



The Sunbeam December 2017

Lansing United Methodist Church

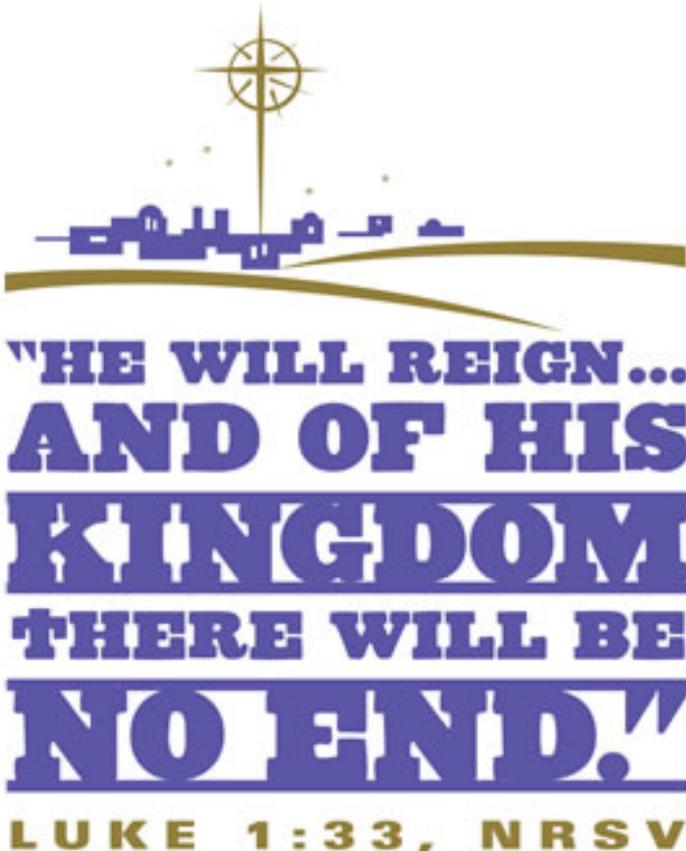
Worship 9:00 AM

SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:30 AM

Pastor: Alison Schmied

Adult Ministries Coordinator: Karen Veaner

Advent and Christmas 2017



From the Pastor

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,
In a recent meeting, the church staff gathered in a very “live” new room of our building—a room with a tile floor and no rug or furnishings. Sound reverberated off of every hard surface.



As we spoke, each of our words echoed. We laughed, and that echoed too. Someone mentioned the responsibility we have to speak only of things that we wanted to be repeated.

Speak hope.
Speak peace.
Speak joy.
Speak love.

Speaking what needs to be repeated should be the rule at all times, and the echo in the live room made us notice and remember.

“Behold! Good tidings! Great joy for all people!” was spoken into a live universe on the first Christmas, so many years ago. Scripture tells us that angels sang and prophecies were fulfilled as hope, peace, joy, and eternal love were personified in Jesus. Scripture also points out that Jesus was born into difficult human circumstances, as a vulnerable newborn baby, a refugee, born of a poor, unwed mother.

The message of Christmas—Immanuel, God with us—even in the most challenging of human circumstances—continues to echo through the centuries. In the person of Jesus, God’s Word of hope and promise for the future, peace and reconciliation with the past, joy in the present and love for all eternity is spoken into our world, and into our lives.

May we each find ways this Advent season to echo back the song which is sung by the whole host of heaven: “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace, goodwill among people” (Luke 2:14).

Advent

The season of preparation for Christmas

According to commercials, you might surmise that preparing means getting all your decorations up, finding the ideal gift for each person on your list, some great bargains for yourself, and creating a picture-perfect family feast resembling a Norman Rockwell painting.

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Advent and Christmas 2017 (continued)

Thankfully, the season of Advent in the church is different. While the mall has a jolly Santa Claus dressed in a red suit with white fur trim, the church has John the Baptizer, dressed in a penitent’s outfit made of camel hair (Mk 1:6). While Santa asks children what they’d like to receive for Christmas, John the Baptizer announces that now is the time to turn away from sin, and to be baptized into a new way of living. A crowd asks John to clarify, “What do you mean by turn away from sin?” John explains: share what you have, give to those who have nothing, and treat others justly (Luke 3:11-14).

This Advent season, you are invited to participate in a variety of activities to help unwrap the true meaning of Christmas, starting with the Greening of the Church on Saturday, December 2. At 9:00 a.m., we’ll share a continental breakfast and bring in the décor from wherever it has been stored. Wreath-making and placing other decorations take many hands!

To begin the Advent season, we will welcome Rev. Quinn Caldwell as guest preacher for our 9:00 a.m. worship service on December 3. Rev. Caldwell is author of *All I Really Want: Readings for a Modern Christmas*, which pairs daily scripture readings and personal reflections with suggested daily actions—a task to complete or a thought to ponder—inviting the reader to become an active participant in this season of preparation. A reading and discussion group on this book will be available as an adult Sunday School class.

LUMC member Dianne Walter will lead a series of adult Sunday School classes on the messages in traditional Christmas Carols. A Giving Tree allows you to help provide Christmas presents for children in need in the Lansing area. A display of Blessing Bags made by our youth will suggest alternative giving ideas for following John the Baptizer’s admonitions to share what you have, give to those who have nothing, and treat others justly.

Several special worship services help celebrate the season. A Festival of Lessons and Carols at 6:30 p.m. on December 10 will tell the Christmas story through scripture and song. A Children’s Christmas Pageant will be part of the 9:00 a.m. worship service on December 17. In the darkness of the Longest Night, December 21, a 7:00 p.m. service will name the struggle, especially during the Advent season, for those who grieve for loved ones no longer present, and those who grieve the conditions in our world which cause us to pray, “Come, Lord Jesus.” Sunday, December 24, is both the Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve. LUMC will have a 9:00 a.m. Advent worship service, a 5:00 p.m. family candlelight Christmas Eve worship service, and a Candlelight Communion worship service at 8:00 p.m.

We hope this variety of events will help you prepare to welcome Jesus into our world and into your heart this Christmas.

Adult Advent Study

All I Really Want: Readings for a Modern Christmas, by Rev. Quinn G. Caldwell—Sunday, 10:30am-11:30am.

This is not your mother or father's Advent Study. From the book:

Let's just get one thing straight: this book is not going to help you 'simplify the season.' ... I'm not here to simplify anything for you. Neither is God. If you have too many cookie exchanges or whatever, you're just going to have to find a way to deal with that yourself. This book is actually designed to complicate the season. It's here to invite you to think and pray a little more deeply about it. And this year, isn't that all you really want?

About the book:

"It's playful and funny and theologically profound."—Lillian Daniel, author of *When "Spiritual but Not Religious" Is Not Enough*

"Quinn Caldwell releases us from forced cheerfulness and invites us to relish the rich, complex darkness of the season. He offers us a Christmas we had thought was out of our reach: a true gift."—Stephanie Paulsell, Houghton Professor of the Practice of Ministry Studies at Harvard Divinity School

The Scriptures Sing of Christmas, by J. Ellsworth Kalas ...with Dianne Walter

Looking for a little comfort and joy?

In this traditional Advent study, examine songs of praise and the lyric quality of the scriptures found in the Gospels of Luke and John. From the book:

"I have loved (Christmas) for as long as I can remember...I grew up on hymns of the church. I love a wide variety of music...it is with these two prejudices that I have written this book. They are prejudices that spring from love...I hope you will fall in love again—with Christmas and music, and with life, and with people, and God."—J. Ellsworth Kalas

About the book:

"The author brings a perspective to the Christmas story which is fresh and enlightening. Having discovered this prolific author, I am now in the process of buying all of his books! I bought these devotionals for 40 of my small group leaders, and they all said it brought a special meaning to the Advent season this year."—Amazon Review

Interfaith Community Dinner

Thursday, December 28

At time of Sunbeam deadline, there was no firm plan in place. Please check the LUMC Calendar at www.LansingUnited.org

A Festival of Lessons & Carols

Sunday, December 10, 6:30 p.m.

~ followed by a reception in the Fellowship Hall ~



The Festival of Lessons and Carols is a service of Christian worship celebrating the birth of Jesus told in short scripture readings from the Bible interspersed with the singing of Christmas carols, hymns, and special music. This year, the LUMC choir, Bell's Angels, and other musicians and friends will perform a collection of holiday carols arranged by Hal H. Hopson with string quartet and hand bells.

In keeping with our hope that there will always be "room at the Inn," donations for Habitat for Humanity will be gratefully accepted.

Longest Night Service

"Blue Christmas," Thursday, December 21, 7:00pm

Lansing UMC will host a "Blue Christmas" service on the longest night of the year, December 21. This time of worship allows people who are feeling less than joyful about the season a space in which to acknowledge their struggle, light candles, and join one another in prayer. Together, we will remember the promise of the coming of Christ, the Light of the world that shines in the darkness, which the darkness cannot extinguish (John 1:5). The service will begin at 7:00 p.m.

In his book *All I Really Want: Readings for a Modern Christmas*, Rev. Quinn G. Caldwell writes about Blue Christmas services:

It's become common for churches to hold a "Blue Christmas" service around this time of year. They're designed to be a safe and supportive place for those dealing with hard stuff made harder by Christmas, for those who aren't feeling what everyone else assumes is the proper Christmas spirit...

I worry about them because it seems to me that every Advent service ought to be a Blue Christmas service. The Bible makes it clear that the context for Christmas isn't rejoicing; it's desolation. It's not fullness; it's need. It's not presence; it's absence. If things weren't pretty messed up for everybody, why would God have bothered?

The time for Christmas carols isn't just when you're feeling great; the time is when you have to force them out through lips slack with depression or trembling with grief. The time for "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" isn't just when you're convinced it's going to happen; it's when you really, really want it to happen but are mostly convinced it won't.

Look, I don't want you to spend December wallowing; if you're feeling OK, great! God's coming on your behalf, too. I just want to be sure you know that if the only spirit you can get into is low, you're just who God is looking for." (pp. 92-93)

Woodsedge Bible Study

Making Sense of the Bible

Looking for a morning Bible Study? Rediscover the power of scripture today. Explore and discuss the nature of scripture, and some of the more challenging passages. Adam Hamilton's study, led by Karen Veaner, meets Mondays, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., in the upstairs lounge at Woodsedge.

The Giving Tree

The Lansing Food Pantry, All Saints Church, and Lansing United Methodist Church join together to support Lansing families in need each Christmas season. The Giving Tree has been set up for you in the narthex! Beautiful pine cone ornaments made by our Kids in Action Now (K.A.N.) kids give each gift giver information about the age and gender of the child and what he or she would like. Children of Giving Tree families receive two gifts, a clothing item and a toy item.



Pinecone tags in the making

Each person who takes a tag purchases a gift requested on the card, making sure to sign in on the log so we know who took what card. Please spend up to \$35 on your gift or gift card, bring all gifts to the church, and put them under The Giving Tree on Sunday, December 10. Some tags on the tree are for sign ups to provide fruit for fruit baskets, homemade cookies for cookie tins, and packages of socks. Your help is needed to provide the gifts for these families. If you have any questions, please contact Debbie Geise at geise1019@hotmail.com. Thank you so much for blessing Lansing families in need with hope and joy this Christmas!

Giving Tree Team Needed!

Not a shopper? You can still help with The Giving Tree Ministry. Debbie Geise is looking for a team to help sort gifts following worship on December 10 and to set up the Fellowship Hall for the distribution of gifts and to prepare fruit baskets and trays of cookies for the families on Monday, December 18. Please see or contact Debbie at geise1019@hotmail.com. Thank you so much for your help!

Sunday School Seeking Donations for Rescue Mission

The Sunday School students will be collecting donations for a Christmas service project for the Ithaca Rescue Mission. The children and youth will make up toiletry kits, winter warmth and care kits, and first aid kits. If you would like to contribute any of the items listed below, please put your items in the bin in the narthex marked "Sunday School Service for Ithaca Rescue Mission." Thank you so much for your generosity and your support of our young people as they give the gift of Jesus' love and care in our hurting community. Please respond by December 6.

Toiletries: toothbrush, toothpaste, unscented soap, travel shampoo, deodorant, hand lotion, ChapStick (or similar), small Kleenex packets, and cough drops;

Winter items: hats, gloves, scarves, hand and foot warmers, ladies and men's heavy socks, \$5 Dunkin Donuts gift cards, ready-to-eat soup (e.g., Campbell's Soup on the Go); and

First Aid Kits: Band-Aids of various sizes, gauze, antibiotic ointment, individually packaged antiseptic wipes, and small cold packs.

The Bishop family invites our LUMC family to a special 90th birthday Open House for Jeanne Bishop on her birthday, Sunday, December 17, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. No gifts please. Your presence would mean the world to Jeanne. So stop by and join us as we celebrate her special birthday!

Acolyte Training

On two Sundays, October 22 and 29, Sharon Bowman lovingly led our third graders in acolyte training to learn how to carry out this meaningful role in our worship service. The children practiced bringing the light into worship, lighting the candles, and then carrying the light out into the world after extinguishing the candles. It has been a beautiful sight to watch God's light shine so brightly in these children as they have been participating faithfully each week in this way. Thank you to all of our acolytes and to Sharon Bowman, who carries and shines God's light as she leads and inspires our young people in this very special ministry.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
3 FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT Worship 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Finance 10:30 K.A.N. 5:30	4 Pancakes and Prayers 7:00 Bible Study at Woodsedge 10:30 Communion at Woodsedge 11:00 Wingmen 7:00	5 Needleworkers Group 10:00 Ladies in Faith Together (LIFT) 6:30 Crossroads	6 Women's Bible Study 9:00 Bell Choir 6:00 Adult Choir 7:00	7	Junior High Youth 7:00 1 Senior High Youth 7:00 Junior High Youth 7:00 8 Senior High Youth 7:00	Mens' Breakfast 7:00 2 Greening the Church 9:00 Junior Choir 9:00 Prayer Shawl Ministry/Caregivers 10:00 Adult Mission 4:00 9 Men's Breakfast 7:00
10 SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT Worship 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Service of Lessons and Carols 6:30 Youth Mission 6:30	11 Pancakes and Prayers 7:00 Bible Study at Woodsedge 10:30 Trustees 7:00 Wingmen 7:00	12 Needleworkers Group 10:00 Church Council 7:00	13 Women's Bible Study 9:00 Bell Choir 6:00 Adult Choir 7:00	14 Staff Parish 7:00	15 Junior High Youth 7:00 Senior High Youth 7:00 Sunbeam Deadline Midnight	16 Men's Breakfast at Linda's in North Lansing Every Saturday 7:00
17 THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT Worship 9:00 CHILDREN'S PAGEANT Sunday School 10:30 Rescue Mission Dinner 3:00 Youth Mission Can and Bottle Drive	18 Pancakes and Prayers 7:00 Bible Study at Woodsedge 10:30 Christmas Gift Giving Tree Distribution 12:30 Wingmen 7:00	19 Needleworkers Group 10:00 Worship Committee 7:00	20 Women's Bible Study 9:00 Bell Choir 6:00 Adult Choir 7:00	21 Longest Night Service 7:00	22 Junior High Youth 7:00 Senior High Youth 7:00	Men's Breakfast 7:00 RUMMAGE SALE TENT SETUP 9:00 Junior Choir 6:00
24 FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT Worship 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 CHRISTMAS EVE Candlelight Family Service 5:00 Candlelight Communion Service 8:00	25 CHRISTMAS 	Church Office Closed			28 Interfaith Dish-to-Pass Dinner Watch for Info	29 Junior High Youth 7:00 Senior High Youth 7:00
31 Worship 9:00	1 NEW YEAR'S DAY 2018 How did that happen? Church Office Closed		December 2017			Lansing United Methodist Church

Message from LUMC Trustees

As the winter season approaches, the Trustees are reaching out to all church members for help in keeping our sidewalks and doorways free of snow. If you arrive early for a church service or meeting, and are able, please take a couple of minutes to shovel the doorway(s) and sidewalk as needed. There is a shovel and some sand inside each of the three main entryways. *Note:* A very light sprinkling of sand is all that's needed.

Plowing opportunity. We are also looking for a church member who owns a truck with a plow who might be interested in plowing. We are down to one snow plower with another Lansing fellow as a back-up. If interested, please speak to Scott Bishop or Glenn Swanson.

Equipment training. As we all are adjusting to our new wing, new offices and classrooms, and new equipment, we ask that you have patience in adapting and learning how things work. It may take some time for training, but we are looking forward to learning all about the workings of our enhanced building, and we'll be glad to share our knowledge.

Careful with heaters and coffee. As previously mentioned, great care needs to be taken around the new baseboard heating elements in all rooms. They are hot! Also, the new coffee maker in the kitchen has been left on overnight a couple of times. **Please,** if you make a pot of coffee, please take responsibility to turn it off before you leave, or enlist another person to be responsible. Turn off all hot plates and note that there's a switch on the back!

Thank you for your cooperation.

Brickyard Philharmonia

Also known as the Christmas Band, the Philharmonia will play during the service on the Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 24. We will have two rehearsals: one at 10:30 a.m., December 2, during the Greening of the Church, and the other at a time to be set.

Christmas Eve Youth Choir

Come sing on Christmas Eve! Any youth who are interested in a special Christmas Eve singing group, please see Diane Withiam.

Special Music

We are always delighted when individuals and small groups offer "special" music during Advent or any time. The music can be a solo, duo, small group, vocal or instrumental. See Diane Withiam if you're interested.

Children's Musical

Watch for the first meeting in January for children and adults interested in producing this spring's children's musical. Hint: The theme will involve building construction! If you can't wait for a meeting (or can't make it) feel free to email Diane.Withiam@gmail.com.

Welcome, New Members

On October 22, Lansing United Methodist Church welcomed several new members. All of these new members have been worshipping with us regularly for some time. All of the children have all been active in programs for children and youth.

The congregation rejoiced to recognize them as members of Christ's holy church, meaning that Lansing United Methodist Church is just delighted that these people have taken the step of making public their commitment to live out their baptismal vows here at LUMC, supporting the mission and ministries of the church with their prayers, their presence, their gifts, their service, and their witness. In return, the congregation promised to do all in their power to increase their faith, confirm their hope, and perfect them in love.

On Sunday, November 12, Maxwell Thomas MacKenzie made a profession of faith and received the sacrament of baptism, becoming a full member of Lansing United Methodist Church. Max is currently serving as the teacher for the Junior High Sunday School class.



Pastor Alison joins Bill Hinderliter to welcome and present new member Max MacKenzie



New members: (back row, L to R): Stephanie Read and Dennis Read, by profession of faith (their son Walter is not pictured); Beth Wilcox, by transfer from Danby UMC; Morgan Wilcox, by confirmation last June; Kent Yoest and Judalyn Yoest, baptized preparatory members; Lonnajean Yoest, by transfer from St. Luke's Lutheran; and Naomi and Seth Littlejohn, by profession of faith. (front row, L to R): children not yet baptized: Scott Leo Yoest, Ethan Littlejohn, and Elijah Littlejohn.



No hands!

Fall Festival Thank You

Despite the rainy, chilly weather, we were able to share a wonderful afternoon together at the Fall Festival on October 29! We all gathered together in the sanctuary for singing and an introduction to their candy corn necklaces. The children and their families had the chance to visit three different stations where they participated in fun activities and games and explored how we are like God's candy corn! At each station, the children received the white, orange, and yellow parts of their necklace which read, "White is for my sins Jesus washed away, Orange is for the joy Jesus brings me each day, and Yellow is for the light of Jesus' love for me so true." The first station brought the opportunity to try Glenn Withiam's apple press and to sample some fresh, delicious cider. They also completed the challenge of eating a donut hanging from the ceiling without using their hands. The second station involved playing the candy corn relay race game of carrying a spoon full of candy corn around candy corn cones to see



Candy corn relay

whoever could fill their bucket to a certain point first. This group also tried to stack their candy corn in a circle as high as they could. The third station found the children being wrapped up in toilet paper to transform them into mummies. They also played a ping pong pumpkin game.

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Fall Festival, concluded



Trunk or treat

Our Junior and Senior High youth gave the younger children a trunk-or-treat experience with creative set-ups, fun games, and sweet treats. A hearty and yummy meal was provided for all of our families to end our night.

An event like this involves the hand and heart work of many! Grateful thanks abounds for our station leaders, Lon-najean Yoest, Janet Keefe, Christine Maloney, Naomi Littlejohn, Bonnie Blair, and Erin Worsell, our harvest meal crew, Wendy Davis, Laurie Conlon, Angie Jackson, and Kelly Tracy, our Trunk-or-Treat coordinator, Denise Wyszowski, our youth who gave the kids an enjoyable Trunk-or-Treat experience, Sarah Wyszowski, Morgan Wilcox, Maddy Jones, Hunter Hamilton, Carly and James Blair and their family, our junior helpers, Avery Sigler, Izzy Gustafson, Lucas Jackson, Anna Weaver-Mule, Judalyn Yoest, Kent Yoest, and Stephen Geise, our photographer, Vicky Swanson, our apple press wonder, Glenn Withiam, and our hayride driver, John Aasen, whose willingness was, unfortunately, washed out by the rain! Thank you to all of the families who attended for their support, enthusiasm, and participation! Thank you to all who contributed delicious meals and sides for our dinner and those who helped set up and clean up. Every helpful act contributed to a joyful, meaningful afternoon! We are excited to provide more church-wide events like this throughout the year.



...and that's a wrap

Third Grade Bible Presentation and “Learning to Use My Bible” Class

On Sunday, October 29, LUMC presented new Bibles to nine children, helping them achieve a special milestone in their journey of faith. Third graders Harrison Davis, Jenna Geise, Jakob Gross, Elijah Littlejohn, and Violet Tracy, along with Etienne Exantus, Noah Gross, Michael Morgan, and Abigail Todi, now have their very own Bible from their Lansing United Methodist Church Family. On Sunday, November 12, the third graders and their parents participated in a “Learning to Use My Bible”



class led by Pastor Alison and Debbie Geise, where they explored their Bible as the living, “God-breathed” Word that contains individual stories that form one complete true story. The children learned many important facts about the Bible and how to find the books, chapters, and verses in it. There are many helpful, useful, and inspiring features of the Hands-On Bible that the children were guided through, as well. We focused on Psalm 119:105: “Thy Word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path,” as they discovered that we read our Bible to grow closer to God and to receive His guidance over our lives. We also discussed the importance of obeying God’s Word. We need to read and understand what God’s Word says and then do what it says, which is obedience, in order to be complete in God. We are blessed to see these precious children greet this milestone with such enthusiasm and joy! Thank you to the parents who supported their child during this special time together.



Christmas Poinsettias

We love to have poinsettias on our chancel for Advent and Christmas Eve. You can dedicate your flower in memory or honor of family or friends. Order deadline is December 10, and plants are only \$10. Order forms are online or at church.

Record of Financial Statements Available Online

For those of you who itemize deductions for tax purposes, financial donations to the church are tax-deductible. Make your contributions by December 31, 2017 in order to deduct them from taxes for 2017.

You may check the balance of your financial contributions (including pledge balance) at any time of the day or night, as long as you have internet access.

1. Go to the church website, www.lansingunited.org
2. Click on the “Online Giving” tab to the far right in the brown header bar.
3. Login to “ChurchTrac” using your email address and passcode. (If you have not set up a passcode, click on “I do not know my passcode, or I do not have a passcode” and follow the prompts.)
4. From there you can update your profile information, view your giving history, check balance remaining on your pledge, or make an online gift as a withdrawal from your bank account, a payment from your credit card, or a payment from your mobile phone.

If you need further assistance, please contact Kelly Tracy, Financial Secretary, at kcashdollar@yahoo.com.

After January 1, 2018, statements of giving for the year 2017 will be printed and made available for pickup in the Narthex. If you have not picked up your printed statement at church by Tuesday January 16, 2018 we will put a stamp on it and mail it to the address in your giving profile.

Thank you for supporting your church’s work in the world. Each and every gift is deeply appreciated.

The Sunbeam

December 2017



Lansing United
Methodist Church

ADVENT WORSHIP 9:00

LESSONS AND CAROLS, DECEMBER 10
6:30

CHILDREN'S PAGEANT, DECEMBER 17
9:00



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES
5:00 PM AND 8:00 PM

Lansing United Methodist Church

32 Brickyard Road, Lansing, NY 14882

one mile north of the spotlight on

Route 34B in South Lansing.

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The Sunbeam is published monthly by
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Please send your news to Glenn Withiam,
editor, at grw4@cornell.edu.

Deadline for the next issue is
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