



DECEMBER 1 - WORSHIP, COMMUNION - 10 AM
DECEMBER 2 - ADVENT BOOK STUDY BEGINS - 4 PM
DECEMBER 7 - CONFIRMATION CLASS - 3 - 6 PM
DECEMBER 8 - WORSHIP - 10 AM
DECEMBER 8 - ADVENT SOCIAL - 11 AM
DECEMBER 10 - SELINGSGROVE CENTER CHRISTMAS PARTY - 5:45 PM
DECEMBER 14 - BUFFALO VALLEY SINGERS CONCERT - 7:30 PM
DECEMBER 15 - WORSHIP, BETHANY GIFTS DEDICATION- 10 AM
DECEMBER 15 - FELLOWSHIP HOUR - 11 AM
DECEMBER 15 - BUDGET MEETING - 11 AM
DECEMBER 15 - BUFFALO VALLEY SINGERS CONCERT - 3 PM
DECEMBER 22 - WORSHIP - 10 AM
DECEMBER 24 - CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE - 7 PM
DECEMBER 25 - CHRISTMAS DAY DINNER - NOON
DECEMBER 29 - WORSHIP - 10 AM

December 

stjohnslewisburg.org

Lewisburg, PA 17837

1050 Buffalo Road

St. John's UCC





We move into the season of Advent at the very beginning of December (on December 1st). As in years past we will yearn for and prepare for the celebration of the birth of Jesus. We will also celebrate and yearn for Christ's appearance among us now and in the future.

Our Advent theme this year is "On the Way to Bethlehem", based on the book by Robert Fuguay and incorporating the materials from the Worship Design Studio (Marcia McFee). Here's a bit of an introduction to our theme:

We are so often focused on the destination in our travels. "Where are you going?" is the most common question upon hearing that someone is heading out of town. While the destination is perhaps the impetus for deciding to "go," it is often the journey itself that offers the most memorable moments -frustrating or delightful. This Advent season, we will pay attention not just to the destination of Christmas, but also to the places where events occurred that led to a starry night on which a child was born who would change the world. And we will ponder our own milestones-the progress and the potholes "on the way."

In our book study group on Monday afternoons (tentatively scheduled for 4 p.m.) and in worship we'll explore some of the stops along the way - Rome, Jerusalem, Nazareth and finally Bethlehem. In each of those places we'll explore the dynamics and impacts of those locations on the events approximately 2,000 years ago. As we accompany the biblical characters through the season, we will also explore our hearts and the ways we are longing for hope, joy, peace and love in our lives and in the world.

I pray that during the potential hustle and bustle of the season each one of us will find ways to attend to our spiritual journey as well. There's a devotional journal available in the Narthex and other devotional materials. Each Sunday we will be invited to look for the ways that God can take even the unexpected, unwanted and unholy and being new life - and Christ can be born among us and in us no matter where we are. The hope is that through this Advent journey we will be changed and go "home" in a way that is different from the start of the journey.

Here is Robert Fuquay's prayer as we start Advent together:

Dear Lord, may I become more aware this season of the journey of my life. Help me to see and discover you as my Guide. As I make my way to Christmas, may I step aside from the daily destinations of life to consider where my journey is ultimately taking me and where you want to lead me. Help me to be open to sights and stops you want to show me as I go, so that when I arrive at Christmas, I will be at a new starting point of my journey. Amen.

Blessed Advent and Christmas to each one of you!

Alice

“Red Book” Memories Continued XXVII

“Provisions for the Journey”

We have begun a new, yet old journey into our congregation’s future. It’s old in the sense that we are a faith community devoted to God and seeking to live out the mission of Jesus Christ through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It’s a new journey because we will be working to do those very things in an everchanging, unfolding world. We will need provisions.

In order to be true to our God-given work and to our church’s history, we will need to address two important questions. How do we respect and learn from the past? What things are worth preserving and how? Answering the first question is relatively easy. It’s the second one that will challenge us.

How do we respect and learn from the past? First, we continue to examine our congregation’s historical records and listen to the story of our church, its pastors, and its people. We must do so with an eye on the previous times and circumstances in which our faith community functioned. There are messages from our earliest days, when Lewisburg was named Derrstown and it was more a frontier settlement than a quiet borough within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. And let us not forget what can be learned from the times when our church endured and thrived during the American Civil War, two World Wars, the Great Depression of 1929, the societal turmoil of the 1960s, and several regional conflicts overseas. The people around us, as well our nation, required much of our church. How did we do it and still remain faithful to God, Jesus, and our mission to serve? The answers, which can guide us into the future, reside in the documents of our past, along with the memories of some of our long-term congregants. These must be preserved and studied. That will be one of the provisions we need for the journey ahead.

What things are worth preserving and how? As was noted in last month’s “Red Book Memories Continued” article, we have always valued inspiring worship services enhanced by music, quality Christian education, hospitality, congregational generosity, active mission and service to our neighbors, and skilled pastors. We must continue to preserve these aspects of our congregational life since they define and nourish who we are as a church. These are other provisions for our journey. But how do we do that?

The Wisdom Teacher of Ecclesiastes writes, “There is a time to look for something and a time to consider it lost. There is a time to keep things and a time to throw things away” (Ecclesiastes 3:6, ERV). To preserve the best of who we are for our future work and continuation as a faith community, we must adapt to changing times and embrace new ways of being a church, a lesson we can learn from our past.

Recall from previous “Red Book” articles, that during the mid-1800s, our ancestral congregations changed from German worship services to ones that were fully English-language. This was done to meet the growing needs of those attracted to and attending our church. When the format of our worship services or our congregational hymnals were no longer spiritually fulfilling or aligned with changing denominational affiliations, we adopted new ones. When our building facilities could not handle what was asked of them for worship, mission, or community outreach, we renovated or completely rebuilt them. And when technology changed and made it possible to connect with our members and others in new ways, we embraced it. For example, during the pastorate of Rev. Perry Smith, we purchased and starting using a mimeograph in 1938. This led to the first publishing of worship bulletins and congregational newsletters. We went on from there to make use of advanced copying machines and telephone systems, as well as projectors and DVD players. We obtained video recorders for the distribution of taped worship services to shut-ins and others. Now, we broadcast our worship to members and others through various social media platforms. Without a doubt, the capacity to discern what is useful or not, a willingness to change, and adaptability, are other important provisions we will need.

We have embarked on a new, yet old journey. We have the provisions we need: a history to study, values that define who we are, and the ability to change and adapt to our circumstances. Armed with faith in God, the mission Jesus gave us, the guidance of the Spirit, and a belief in ourselves and each other, let us take those first steps into the good tomorrow the Holy One is preparing for St. John’s!



CHRISTMAS DAY DINNER

You are welcome to join us for Christmas Day Dinner in the Fellowship hall. We will be serving appetizers, turkey, ham, all the sides and deserts. Come at noon for fellowship and we will serve when everyone has arrived.

It would be appreciated if you could let Todd, Linda Sartwell 570-966-1101, or Kay Nottis 570-523-7137 know that you are coming so we can set enough places. We always have room for more. If you know of someone spending Christmas alone, please invite them to come too.

Save the Date: January Second Sunday Social

The Christian Education team will begin the next set of Second Sunday Socials on **January 12, 2025**, after church in the Fellowship Hall. Please join us for a light lunch and learning opportunity!



CHRISTMAS BASKETS

Our congregation will be providing Christmas Dinner Baskets for 15 Children and Youth families who need assistance to have a holiday meal. We will be collecting both monetary donations, and nonperishable foods such as (cranberry sauce, stuffing mix, instant mashed potatoes, canned veggies and fruits, and dessert such as Jello/pudding, pie filling and crust, and cake mixes). Please have all donations to the Church no later than **MONDAY, DECEMBER 16th, 2024**.

Please be generous this holiday so others may be able to enjoy a nice holiday meal and leftovers.



OCTOBER 2024 REPORT

Current Operating Receipts	\$ 40,430.60
Current Operating Disbursements	\$ - 21,762.67
Current Operating Balance	\$ 18,674.93



12/01 James Donlin
12/02 Brenda Adams
12/02 Deb Catherman
12/03 Sue Tomlinson
12/05 Justin Baughman
12/10 Linda Sartwell
12/15 Sharon Brown
12/15 Lynn Dean
12/15 Betty Hackenberg
12/18 Anna Brouse
12/23 Richard Berry
12/23 Ann Louise Snyder
12/24 Michael Catherman
12/29 Roger Spickler

12/23 Roberts, Janet & Michael
12/26 Fuller, Lola & Bill
12/29 Rauch, Alice & Palmer Dreesse
12/30 Letteer, Jeanne & John
12/31 Fennell, Vicki & William

A Need for Walk-through Volunteers

Did you know that every evening, a church volunteer does a walk-through of the church building? They check for air conditioners that don't need to run all night, running water in sinks and toilets, exterior doors that should be locked, signs of water leakage from above or below, and so forth. They are the ones who often spot small problems before they become big problems. Volunteers usually sign up for a calendar month. We need several more volunteers for 2025. Can you consider volunteering for this important task? If so, please contact the church office (stjohnsucc@ptd.net).

Many thanks from the Buildings and Grounds Committee





Our New Bench

Many thanks to Beth Moser, who donated the sunflower bench that is near the Office entrance. Now folks will have a place to sit, put down packages while unlocking the door, or even have lunch on a mild day!

Thanks so much, Beth!

The Christian Education Committee would like to thank everyone for their contributions to this year's Trunk-or-Treat event in October. From setup to cleanup, we had a great day, made possible by many helping hands. We appreciate everyone who brought their decorated trunks and handed out candy for the afternoon. We had a nice turnout! The Public Library for Union County Bookmobile and an emergency vehicle from the William Cameron Engine Company were our special guests. Thank you to the Catherman, Aulenbach, and Adams families for their help with the hot dog and cider stand. We also appreciated the donations of candy, hot dog buns, and cider that came from church members. Thank you, everyone, for helping to make this event a success. What a nice way to show hospitality to our local community!

The Fall Book Study on Biblical Wisdom Literature wrapped up in November. We'd like to take this opportunity to thank our book study host, Dave Smit, for his dedication and leadership. We appreciate all the planning and preparation he did for us. Thank you, Dave!



A CHRISTMAS PARTY FOR RESIDENTS AT SELINGSGROVE CENTER
ON DECEMBER 10

St. John's has a long tradition of providing a Christmas party and gifts to residents at Selinsgrove Center. This year, we will once again be doing this on **Tuesday evening, December 10th**, with the ladies in Wing CF10. This is a special time for all the participants when we deliver presents, treats, and holiday cheer. Please consider going this year and enjoy a truly meaningful Christmas event. Once again, masks are required for any visitors to the center. **We will be meeting at St. John's at the Office entrance at 5:45 PM to carpool to the Center.** Those who leave from the church will bring along the gifts for the residents including quilts provided by the Quilters, Knitters, and Knotters group, and some soft food treats. If you would like to provide some individual pudding cups or soft, packaged cookies for the party, please let Kay Nottis know. If you prefer to drive directly to the Center, go to the main building (front entrance) and wait for the rest of us so we can check the group in there. **The party will start at 6:30PM.** So, bring your enthusiasm, your Christmas carol singing voice, your mask and join in on the fun!



Wired Word Study Group

The Wired Word Study Group will meet on a new day of the month starting in December. Please join us on Monday, **December 2, at 7 p.m., on Zoom**. The Zoom link for the meeting will be sent out via email. Please contact the church if you'd like to be on the Wired Word email list!

What is the Wired Word Study Group? We get together once a month to discuss topics from the weekly Wired Word emails. The emails relate current events to scripture, to create thought-provoking, stimulating discussions. This is a great way to connect our modern-time experiences to the teachings of the Bible. A topic for this month's Wired Word conversation will be chosen ahead of the meeting from the weekly emails. Please join us for this lively discussion time!



Advent Social

You are all invited to St. John's Advent Social on **Sunday, December 8**, directly after the worship service. We will meet in the Fellowship Hall for food, crafts, music, and an outreach project for our members who are mostly homebound. Please sign up on the sheet in the Narthex to bring a dish or dessert to share. We hope you can join us for this fun, relaxing time of fellowship!

What Should We Put into Our Time Capsule?

A time capsule reaches out to future generations and says, "Remember Us." As we mark our bicentennial year, how do we want to be remembered? What do we want future church members or others to know about us, 50 or 100 years from now? What should we put into our church's third time capsule, a sealed vessel of mementos to be buried in the near future on the church grounds?

In September, on Rally Day Sunday, the congregation was asked for input. So far, the suggestions we have received are:

- Sheet music for "A Joyous Song of Praise," as a representation of our lives as Christians.
- A fork, representing all of the mouths we have fed.
- A milkweed seed pod and monarch butterfly, as a representation of our butterfly garden, and our concern and care for the natural world.
- Something representing Kamala Harris as possibly the first black woman president.
- A COVID mask, representative of the recent pandemic and our difficulties we faced as individuals and a church.
- A candle, representing God and Jesus lighting our way.
- A Bible.
- Eye glasses, representing our looking to the future.
- A copy of the celebratory hymn written for our bicentennial observance.
- An olive wood cross, representing our uniqueness, the Holy land, and the timeless meaning given to it.
- A tiny quilt, representing our quilt and prayer shawl ministries.

What other thoughts might you have? Please let Pastor Alice, Pastor Gary, Todd, or any member of Consistory know so we can best represent St. John's with a time capsule, during this period in our history.

DECEMBER VOLUNTEERS

Lock-up: MARK BROUSE

Lay-Reader: SHANNON PRUTZMAN

Preparation of Communion Elements:

DECEMBER	CHILDREN'S CHURCH	OPENER/FLOWER DEL.
1	DURING WORSHIP	CAROL BERRY
8	DURING WORSHIP	
15	DURING WORSHIP	
22	DURING WORSHIP	
29	DURING WORSHIP	

DECEMBER	FLOWER SPONSORS	Acolyte
1	SUE & JIM TOMLINSON	Keira/Kora Aulenbach
8	BRENDA & DON ADAMS	Keira/ Kora Aulenbach
15	WENDY GENTZEL & SYLAS WILDE	Keira/ Kora Aulenbach
22	JANET & MIKE ROBERTS	Keira/ Kora Aulenbach
29		

DECEMBER	GREETERS
1	STACI & SHANNON PRUTZMAN
8	CAROL BERRY
15	STACI & SHANNON PRUTZMAN
22	
29	



Worship: 10:00 a.m.
Indoors or online
via Facebook or YouTube

Visit us on the Web!
www.stjohnslewisburg.org



St. John's United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation

No matter who you are, or where
you are on life's journey, you're
welcome here!

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MONTHLY COMMUNION MISSIONS

December - CHRISTMAS FUND, BETHANY GIFTS, CHRISTMAS BASKETS

January - LEAF

February - MAZEPPA MANA

March - OGHS (ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1</p> <p>CHILDREN'S CHURCH DURING WORSHIP</p> <p>9:00am CHANCEL CHOIR REHEARSAL (CHRM)</p> <p>10:00am WORSHIP - COMMUNION</p>	<p>2</p> <p>12:00pm Lewisburg Garden Club Board (PAR)</p> <p>4:00pm ADVENT BOOK STUDY (GP)</p> <p>7:00pm BVS REHEARSAL (FH)</p> <p>7:00pm WIRED WORD BIBLE STUDY (GP/ZOOM)</p>	<p>3</p> <p>10:30am Willowbrook Strings (FH)</p> <p>7:00pm Men's Westbranch Chorus (FH)</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p> <p>8:30am WW (FH)</p> <p>9:00am TOPS (CR)</p> <p>1:30pm Trailside Troubadours (FH)</p> <p>7:00pm Building & Grounds (PAR)</p> <p>7:00pm Women's Barbershop Chorus (CH.RM)</p>	<p>6</p> <p>1:30pm Violin Class (SANCT.)</p> <p>4:00pm Suzuki Class (SANCT.)</p>	<p>7</p> <p>10:00am Suzuki Class Recital (SANCT.)</p>
<p>8</p> <p>CHILDREN'S CHURCH DURING WORSHIP</p> <p>8:45am BELL CHOIR REHEARSAL (SANCT.)</p> <p>9:15am CHANCEL CHOIR REHEARSAL (CHRM)</p> <p>10:00am WORSHIP</p> <p>11:00am ADVENT SOCIAL (FH)</p>	<p>9</p> <p>9:00am ST. JOHN'S QUILTERS, KNITTERS & MORE (CR)</p> <p>1:00pm WORSHIP/MUSIC (GP)</p> <p>4:00pm ADVENT BOOK STUDY (GP)</p> <p>7:00pm BVS REHEARSAL (SANCT)</p> <p>7:00pm CHRISTIAN ED. COMMITTEE (ZOOM)</p>	<p>10</p> <p>10:30am Willowbrook Strings (FH)</p> <p>6:30pm SELINGROVE CENTER PARTY</p> <p>7:00pm Men's Westbranch Chorus (FH)</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p> <p>8:30am WW (FH)</p> <p>9:00am TOPS (CR)</p> <p>1:30pm Trailside Troubadours (FH)</p> <p>7:00pm BVS REHEARSAL (SANCT)</p> <p>7:00pm M.A.S.H. (ZOOM)</p> <p>7:00pm Women's Barbershop Chorus (CH.RM)</p>	<p>13</p> <p>4:30pm BBBS NEPA (FH)</p>	<p>14</p> <p>7:30pm BVS CONCERT (FH/SANCT)</p>
<p>15</p> <p>CHILDREN'S CHURCH DURING WORSHIP</p> <p>9:00am CHANCEL CHOIR REHEARSAL (CHRM)</p> <p>10:00am WORSHIP</p> <p>3:00pm BVS CONCERT (FH/SANCT)</p>	<p>16</p> <p>4:00pm ADVENT BOOK STUDY (GP)</p> <p>6:00pm Evan. Empty Arms Group (CR)</p> <p>7:00pm FINANCE/PERSONNEL (ZOOM)</p>	<p>17</p> <p>10:30am Willowbrook Strings (FH)</p> <p>7:00pm Men's Westbranch Chorus (FH)</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p> <p>8:30am WW (FH)</p> <p>9:00am TOPS (CR)</p> <p>1:30pm Trailside Troubadours (FH)</p> <p>7:00pm CONSISTORY (ZOOM)</p> <p>7:00pm Women's Barbershop Chorus (CH.RM)</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>22</p> <p>CHILDREN'S CHURCH DURING WORSHIP</p> <p>8:45am BELL CHOIR REHEARSAL (SANCT.)</p> <p>9:15am CHANCEL CHOIR REHEARSAL (CHRM)</p> <p>10:00am WORSHIP</p>	<p>23</p> <p>4:00pm ADVENT BOOK STUDY (GP)</p>	<p>24</p> <p>10:30am Willowbrook Strings (FH)</p> <p>7:00pm CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE</p> <p>7:00pm Men's Westbranch Chorus (FH)</p>	<p>25</p> <p>12:00pm Christmas Day Dinner</p>	<p>26</p> <p>8:30am WW (FH)</p> <p>9:00am TOPS (CR)</p> <p>1:30pm Trailside Troubadours (FH)</p> <p>7:00pm Women's Barbershop Chorus (CH.RM)</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29</p> <p>CHILDREN'S CHURCH DURING WORSHIP</p> <p>9:00am CHANCEL CHOIR REHEARSAL (CHRM)</p> <p>10:00am WORSHIP</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>10:30am Willowbrook Strings (FH)</p> <p>7:00pm Men's Westbranch Chorus (FH)</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2</p> <p>8:30am WW (FH)</p> <p>9:00am PEO (GP)</p> <p>9:00am TOPS (CR)</p> <p>1:30pm Trailside Troubadours (FH)</p> <p>7:00pm Building & Grounds (PAR)</p> <p>7:00pm Women's Barbershop Chorus (CH.RM)</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>