer and Lucille Pagano for donating the supplies!



FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Update On Our Financial Situation

As of the end of October we are facing a daunting but not defeating \$78,000 deficit. This is caused by pledges falling behind (common for this time of year) and the loss of one anticipated space use partner. We are reducing expenses as much as possible. We need your help to make up the difference!

1. Please catch up on your pledge, if you have made one for 2012. We could cut the deficit in half just by catching up!
2. If you have not pledged this year, we really need your support. Checks can be made out to St Paul and St Andrew and dropped in the offering plate or mailed to the office.
3. We have a special fundraising opportunity in December! Please buy a ticket (and get someone to come with you) to the December 13 concert, "Suzzy and Maggie Roche: a Holiday-ish Concert." Maggie and Suzzy of the famed folk trio The Roches offered to do this after hearing about the great work we do!

If we work together, we can end the year as strong as we began it. Or stronger!

Suzzy & Maggie Roche In a Holiday-ish Concert



with Lucy Wainwright Roche and Julie Gold
A benefit for SPSA

**Thursday,
December 13, 7:30**
Tickets: \$250 (patron)
\$100 (with reception)
General Admission: \$20



Children & Families: Tradition!

By Julie Nelson
Chair, Children's Education

In the end we realize that our traditions are repeated year after year because Christmas doesn't change. God's love shown through us in Jesus is constant. The gift that we celebrate every year is still one of hope and of love. With every ritual, whether it is in church or at home, remember God's constant and unchanging love.

DATES:

- Dec. 1 2-4 p.m. Pageant Rehearsal
- Dec. 2 1-3 p.m. Pageant Rehearsal
- Dec. 8 2-4 p.m. Pageant Rehearsal
- Dec 9. CHRISTMAS PAGEANT
- Dec. 15 6 p.m. Kids Night out Christmas Party!
- Dec. 23 7 p.m. Christmas Eve Family Service

During Advent we find ourselves partaking in many rituals and traditions that are repeated.

Every year we do a Christmas pageant. Every year we do lessons and carols. Every year we light the same candles in the same Advent wreath and say more or less the same prayers. It all can feel very redundant.

This is a theme that the youth and children are exploring in the pageant this year. Why do we keep repeating ourselves year after year after year after year after year after..... Do the major themes of Christmas lessen every time we repeat our tradition? Or are they timeless and increase our anticipation of what's to come? The birth of Christ!



**Every Member
Commitment Campaign
2013**
Please support the
church we love
Every pledge counts!

YOUTH:

Just Being Who They Are

By Siobhan Sargent

The Election Day was a huge success. I want to give thanks to so many SPSAers who spent the day helping and who baked, and also to our youth group who served the many patient-- and some not so patient-- voters who found themselves at our humble doors. It really was a sight to see. By 2 in the afternoon we had it down to a science. Youth were running around using smart phones to find district numbers for people, seating the newcomers to maintain order and taking coffee and tea orders to help make their time with us just a bit more enjoyable.



Although many had to wait over an hour to vote, it truly made all the difference in the world for people to experience SPSA hospitality first hand. I don't want to toot our own horn but we really knocked it out of the water. And the proof is in the pudding. So many of our friends and neighbors stopped by, called and left notes thanking us for all we did.

It's this spirit and hospitality that carries me right into our Christmas season. There are so many wonderful things happening at SPSA to celebrate the coming birth of Jesus. And because this is just who they are, the Youth are knee-deep in all of it. Using those skills they developed on

Election Day, our Youth will be serving as ushers for the upcoming Benefit Concert on Thursday, December 13th. They are designing their t-shirts and getting ready to do their part in helping the congregation raise the money we need to get us through the rest of the year.

Of course it wouldn't be Christmas without our annual Children's Christmas Pageant. And, in my mind, the Christmas Pageant here at SPSA would not be as wonderful without the full-on love our youth give to the Children of this congregation. So the youth are getting into costume once again, not to scare anyone this time, but rather to have fun and importantly give guidance and support to the children of our church, because that's just who they are.

There are many opportunities to get involved and many opportunities nurture our thriving Youth Ministry. Just send me contact us thru the spsa website.

And always we welcome your prayers!

Upcoming Events

December 1-2, Lock-In 7 p.m

December 8th, Hanging of the Greens, 1:30 pm

December 9th, Christmas Pageant

December 9, 16, & 23 Youth Group

December 13, (Ushering 6:30 p.m.) Suzzy & Maggie Roche Benefit Concert

December 24, 7 pm Family Service; 10:45 Candlelight Service

CAMPUS MINISTRY:

NEW MONDAY WORSHIP!

By Siobhan Sargent

"Where two or more are gathered in my name, there I will be with them"
~ Matthew 18:20

The kick-off for our new campus initiative happened this past month. Every Monday night from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m. you'll find us at St. Paul's Chapel on Columbia's campus. The Gathering, a progressive prayer service, is designed to offer students an oasis in the middle of their hectic academic schedules. We sing, we pray, we study the Bible; basically it's everything you'd think should be in a prayer service, but mostly it's about gathering together and recognizing how the love of God is present in every nook and cranny of our life. As we filled those vaulted ceilings of St. Paul's Chapel with our voices and our song this past Monday, I could feel God's spirit with us and all around us. I'm thankful for those who are present to help make the space warm and inviting; it truly makes all the difference in the world. I ask the congregation to keep us in your prayers and if you are free on Monday nights please come on by and join us.



Please Pledge for 2013!



December 2012



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
November 25 11 Worship K preaching	26	27 6:30 Pilates 7:30 Knitting	28 6 Homework Help	29 7:30 Church Council	30	December 1 2 Pageant Rehearsal 4 Choir Rehearsal 7 Christmas Lock-in
2 ADVENT COMMUNION 10 Choir 11 Worship K preaching 12:15 UMW Sale 12:30 Staff-Parish 12:45 Nominating 1 Pageant Rehearsal 2 Madison Park Worship	3 7 Trustees	4 2 Staff meeting 4 Open Youth Rm 6 Farewell for Doreen Wohl 7:30 Church Conference	5 6 Homework Help 7:15 Advent Vespers	6	7 7:30 Trash Tree Lighting	8 1:30 Hanging of Greens 2 Pageant 4 Choir Rehearsal
9 CHRISTMAS PAGEANT 10 Choir 11 Worship K preaching 1 United Methodist Women 1 Youth Group	10	11 2 Staff meeting 4 Open Youth Rm 6:30 Pilates 7:30 Knitting	12 6 Homework Help 7:15 Advent Vespers	13 Benefit Concert 7:30 Suzzy and Maggie Roche in a Holiday-ish Concert!	14	15 4 Choir Rehearsal 6 Kids Night Out
16 LESSONS & CAROLS 17 9 Mission Trip Meeting 9:30 Choir 11 Worship Lessons & Carols 5 Caroling at St. Luke's Hosp.	17 7:30 Shakespeare Sandy Benefit in the Theatre	18 4 Open Youth Rm 6:30 Pilates 7 Staff Parish 7:30 knitting	19 6 Tutoring Party 7:15 Advent Vespers	20 7 Shelter Holiday Dinner	21	22
23 10 Choir 11 Worship Siobhan Preaching No Sunday School 1 Youth Group	24 Christmas Eve 7 Family Service 8 Open House 10:45 Candlelight Service	25 Christmas!	26	27	28	29
30 11 Worship K Preaching	31	1 New Year's Day	2	3	4	5

Shelter: Sundays, Wednesdays and Thursdays at 7:00; AA Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7:00; Food Pantry, Monday 8:00 to 6:30, Wednesday to Friday 8:00 to 3:00.

MISSION, CHURCH & SOCIETY Prison Ministry

Baby Shower!

ATTENTION all knitters, crocheters, and shoppers!!! Sometime in January there will be a BABY SHOWER for the babies of women in prison here in NYC.

Because of prison rules only NEW items may be used, sizes newborn to 2 years. This announcement comes early to provide time for those who wish to "make" their own gift.

It will be a fabulous shower hosted by Mission, Church and Society and United Methodist Women. We are excited already!!

--June Quarfordt

SPSA's Annual Church Conference

Tuesday, December 4

6:00 pm Reception for Doreen Wohl
7:30 Church Conference

A Service of
Lessons & Carols
Sunday, December 16
11:00 am

Christmas Pageant!

Sunday
December 9
11:00 am



Presenting a Bard-Based Show

Starring Olympia Dukakis

Monday, December 17, 7:30 pm

In the Theater. Tickets \$20

www.brownpapertickets.com

Shakespeare
WITH BENEFITS!

CHRISTMAS EVE

7 PM FAMILY SERVICE

8 PM CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE
AT THE PARSONAGES

10:45 CANDLELIGHT SERVICE





**Suzzy and Maggie Roche
in a Benefit Concert for SP&A
Thursday, December 13, 7:30 pm**

The Church of St. Paul & St. Andrew
United Methodist
263 West 86th Street
New York, NY 10024
(212) 362-3179
www.stpaulandstandrew.org



Interfaith Story Feast with B'nai Jeshurun, the American Society for Muslim Advancement and the Muslim Consultative Network.



Karen Malik makes pies for Goddard-Riverside's Thanksgiving Dinner. We made 171 pies and 80 dozen cookies!

More Photos on Page 4.