



PASTOR'S PONDERINGS...

Dear Church,

Brilliant October days have been replaced by the impenetrable fogs of late fall. And even once the mists have lifted, we seem to be stranded within a colorless quiet that discourages our hearts. So we tuck ourselves into cozy comforters that allow a temporary respite from the damp chill. "All is safely gathered in, e'er the winter storms begin."

And yet the celebration of Jesus' birth is just a few weeks away. Somehow the gloom of the world around us feels out of line with the happiness and joy we expect to feel on that day.

Expect. We expect the babe will once more come into our lives and we will no longer experience the pains or sorrows of this earthly life. So we look forward to that time with great hope, which of course makes this time before the celebration rather hard to bear.

Back in the "old days" of church, Christians hid from this season of waiting in hope by singing favorite Christmas carols in worship and sharing Christmas cookies from the first Sunday of December onward.

In more recent years mainline denominations, including Presbyterians, began to intentionally remember the stories, promises and images of the Bible's ancient words that tell of Mary, Elizabeth Joseph and John the Baptist. We again looked to the Old Testament for the hope Isaiah and Amos offered to the often hopeless Children of God. We began to re-appropriate the traditions of the earliest days of the church – as far back as the early fourth century!

In those days, from the feast of St. Martin on November 11 to Epiphany on January 6, Western European Christians observed a season of fasting and preparation for baptisms which were regularly held on Epiphany. When Sts. Patrick and Columba shared the good news in Ireland they emphasized the coming of the Lord for judgment during the late fall and early winter.

And in keeping with the theme of penitence, they wore purple vestments to remind worshippers that before Jesus was crucified he accepted being wrapped in purple so as to remind all people that he was willing to take on their sin so they could turn back to God.

Just as we do during Lent, this season of paying attention to "end of world" matters and ancient stories of those who prepared the way of the Lord invites Jesus' followers to look into their hearts and seek ways to mend behaviors that fall short of his teachings. And this quiet, brooding atmosphere that surrounds us now allows us the space in which to do so.

Just as the word Advent means, Jesus is *coming*. *Christ will arrive*.

During worship this Advent season we will take time to remember Christ's coming in final victory, how John the Baptist prepared the way of the Lord and how Mary and Elizabeth were filled with wonder at the news that God was coming to live on earth with them! We'll also sing hymns like "O Come, O Come, Emanuel," "Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates," and "Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming."

But I want to invite you to take time over the next few weeks to look deeply into the fogs of late fall, to wrap yourselves in soft comforters and consider the meaning of Christ's birth, life, death and resurrection in your life. Prepare your hearts to receive him.

For he is coming. *The light of the world is coming!* And the brilliance of his love will burn away the fog of our hearts. When our hope arrives we'll feel his encouragement as we serve God. And then we'll sing together with the heavenly choirs "Joy to the World!"

In Peace,

Pastor Deb.



Looking Ahead....

TREE TRIMMING EVENT

Saturday, December 8th

The Christian Education committee will be hosting a Christmas tree trimming event in the Fellowship Hall on Saturday, December 8th from 4 until 6 pm. All are invited to this fun advent activity. We will make ornaments, decorate cookies, eat chili and/or pizza, and play games. There is sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Hall on the kiosk for this event. Hope to see you there!



WORSHIP THROUGH MUSIC SERVICE

Sunday, December 16th

Mark your calendars! Our annual *Worship Through Music Service* will be on Sunday, December 16th @ 10:00 am. Hope to see you there! Tell your friends, or better yet, bring them with you!

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

Monday, December 24th

Our Traditional Candlelight Christmas Eve Service will be on Monday, December 24th @ 11 pm. Come to hear the good news and enjoy beautiful special music. When you leave the sanctuary...it will be Christmas!



PRAYER GROUP

"The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working."

James 5:16b ESV.



And all who believe are made righteous by the blood of Christ our King! It's a wonderful privilege we have to pray for our needs and the needs of others. Let the prayer group pray for you. Put your requests in the prayer box. We will meet **December 3rd** and **December 17**.

And to God be the Glory!

CAN WE COUNT ON YOU?

We are in the process of finalizing our 2019 operating budget. Pledges for 2019 are dragging behind past years. We count on pledges to cover the majority of our operating expenses. We are looking at the real possibility that we will have to cut expenses. That means outreach and other important programs would have to be reduced. If you have not yet pledged for 2019, we ask "CAN WE COUNT ON YOU?" There are pledge cards available on the table in the narthex and in the office, or call the office to have a pledge card mailed. You may also verbally give your pledge amount to Becky. However you choose to do it, we hope that "We Can Count on You."

If you are unable to pledge, we hope we can still count on your support throughout the year.

Let's get our ship into dock, and meet our budget.



OUR VERY OWN "MITCH" MILLER TO RETURN FOR A SPECIAL ORGAN CONCERT IN JANUARY!!

Sunday, January 6th at 3 pm

Mitch will be back in our Sanctuary to play an organ concert in memory of *Janis Brewer* and *Hugh Hanes*, both of whom were members of the Chancel Choir, and joined the "heavenly choirs" soon after Mitch graduated and departed for Germany. Due to communication 'flubs' he was unaware of their passing until his surprise visit here on Labor Day. At his suggestion, we began discussing the possibility of presenting such a concert during a time when he would be stateside for a short time.



More information will be forthcoming about the concert AND about Mitch's many accomplishments since he's been studying and playing in Germany, but as it is now a 'definite,' PLEASE mark it on your calendars AND begin 'spreading the word!' It should be a GLORIOUS afternoon of music and will be an opportunity to welcome Mitch back, even if briefly!!! A light-refreshment reception, sponsored by Chancel Choir and Music Program, will follow the concert.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY



The Sunday Morning Bible Study will be looking at five Advent texts through Middle Eastern Eyes as we move into December. We will be seeking to remove the dust from these centuries old stories to see them as they were originally in-

tended. The group meets at 8:45 am in the Church Parlor. All are welcome. Bring your own Bible.

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|---------|--|----------------|
| Dec. 2 | The Story of Jesus' Birth | Luke 2: 1-20 |
| Dec. 9 | What's In a Genealogy? | Matt. 1:1-21 |
| Dec. 16 | NO STUDY GROUP--WORSHIP THROUGH MUSIC | |
| Dec. 23 | The Wise Men | Matt. 2: 1-12 |
| Dec. 30 | Herod's Atrocities | Matt. 2: 13-18 |
| Jan. 6 | Simeon and Anna | Luke 2: 22-36 |

WORSHIP THROUGH MUSIC SERVICE ON DECEMBER 16TH



Please join us as Chancel Choir and Friends, Handbell Choir, String and Brass Instrumentalists, and Scripture Readers join together once again to provide a service of worship, celebration, meditation, and congregational participation, as we anticipate the coming Christmas Miracle through music and the Word. As the Third Sunday in Advent, the theme of JOY is an appropriate one for this service. We will also pay special notice to this being the 200th Anniversary of the writing and first-time singing of the beloved Christmas Hymn, "Silent Night" INVITE YOUR FRIENDS There's plenty of room in our 'Inn!'

TRADITIONAL CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

Please join us for the Traditional 11 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service of Reflection and Meditation, Lessons and Carols. Included will be special music from the Chancel Choir, friends and soloists, congregational singing of carols and readings of the Lessons from Scripture as the "Christmas Story" is told once again. There will be the traditional lighting of the Christ Candle and Passing of the Light through the congregation candles, as all sing the beloved hymn "Silent Night", celebrating it's 200th Anniversary this Christmas Season! As you leave the sanctuary....



*IT WILL BE CHRISTMAS DAY!!!
"JOY TO THE WORLD THE LORD HAS COME!!!"
PEACE ON EARTH TO ALL!!!*



PRAYER CALENDAR FOR THE CHURCHES OF HURON

December 2, 2018

Lighthouse Assembly of God Church
Pastor Tom Holzaepfel

December 9, 2018

St. Peter Catholic Church
Father Jeff McBeth

December 16, 2018

United Methodist Church
Reverend Pamela Sayre

December 23, 2018

Zion Lutheran Church
Pastor Kristine Schroeder

December 30, 2018

First Presbyterian Church
Pastor Deborah Bowsher



SPECIAL OFFERINGS CHRISTMAS JOY

The Christmas Joy Offering is received anytime during the Advent and Christmas Season to respond in gratitude to the gift of Jesus Christ. Gifts to this offering:

- ◆ Support grants that help retired church workers and their families with critical housing needs
- ◆ Provide aid to church workers with urgent financial and medical needs
- ◆ Give scholarships for racial ethnic students and future church leaders at Presbyterian– related schools and colleges
- ◆ Equip racial ethnic leaders for ministry

Three Ways You Can Give:

- ◆ Through your congregation
- ◆ Text JOY to 20222 to give \$10
- ◆ Visit pcusa.org/donateCJO

THANKS!



Special thanks to everyone that supported the Boy Scout Spaghetti Dinner fundraising event in November! Whether you assisted with setting up, cooking, serving, clean-up or donating items. Your help was greatly appreciated! The scouts had a great turnout for their dinner!

THANK YOU

Dear Friends,
The Board of Trustees, Staff and Volunteers would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your generous donation.

It is because of your generosity that Safe Harbour can offer the services to victims of domestic violence to provide for their safety, to help them heal and become independent survivors in our community.

Sincerely,
Linda L. Mitchell
Executive Director



NURTURE AND MISSION BENEVOLENCE GIVING - 2018

Below is a list of organizations that N&M donated to throughout this past year:

- Boys & Girls Club of Erie County
- Cancer Services of Erie County
- Care and Share
- Volunteers of America / Crossroads
- Helping Hands
- Kinship
- Pastor's Discretionary Fund
- Phil Seeker Fund EHOVE
- Safe Harbor
- Salvation Army/Huron
- Victory Kitchen

FACES AT THE MANGER

J. Barrie Shepherd

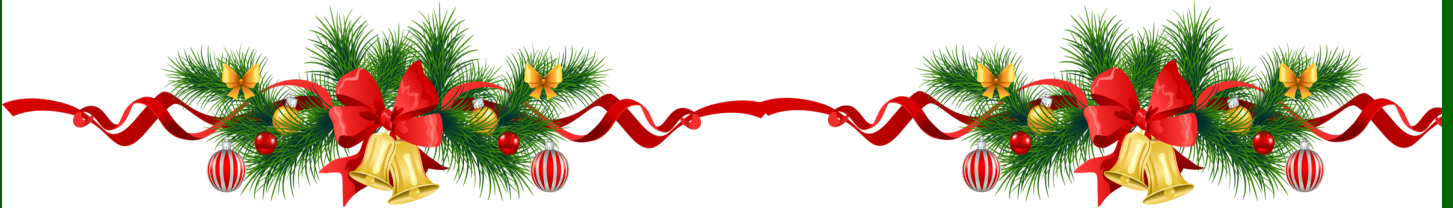
Faces at the Manger



Think back to Advents past. Do most seem to swirl past as breathlessly busy merry-go-rounds? Do you long to reconnect with the spirituality of the Season? Do you want to find Mary's baby boy for the first time – again? Perhaps you've wondered about what the visitors to Jesus' manger felt or thought or even did after they saw the baby?

To help answer those questions, this Advent you're invited to come, hear and discuss excerpts from Rev. J. Barrie Shepherd's Advent classic "Faces at the Manger." In poems, prayers and brief meditations this book describes the thoughts, feelings, questions, and dreams of those who gathered around the newborn king so long ago, as well as the faces that have been there in the centuries since.

Though we'll have a few copies of Rev. Shepherd's book on hand, you need not buy one to participate. Just come as you are to listen as the good pastor's writings are read aloud. Then we'll share our responses to the readings with each other. We'll gather for no more than an hour by the fireplace in the parlor at 4 pm on Wednesdays December 5 and 19.



CHRISTMAS TREE OF REMEMBRANCE

The Christmas season can be very difficult after the loss of a loved one. Sometimes sadness from years past rise up during the season when stores and media proclaim "all is merry and bright."

If you are struggling with holiday blues, you are invited to attend a special Service of Remembrance, Wednesday, December 12 at 4:00 p.m. During our time together you may quietly celebrate Jesus' birth and remember the life of loved ones now gone.

If you like, you may bring an ornament that represents a favorite hobby, profession, or shared interest of your loved one. Ornaments from previous trees already be hung on the Remembrance Tree and after we've hung the new ornaments, all will be included in a special blessing.

Please come and join us. If you are unable to attend, but would like an ornament placed for your loved one you may bring those to the office and we'll make sure that they are placed on the tree. May the Blessings of this Christmas Season be with you and those who you love!





PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE

OUT OF CHAOS, HOPE

“The flame shall not consume you”

We know that your hearts, like ours, have been broken as the devastation wrought by wildfires in California continues to increase in severity. In addition to the destruction of land and forests, the cost to lives and human community has been unprecedented, and those costs are still rising. The town of Paradise has been leveled; more than 80 people have been confirmed dead at this writing, and thousands more are unaccounted for. In Northern California, families are living in tents and having difficulty accessing basic services; many of those who have lost their homes are older than 60. While the focus is on those closest to the fires, the impact is widespread. Due to the smoke, communities hundreds of miles from the fires are being impacted by unhealthy air quality. What's more, after the wildfires there is an increased risk of mudslides.



*Seminole Springs Mobile Home Park in Cornell, California
(Photo by PDA NRT member, Dave Doehnert)*

Through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA), the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has been present since the beginning of the disaster. Working closely with leadership in the affected presbyteries, we have released emergency grants to support the presbyteries in meeting the urgent needs of their neighbors. At the request of the Red Cross, PDA has deployed four disaster spiritual care providers from our national response team to work directly with survivors in shelters and the affected communities. We are deploying additional PDA teams to support the presbyteries in their assessment and response as they help their neighbors begin recovery. Additional grants for ongoing emergency support for survivors and long-term recovery will be forthcoming.

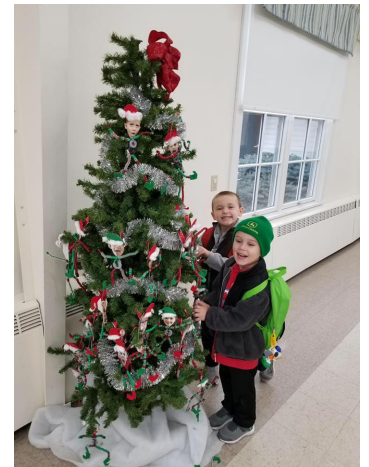
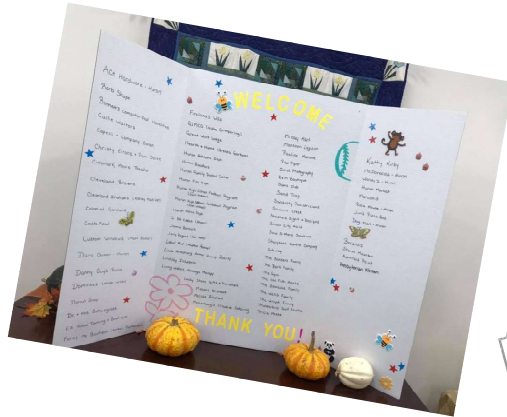
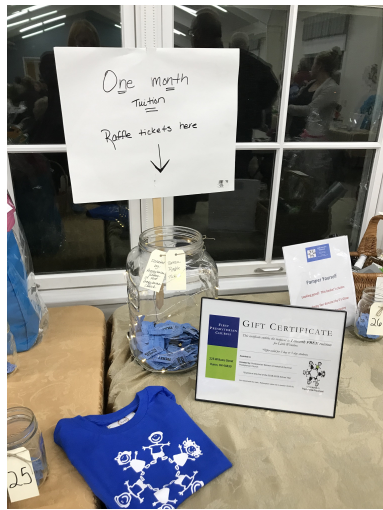
HOW YOU CAN HELP:

To give by phone, call 800-872-3283. To send a check, please write **DR000165** on the memo line and mail to:
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
P.O. Box 643700
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700

As people of faith we seek comfort, support, and direction from God. We ask that you join your spirits with ours as we walk with our California neighbors through the valley of the shadow.

LITTLE WONDERS

The Little Wonders hosted a Spaghetti Dinner here in November. The event was well attended and brought in their biggest fundraising amount ever! The hot ticket item was a month of free tuition donated by the Presbyterian Women's group! Many people bought tickets and bid on that item. They even used a bigger jar for all of the tickets....just to accommodate them all! Special thanks to all the parents and families who made this event so successful! Thank you to all who attended or donated items!





IN THE COMMUNITY



SPECIAL, ARTISTIC WORSHIP OPPORTUNITY

This Advent season the church's wonderful Worship Through Music service will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, December 16th. The choir, bell choir soloists and special musicians all hope you'll share the morning with them!

But that's not the only worship opportunity you'll have that day. In the afternoon you're invited to hear the Christmas story as never before!

That's when the Firelands Presbyterian Church in Port Clinton will host Rev. Dennis Dewey in a Concert of Christmas Storytelling.

Rev. Dewey is ordained in the PC(USA) and is a master biblical storyteller who has shared the Word all over North America, the United Kingdom, Australia, South Africa, South Korea and beyond! He's performed and led workshops at the National Storytelling Festival, Princeton Theological Seminary's Institute of Theology, Oxford University and national television.

This is an opportunity not to be missed. Dennis' faith filled presentation can make even Matthew's genealogy of Jesus sound fascinating!

Anyone who wants to come along can meet up with Pastor Deb here at 2:45 p.m. to travel together. If you can't ride with us and still want to attend, the concert begins at 4:00 p.m

CHRIST SALAD LUNCHEON

Church Women United's presents their

Christmas Salad Luncheon

on Friday, December 7th @ 12 pm

Theme: "In Joy to Celebrate God's Gift"

~ Luke 2:6-15

Keynote Speaker: Pastor Joseph M.A. Strong

Host Church: Providence Missionary Baptist Church

224 Dixie Avenue, Sandusky, OH 44870

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Saturday, Dec. 1st @ 9 am- 3 pm

at St. Stephen UCC Church

(located at 905 E. Perkins Avenue, Sandusky, OH)

- ◆ A nice variety of vendors offering homemade items including jewelry, decorations, crocheted & knitted items, and wood plaques.
- ◆ Lebkuchen Cookies
- ◆ Christmas Resale Shop
- ◆ Scrip Gift Cards
- ◆ Lunch Available

\$1.00 Admission to benefit the food pantry.

SEARCH FOR THE CHRIST CHILD



The New Life Church in Sandusky will be hosting their annual "Search for the Christ Child" event on Saturday, December 3 from 5-8 pm and Sunday, December 4 from 4-7 pm. Come and experience the REAL story of Christmas as you walk through biblical Bethlehem.

Travel with a shepherd on a 20 minute guided tour. Located at the New Life Church, 6511 Milan Rd, Sandusky, OH.





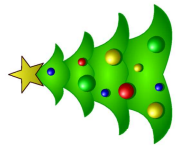
December 2 Chris Hakeman
 December 5 Fern Delamatre
 December 7 Karen Brown
 December 9 Dick Connerth
 December 16 Jeanne Smith
 December 22 Marty Ryu
 December 24 Edwina Chamberlin
 December 25 Carol Johnson
 December 25 Katy Mischler
 December 29 Sharon Velliquette



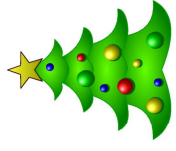
December 2 Little Wonders Christmas Program @ 1 pm
 December 3 Prayer Group @ 1 pm
 December 4 PW Circle @ 1 pm
 December 5 Faces at the Manger @ 4 pm
 December 8 Tree Trimming Event @ 4-6 pm
 December 12 Christmas Remembrance Tree Service @ 4 pm
 December 12 Christ's Meal @ 5 pm
 December 12 Girlfriends in God @ 6 pm
 December 12 F&M and Worship Meetings @ 7 pm
 December 13 N&M Meeting @ 7:30 pm
 December 14 Retired Teachers Luncheon @ noon
 December 16 Worship Through Music Service @ 10 am
 December 16 Congregational Meeting following worship
 December 17 Prayer Group @ 1 pm
 December 19 Faces at the Manger @ 4 pm
 December 19 Session Meeting @ 7 pm
 December 24 Christmas Eve Worship Service @ 11 pm
 December 26 Christ's Meal @ 5 pm




	Ushers	Liturgist	Hospitality	Flowers
Dec. 2	Jack & Marcia Arthur	Tammy Boos	Christian Education	Doug & Wendy Quinn
Communion Servers: Janet Mueller, Katy McGraw, Kathy Kirby, and Rachel Pratt Communion Set-up: KC Wittmer				
Dec. 9	Edwina Chamberlin & Rachel Pratt	KC Wittmer	Patti Smith	Ron Ruble/ Mueller Family
Dec. 16	Chuck & Bob Kaman		Kathy Kirby	Glann Family
Dec. 23	Kathy Kirby & Ron Ruble	Janeane Hopkins	Kaman Family	
Dec. 30	Sarah Blakeman & June Hanes	Steve Koenig	Gail Burke	Muntz Family



DECEMBER 2018



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 Adult Bible Study @ 8:45am Worship @10:00am (2-Cents-A-Meal/Communion/ Receive Confirmands) Little Wonders Christmas Program @ 1 pm	3 Hot Dog Monday @ noon Prayer Group @ 1 pm	4 PW Circle @ 1 pm	5 Faces at the Manger @ 4 pm	6 HHS Cheer Banquet @5pm Handbell Practice @ 6:30 pm Chance Choir Practice @ 7:30 pm	7 No School! Little Wonders	8 Tree Trimming Event @ 4-6 pm
9 Adult Bible Study @ 8:45am Worship @10:00am	10 Hot Dog Monday @ noon	11	12 Christmas Tree Re- membrance Service @ 4 pm Christ's Community Meal @ 5 pm Girlfriends in God @ 6pm F&M/Worship @ 7 pm	13 Handbell Practice @ 6:30 pm Chance Choir Practice @7:30 pm N&M @ 7:30 pm	14 Retired Teachers Luncheon @ noon	15
16 Adult Bible Study @ 8:45am Worship Through Music Service @10:00am Congregational Meeting	17 Hot Dog Monday @ noon Prayer @ 1 pm	18	19 Faces at the Manger @ 4 pm Session @ 7 pm	20 Handbell Practice @ 6:30 pm Chance Choir Practice @ 7:30 pm	21	22
23 Adult Bible Study @ 8:45am Worship @10:00am	24 Hot Dog Monday @ noon Christmas Eve Service @ 11 pm Office Closed	25 Merry Christmas! 	26 Christ's Community Meal @ 5 pm	27 Handbell Practice @ 6:30 pm Chance Choir Practice @7:30 pm	28	29
30 Adult Bible Study @ 8:45am Worship @10:00am	31 Hot Dog Monday @ noon Office Closed	Happy New Year! 