

December 2019

Meeting House News

First Presbyterian Church
On the Square, 2A North Hanover Street
Carlisle, Pennsylvania 17013



The Reverend Anthony D. Lorenz, Pastor
The Reverend Jon A. Black, Pastor Emeritus
Deborah Madden, Educator Emerita
Arthur Thompson, Organist
Susan Shuey, Choir Director
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Pastor's Corner



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Dear Members & Friends of First Presbyterian Church,

I've never been very good at waiting. When I was growing up I used to hate going to a restaurant where you have to wait to be seated and then order off the menu and then wait for your food to arrive. Too much waiting! Even now I'm still not very good at waiting. I always look for the shortest lines at the gas station or the grocery store (though rarely the fastest).

What is it about waiting that seems to frustrate us so much? Why does it seem like the bell will never ring at the end of the school day or why does the line seem so long at the airport or why does Christmas seem so close yet so far?

Most of us struggle with this waiting business. And then the church turns around and gives us a whole season of waiting, a whole season of preparation for Jesus' birth. And this is hard waiting! Everywhere around us Christmas is in full swing. Retailers and merchants can't put those jack-o-lanterns away fast enough in order to drag out the trees and wreaths. Black Friday sales start in early November, and the movies and the music!

The world struggles with waiting just as much as we do. So what good does it do to participate in Advent? Why should we hold back? Why should we wait? I wonder if it has something to do with that feeling we all had as children, when Christmas seemed so close and yet it was still so far away. Those December days just seemed to drag on forever and we thought Christmas would never come! But then it did.

I think that's how we see the world these days. We have Jesus' promise that He will return one day and usher in the Kingdom of God. There is no pain or suffering or anger or fear or sin in God's Kingdom. What a day that will be, better than Christmas! But we're not there yet. It's close, but still so far away. Advent reminds us that Jesus is coming back, and Advent invites us to prepare ourselves for this reality. We celebrate Christ's first birth by preparing for His second birth, and rejoicing in that day when God's people and, indeed, all of God's creation will be made new.

Yours very truly in Christ,
Pastor Tony Lorenz

PS: Thank you for the lovely gift and recognition during Pastor Appreciation Month. I was most surprised! Your love and appreciation means a great deal to me.

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL
You are invited to read and/or listen to daily Advent devotionals provided from the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary community. Go to the site directly at: https://www.pts.edu/devotional_1 or link to it from our church website (under "Resources").

The Prayer Community meets under the leadership of Jamie Hoffman after worship on the 3rd Sunday of the month. Pray-ers are welcome!



When grocery-shopping, remember SOUP for SHARE!

Can't make it to church? Listen to sermons & full services, plus read the monthly newsletter at: www.firstprescarlisle.org

Advent & Christmas at First Church



Thursday, Dec. 19, 7:30 PM: Blue Christmas (The Longest Night) Service. For many, the Christmas season is a time of peace and joy, but others do not experience Christmas that way. For some, celebrating at all is a real struggle as they deal with the pain of losing a love one, being out of work, or simply being alone at Christmas. This service is designed to give a voice to these feelings which are usually suppressed, and to speak a word of hope to all who long for peace and joy in their lives. We will gather in the sanctuary on this evening to remember and pray and hope. It will be a quiet, contemplative time. No offering will be received.



Tuesday, Dec. 24, 5:00 PM: Children/Families Christmas Eve Service.

Tuesday, Dec. 24, 8:00 PM: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service.

Arrive at 7:30 to enjoy special Christmas music. Then at 8:00, we will worship in a service filled with music, carols, scripture, prayers and proclamations, closing with a traditional candle-lighting. The Christmas Eve offering will go to:

50% - Habitat for Humanity, Cumberland Valley Chapter;

50% - Presbytery Housing Initiative, Honduras

Bring in your favorite bell on the 4th Sunday of Advent (Dec 22) to ring vigorously during the last stanza of the closing hymn!



FLOWER COMMITTEE NEEDS YOUR HELP!

NEEDED ARE size 3 cans used to give/deliver altar flowers. Size 3 is the size of large juice cans (46 fl. oz.).

Thank you!



Stocking stuffers anyone?

- ◇ soup mix (on kitchen counter)
- ◇ Church note cards
- ◇ Cell phone cleaners

Merry Christmas!



Ladies —
You Are Invited!

Faith Circle invites ALL WOMEN of the church to a holiday social. It is on Monday, December 16th at 3 PM in Fellowship Hall. Introduced will be Carved in Stone — a study of the Ten Commandments — to be used in 2020. Retired Educator Debby Madden will lead the study.

We hope you can attend!
Presbyterian Women



GIVE A GIFT OF SONG

Is your worship enriched by the music program of this church? If so, you can support the choir by sponsoring an anthem "in honor" or "in memory" of someone.

Anthems will be on display in Fellowship Hall during December. Simply select your anthem, then fill in the label with the words as you want them to appear in a bulletin dedication the Sunday your anthem is sung.

Thank you for your support!



Hanging of the Greens & Soup Luncheon



After worship on the 2nd Sunday of Advent — December 8th — there will be a simple soup luncheon followed by the Hanging of the Greens. Some of the decorating will be done in advance, mainly the gaslight wreaths and the balcony garlands. Remaining will be six projects to complete. A leader will be designated to supervise each project. Projects are:

- Assembly and decorate the tree in Fellowship Hall.
- Decorate the three front doors with pine roping and hang wreaths on all the entrance doors.
- Hang garland on the organ pipes with a wreath and two swags.
- Place greenery and candles on the window sills in the sanctuary.
- Decorate the tower stairway area and place the nativity set on the small table in that area.
- Prepare the candles and holders for distribution at the Christmas Eve service. Prepare the candles for the decorated aisle stanchions. The stanchions will not be put in place until after the worship on Sunday, December 22.

Decorating activities will be followed by a short devotional led by Pastor Tony that will include carol singing. Watch for a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall to help us in our planning. We hope you will attend and make this event the start of your Christmas season.

Thank you,

Worship Committee



Poinsettias

Poinsettias will once again be offered for purchase this Christmas season. If you wish to buy one/more to adorn the sanctuary, please provide the information below to either Mrs. Joan Line, 2070 Ritner Highway, Carlisle, PA 17015; or to the church office. The price is still **\$9.00**. Make checks payable to **"Flower Fund, First Presbyterian Church."** Both orders & payments must be received by Sunday, Dec. 8th. Flowers will be available Sunday, **Dec. 15th**.

IN MEMORY OF:

IN HONOR OF:

BY:

Place a checkmark beside which of the following is/are applicable:

- I will pick up my poinsettia(s) after the Christmas Eve service.
- I will leave my poinsettia(s) to be given to a shut-in.
- I am willing to deliver a poinsettia to a shut-in.



<u>Financial Update</u>		
	<u>OCT</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Giving	\$22,734	\$201,126
Investments	\$ 1,912	\$ 14,021
Shares Redeemed	\$12,000	\$26,000
Other	\$	\$ 3,457
Total Income	\$36,646	\$244,604
Expenses	(\$24,457)	(\$254,926)
	(Stewardship & Finance Committee)	

A Christmas Prayer

“Loving God, help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the wise men.”

Robert Louis Stevenson

In the New Year



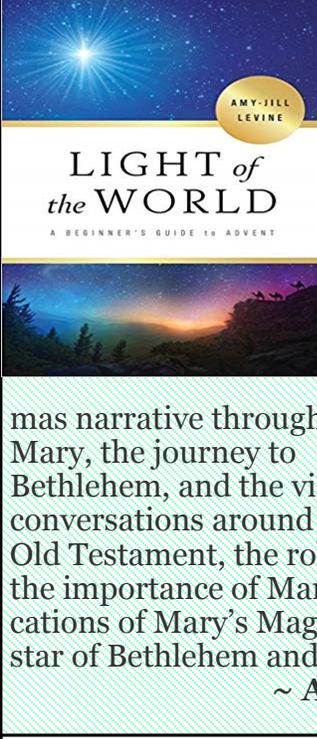
In preparing files for a new year, I came across a folder titled, “One Book, One Church, One Year.” Some years ago (2005-2006), First Church members/friends endeavored to read the Bible in a year. So, I’ve brushed it off, assigned 2020 dates and will reprint it for your use before the start of the new year. Look for copies in Fellowship Hall.

Deacons’ December Doings

Salvation Army Bell-Ringing
 The Deacons & Friends will ring the red kettle bells outside JoAnn Fabrics (Point Mall) on Sat., Dec. 7, 10 AM—9 PM. Alice Zimmerman is POC, 240-0063.



Truck Stop Ministry Cookies
 As you bake Christmas cookies this season, why not make a few extra? The Deacons ask you to drop them off Friday, 6th (9-2), or Sunday, 8th. They will package them & deliver them to Carlisle Truck Stop Ministry for their use in sharing a touch of home with truckers who pass through our local area.
 Thanks!



Adult Sunday School — Advent 2019

We will have a special study theme during the 9:30 AM hour Sundays during Advent.

In the book, ***Light of the World: A Beginner’s Guide to Advent***, author, professor, and biblical scholar Amy-Jill Levine explores the biblical texts surrounding the story of the birth of Jesus. We will join her as she traces the Christmas narrative through the stories of Zechariah and Elizabeth, Mary, the journey to Bethlehem, and the visit from the Magi. These stories open conversations around connections of the Gospel stories to the Old Testament, the role of women in first-century Jewish culture, the importance of Mary’s visitation and the revolutionary implications of Mary’s Magnificat, the census and the stable, and the star of Bethlehem and the flight to Egypt.

~ ALL ARE WELCOME ~

\$\$\$ From The Stewardship & Finance Committee \$\$\$

A special federal tax break is available for seniors owning an IRA. Individuals who are age 70-1/2 or older can make donations from their Traditional IRA to a qualified charity such as First Presbyterian Church. The donation will not count as personal income. Individuals must transfer the funds directly from the custodian of their IRA to the charity & cannot personally take possession of the funds at any time during the transfer. For more info, contact your tax advisor, the IRA custodian, or a member of the Stewardship & Finance Committee, chaired by Fred Seltzer.



2020 Church Envelopes will be ready for pick-up shortly. If you do not use envelopes currently, but would like to, just let the church secretary know.

December Birthdays

- 2 Avis Allen
Steve Walker
- 4 Janet Clark
- 8 James Dukes
- 11 Jon Black
- 15 Kathryn Yeager
- 16 Allison Whitman
Molly Shane
- 17 Barb Crum
Tommy Dennison
Richard Tritt
- 18 Mark Easteadt
- 19 Lois Lloyd
- 20 Bill Beck
Danielle Weiser
- 27 Sam Whitman
- 28 Jack Hofferica
- 29 Bill Gottlieb
- 31 Madison Ellis



December Worship Helpers

READERS

- Dec. 1: Bruce Bailey
Dec. 8: Earl Zimmerman
Dec. 15: Susan Meehan
Dec. 22: Carlton Walker
Dec. 29: Tom McKinnon

USHERS

- Dec. 1: Lynne Hofferica; Rick Line
Dec. 8: Bill & Rita Beck; Dennis & Connie Husler
Dec. 15: Randy Crawford; Richard & Deb Bressler;
Amelia Bressler
Dec. 22: Bruce & Anita Ashbaugh; Dick & Ellen Darr
Dec. 29: Bruce & Kathy Mulvey; Bruce & Anita
Ashbaugh

COUNTERS

- Dec. 1: Bruce & Trudy Bailey; Fred Seltzer
Dec. 8: Deb Ryerson; Terry Shull; Carlton Walker
Dec. 15: Ron & Deb Richcreek; Mary Jane Blosser
Dec. 22: Bruce & Kathy Mulvey; Barb Allen
Dec. 29: Bob & Judie Read; Earlene Heckendorn

FLOWERS

Alice Zimmerman (chair)

FELLOWSHIP HOSTS

- Dec. 1:
Dec. 8: None Needed (luncheon)
Dec. 15:
Dec. 22:
Dec. 29: None Needed

COMMUNION

Dec. 1

PREPARERS: Dennis & Connie Husler;
Anita Ashbaugh

SERVERS: Lynda Mann; Fred Seltzer;
Charlie Thompson

Dec. 24

PREPARERS:

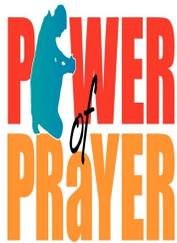
SERVERS:

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**If you cannot serve as scheduled, please find a replacement and provide the substitute's name to the office as soon as known.
Thank you for serving!**

PRAYER PARTNERS



On December 1st, we will exchange Prayer Partners during worship. To participate, simply:

1. Write your name on the bulletin insert
2. Place it in the offering plate
3. Select a slip of paper as you depart.
4. Pray for your partner in 2020!

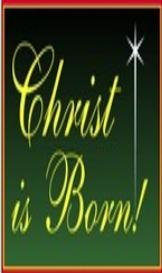
The last day your 2019 donations to the church can be received is Sunday, December 29th.
Thank you.

2020 Per Capita

The "per capita" amount for 2020 is \$27.20 (a \$.10 increase from 2019). You may use the blue envelope inside your offering envelopes box at any time during 2020. This is a regular expense per member payable by each church.

DECEMBER 2019



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1—ADVENT 1 9:15: Prayer 9:30: Education 10:45: Worship, Communion; Prayer Partners After: Fellowship</p>	<p>2 7: Deacons</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4 6: Worship Committee 7: Choir</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7 10AM-9PM: Deacons Bell- Ringing (Point Mall)</p>
<p>8—ADVENT 2 9:15: Prayer 9:30: Education 10:45: Worship After: Advent Luncheon & Hanging of the Greens (Truck Stop Ministry Cookies) (Last day to order poinsettias!)</p>	<p>9 7: Space for God</p>	<p>10 6:30: Bible Study</p>	<p>11 7: Choir 5-9: Farmers Market Dinner</p>	<p>12 3:30: Property Committee</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>15—ADVENT 3 9:15: Prayer 9:30: Education 10:45: Worship; Peace Rose After: Fellowship (Poinsettias in the sanctuary)</p>	<p>16 2: Faith Circle (note date change)</p>	<p>17 7: Session</p>	<p>18 7: Choir</p>	<p>19 7:30 AM: Men's Break- fast 7:30 PM: Blue Christmas Service</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>22—ADVENT 4 9:15: Prayer 9:30: Education 10:45: Worship; Bell Sunday After: Fellowship</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24 5: Children/ Families Service 7:30: Special music begins 8: Christmas Eve Candle- light Service</p>	<p>25 </p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29 No Sunday School 10:45: Worship; Bill Beck preaching No Fellowship</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>			<p> Sunday, Jan. 5: Epiphany Sunday; "Star Gifts" will be distributed</p>	