



# FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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*Rev. Patricia Cleary*

## Pastor's Page –November 2014 Navigating the Super-Buffer

Have you ever eaten at one of those big buffet-style restaurants? Several years ago in Johnstown, we had out of town guests. After going to the Flood Museum we decided to go out for lunch. On a whim, we chose to go to Ryan's restaurant. None of us had ever been there before.

Ryan's restaurant is a huge, all you can eat buffet with *lots* of tasty food.

We enjoyed our meal. But from among ALL the food it was hard to pick *healthy* options. They were there but so was a lot of food that wasn't healthy. The other challenge was not to eat too much. Even healthy options are harmful if you make a pig of yourself. Self-control was definitely the order of the day!

We are coming into a season of the year in which we will be bombarded with options – both healthy and unhealthy. The temptation will be to overdo it. Unlike my first trip to Ryan's, we know what's coming. But that doesn't make it any easier to manage the challenge of keeping things under control.

I urge you to *think ahead* about the choices you have in this blessed season of the year, beginning with November's Thanksgiving and on through Advent and Christmas.

Keeping the Christ in both of these celebrations means not just putting the Christ IN them, it means keeping Christ *the main thing*.

Christ would not have us spending our money in ways that will put us in debt. In fact, he would have us not even spend it on those who can return our generosity. True Christ-likeness is to give to those who cannot. Why not give to a worthy charity in honor of friends and family members this holiday season?

Nor do I think Christ would have us celebrate in ways that leave us exhausted and over-worked. Five years ago Wayne and I did something I never thought we'd do – we didn't send out cards or put up a Christmas tree. Despite not following these time-honored traditions we had a blessed Christmas.

Think ahead AND decide now how you will manage your Thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations this year. Put it all on the table and then choose the options that honor Christ. By doing this you will find yourself less stressed and more blessed – I guarantee!

*"Only one thing is essential, and Mary has chosen it—it's the main course,  
and won't be taken from her."* – Jesus speaking to Martha,  
Luke 10:42, The Message

*Pastor Pat*



*LAST WEEK MY PERSON MANAGED TO FIND THE BOX WITH THE JACK-O-LANTERN DECORATIONS. FOR A WHILE SHE THOUGHT IT WAS LOST BUT IT HAD BEEN PUT IN THE STORAGE ROOM BY MISTAKE. NOW THE JACK-O-LANTERNS ARE SITTING AROUND THE HOUSE. I KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS. ONE OF THESE EVENINGS SOON THE DOORBELL WILL START RINGING LIKE CRAZY FOR A COUPLE OF HOURS. THAT'S WHEN I'LL DO WHAT I ALWAYS DO – GO AND FIND A PLACE TO HIDE.*

- GEORGE, THE PARSONAGE CAT

