



**THE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF LAMBERTVILLE
First Presbyterian Church**

**Many voices with one faith, one heart.
One family under God.**

From Our Elder ~ Phil McCloughan

Luke 1:26-33

The Birth of Jesus Foretold

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

The Advent Season is here and celebrate Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love in the weeks before Christmas. We are getting ready for the Christmas Season and understand why we are excited! As Winter settles in Let the Holy Spirit warm you . The Promise Foretold In The Bible is going to come true. ***Unto You Is Born This Day ... A Savior, Which Is Christ The Lord .. Luke 2:11***

Although the Winter Season is coming in and we get ready for the Cold and Snow we are heading into the most anticipated day of the year!!

As Advent begins first we:

Celebrate Hope. We are assured in the most overwhelming way that God Keeps His Promises.

Celebrate Peace. Peace isn't the absence of conflict, but the ability to deal with it!

Celebrate Joy. Joy is what we are celebrating this last of Advent. Joy is what we are to ask the Holy Spirit for. The Bible says...The joy of the Lord is your strength.

Celebrate Love. Love is the greatest of virtues on the Advent Wreath and encompasses Jesus' entire purpose for being on Earth.

As an Elder, I am inviting you and others to join us Christmas Eve for our regular service at 10:30 am and our Candlelight Service at 4:00 pm!

“From the Office”

We have a busy December coming up, and there is a lot of happenings about the church. Please refer to the monthly calendar on our website. If anyone has a question, please feel free to call or email me at the Office.



The Bell Choir is planning to ring in church for the morning Christmas Eve Service at 10:30 am.

There will not be a Newsletter for the month of January. I will be collecting information for the Annual Report which will be out in early February. If you have submitted a report in the past, please send me your report for 2023 to the Church Office during the month of January. Please reach out to me with any questions.

The Church Office will be closed the week of December 25th. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you!!

Sue

Church News:



Communion will be on Sunday December 10th, and January 7, 2024, and Pastor Peter Gregory will be here.

The Ladies' Bible Study will be continuing on Wednesdays at 2:00 pm. Please reach out to Joanne DiBlasi with any questions.

The Ladies will be having a Christmas Gathering on Monday December 11th at 6:30 pm in the Church Library. The Guest Speaker is Crystal Robertson. Please bring an appetizer to share!

Roller Skating is happening on December 8th and 15th at 6:00 pm. There will be No skating on Dec. 22nd or 29th. Skating will resume on Friday January 5th at 6:00 pm. There is no Teen Night at this time.

The Children's Christmas Pageant is Sunday December 17th, during the Worship Service! If your child/children are interested in participating, they will be practicing on Sunday December 17th at 9:00 am.

There will be No Sunday School December 24th or 31st.

The Soup Sales will be starting on Saturdays in January during the basketball games. More details to follow. If you would like to contribute a monetary donation for the soup sales, please see Heather Pursell.

Mission Sundays are continuing on the 3rd Sundays of the month.

Please see the weekly announcements for the Sermon and Accompanist schedules.

It's Time to Order Your Memorial Poinsettias

Deadline for ordering the poinsettias will be Sunday, December 10th. The cost of the poinsettias will be \$9.00 each. Please fill out this form and give it to Donna Zambella or Gail Armitage. Payment is due at the time of your order. Thank you.

Your Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

In Memory of: (Please Print)

Please make checks payable to: First Pres. Church and put "flowers" in the memo section.

Number of poinsettias you are ordering: _____

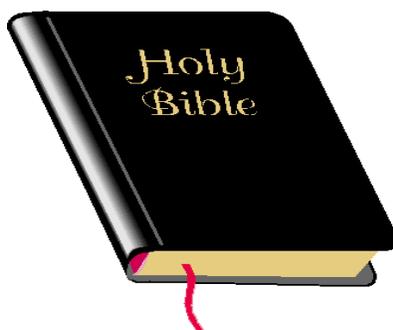
Total of check/cash: _____

****Please Note: The poinsettias may be taken home after the 10:30 am worship service on Sunday December 31st.***

Having A Spiritual Ear

- There is a big difference between having physical ears and having spiritual ears to hear. *Please read *Mark 4:21-25*.
- Jesus Says we need to have “Ears to hear”, in other words, “Listen up, pay close attention.” *Please read *1 Corinthians 1:18-31*.
- It is the Holy Spirit who gives us ears to hear, but it is our responsibility to act on that. *Please read *John 6:41-48*.
- Jesus has the words of eternal life, but many people don’t have or want to have ears to hear.
- Try to live your life with one ear always turned toward heaven, then you will hear God when He shouts and also when He whispers.

Blessings,
Joanne DiBlasi



Operation Christmas Child

Thank you to everyone who participated in this years Samaritans Purse Christmas Shoebox Outreach. We collected 23 shoeboxes and delivered them to the church drop-off location in Warrington, PA., along with monetary donations toward this outreach. Thank you for blessing them.



December Birthdays

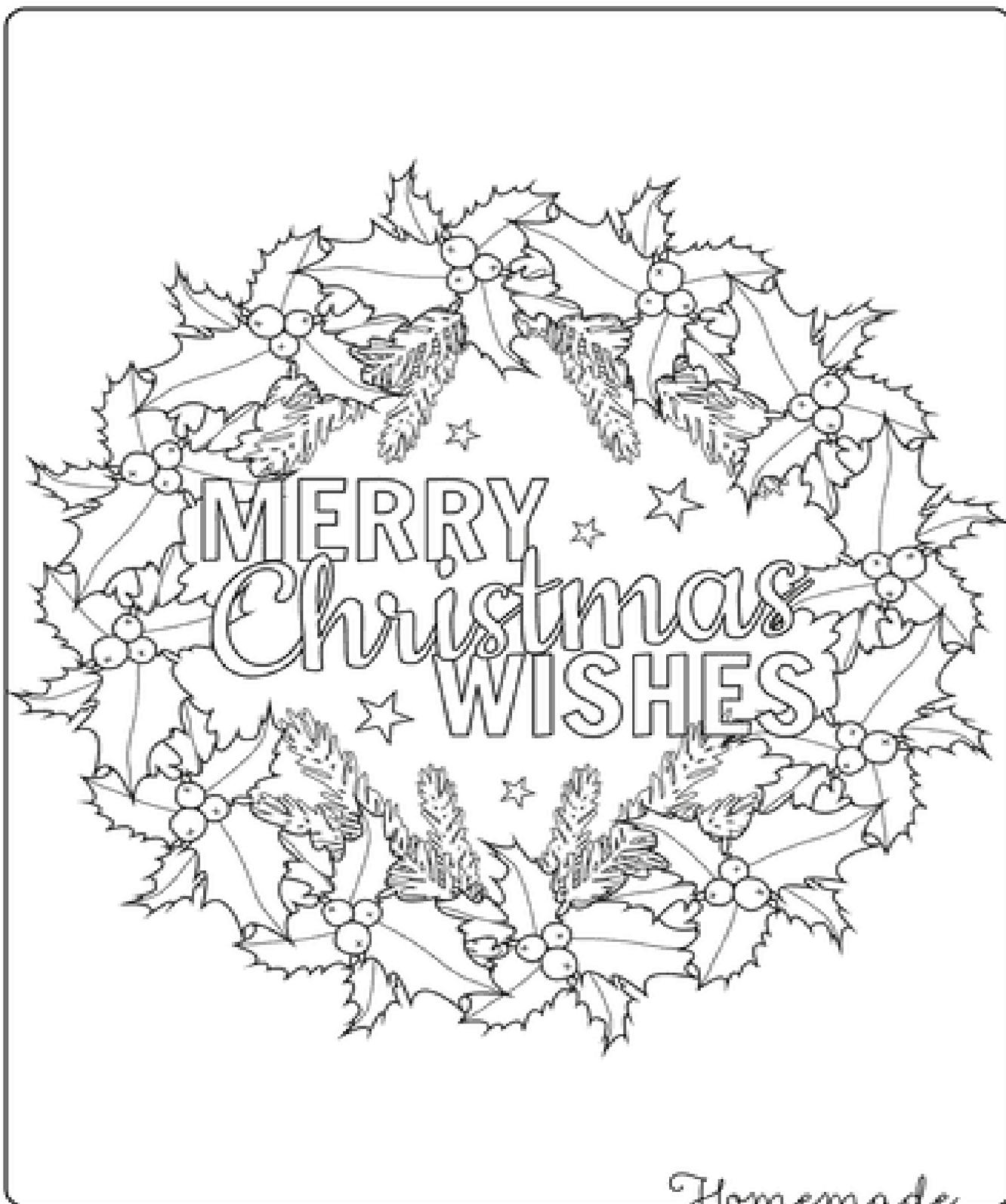
2 Brent Pursell
4 Carol Griffiths
5 Megan McIntyre
14 Brittany Shurts
18 Sandra Parker
19 Jacob Pursell
23 Dan Fisher
23 Chuck Robertson
27 Heidi Danberry
27 Levi Stratuik
30 Caitlin Stratuik

January Birthdays

2 Matthew Moraski
4 Scott Cummings
7 Andrew Zambella
11 Sarah McIntyre
12 JoAnn Serlenga
14 Dana Garrenger
25 Alan Durborow, Jr.
26 LaNelle Gallagher
30 Erin Durborow



Merry Christmas All!



December Assisting Schedules:

Elder Schedule

Dec. 3– Pat Durborow
Dec. 10- **Communion**/Phil McCloughan
Dec. 17– Don Pidcock
Dec. 24– Karen Thatcher
Dec. 31– Joanne DiBlasi

Deacon Schedule

Dec. 3– Heidi Danberry
Dec. 10– **Communion**/*Heidi Danberry, (**Stair Glide**), LaNelle Gallagher
Dec. 17– Gail Armitage
Dec. 24– Terry Peck
Dec. 31– Jen Chernoski

Greeting Schedule

Dec. 3– Connie Fisher
Dec. 10– Joan Yannarella
Dec. 17– Sue McCloughan
Dec. 24– Carol Griffiths
Dec. 31– Gail Armitage

Please see the upcoming bulletins for the January Assisting Schedules.

**If you unable to serve your scheduled dates,
please find a replacement and contact the church office.**

Schedules are subject to change

Thank you!

Session Minutes
First Presbyterian Church of Lambertville
Westminster House
October 23, 2023, 6:30 PM

<u>Class of 2024</u>	<u>Class of 2025</u>	<u>Class of 2026</u>
Don Pidcock	Joanne DiBlasi	Pat Durborow
Karen Thatcher	Heather McIntyre	Phil McCloughan

Rev. Brad Morgan, Moderator

Susan McCloughan, Clerk of Session

Present: Joanne DiBlasi, Pat Durborow, Phil McCloughan, Heather McIntyre, Don Pidcock, Karen Thatcher and Rev. Brad Morgan

Excused: None

Welcome: Reverend Morgan, declaring a quorum, welcomed all to the October 23, 2023 Session Business Meeting and opened in prayer.

Guest: Stephanie Duryea from the Duryea Insurance Agency/2023-2024 Insurance Review

Insurance Review- Stephanie discusses the different policies. A handout was given regarding what are the current policies that we have here at the church. Breakdowns were given, and the policies- USLI, Franklin Mutual, and Markel. All policies are on file at the Church Office. Stephanie was available for questions, and would be available by phone or email if more questions arose.

Devotion – Phil McCloughan

The New Testament talks a lot about forgiving one’s enemies, a noble and altruistic notion. But it’s difficult. As humans, we want revenge and vindication. We don’t naturally think about praying for our enemies. But Jesus commanded us to pray.

Who Are Our Enemies?

Merriam Webster Dictionary defines an enemy as, “One that is antagonistic to another, something harmful or deadly, or a hostile unit or force.” Enemies don’t have to be those out to kill us. They can be a gossipy neighbor who wants to ruin your reputation. Or a competitive business with cutthroat methods to put you out of business. It’s natural to shy away from those who mean us harm. But if we want to walk in obedience to Jesus, we will pray for them.

Why Must We Pray for Them?

Jesus himself told his followers to pray for his enemies. “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, **love your enemies** and pray for those who persecute you,” *Matthew 5:43-44*. He didn’t suggest we *like* them or *ignore* them but through our prayers, we bring them to the throne of God and bless them. And when we do, *Matthew 5:45-48* says that we will be “... children of Your father in heaven.” In other words, obeying this commandment marks us as people related to God Almighty.

Jesus then added that if we pray for those who persecute us, it will be painful to them. As our enemies receive blessings via our prayers, they will feel miserable, weighed down with burning coals heaped on top of their head, **Romans 12:20**. Because when someone is against you, they will expect you to retaliate. Turning the other cheek and petitioning God for your enemy's needs is the last thing they will expect.

Around the Room - The Elders, Brad and myself went around the room and shared our concerns. Brad closed this section with prayer.

Moderator Time - Rev. Brad Morgan

There were two things that Pastor wanted to speak about during his time.

1. At the November Session Meeting, Mike Atzert (Mike is our Committee on Ministry point of contact from our Presbytery) would like to come and discuss what direction we are taking in finding a new Pastor.
2. On November 26th at 1:30 pm, there will be a "Friendsgiving" at Kirkpatrick Presbyterian Church, and would be a community gathering. Larison's Corner, First Pres. of Lambertville, Stockton, Mt. Airy will be participating. First Pres. and Mt. Airy were asked to bring a main course, and the other churches will be asked to bring sides and desserts. Also, each person if they are able to bring 2 non-perishable items, to donate to the Del-Val and Kirkpatrick food pantries. Everyone thought this was a wonderful idea. Brad will get a flyer out to the churches. There is also a possibility of having a hymn sing as well.

Clerks Correspondence and Session Mail Box - Susan McCloughan

Review of Minutes: A motion was called to approve the minutes from September 18, 2023. All were in favor. The minutes are to be included in the Church Newsletter.

Mail Box/Clerk Correspondence- We've received our "Certificate of Registration" from the State of New Jersey regarding the permitted occupancy of our Gym/Recreation area. A copy of this certificate will be posted in the Gym area. The **Facility Use Agreements** are on file for the Riverside Symphonia for their upcoming concert dates, and the upcoming season of the Lambertville Basketball League. The LBL will be in the Gym- M-5-7pm, T-5-8pm, W-Th 5-9pm and Saturdays 7:00 am-4:00 pm until March 16, 2024.

Calendar Highlights from November 2023-January 2024

Communion is scheduled for 11/5, 12/10 and possibly 1/7/24 with Peter Gregory.

The Children's Sunday School will be starting on 11/12 at 9:00 am along with the Adult Sunday School.

The Session Prayer meetings will be on Nov. 6, Dec. 4 and Jan. 8th at 7:00 pm. Skating and Friday Night Hang are scheduled to start on Friday Nov. 17th. Sue will reach out to Steve Chernoski to get the details. We are looking to schedule a Youth led service sometime in November, more details to follow. There will be a Joint Session/Deacon Meeting on Monday Nov. 20th at 6:30 pm in the Adult Sunday School Room. Phil and friends will be setting up the outside Nativity on Sat. Nov. 25th. The Church Office will be closed on Thursday and Friday the 23 & 24 due to the Thanksgiving holiday. The First Sunday of Advent is December 3rd. The Lambertville Elks will be having their Hoop Shoot in the Gym on Sat. Nov. 9th from 1-5 pm. There are 2 services on **Sunday December 24-** the 10:30 am service and the 4:00 pm Candlelight Christmas Eve Service.

The Ladies' Bible Study will continue at 2:00 pm, and so the Girl Scouts on the first Friday of the month, on January 5th. The information for the Annual Reports are due to the Church Office starting the week of January 8, 2024. Pastor Brad will do a report as well, as our Moderator. Sue was asked to send out an email asking for Accompanists for December 2023 thru February 2024. The men and ladies of the congregation will have an ensemble to sing on a church Sunday. More information to follow.

Worship and Music/Church Life – Joanne DiBlasi/Karen Thatcher

Insurance Review/Morgan Stanley- The Insurance Review was spoken earlier during the meeting. Heather spoke with Tim Stevens about our investments with Morgan Stanley. He will most likely come to speak with Session soon.

Young Adult Time- The name was changed from Children's Time to Young Adult Time, **since** our children are becoming young adults. Joanne spoke and let us know this is going well. The person who gives the sermon usually does the children's time.

Sight & Sound- It was talked about that LaNelle Gallagher was going to be taking over the information about the show and luncheon buffet afterwards. She will be getting the information from Karen to take this on. Addie Andino will still be reserving the bus for the trip.

Soup Sales- Sue was asked to reach out to Heather Pursell to see when the soup sale fundraisers were going to start.

Accompanist/Pianist- Our pool for substitutes now is low. We have about 3 people on a regular basis to play.

Karen let all know that our resume is still out there, and we are looking for the right candidate.

The resumes are posted on various sites. A **motion** was called to raise the pay of Stephen McCloughan on Sundays from \$50.00 to 100.00. The **motion** was seconded and approved. It was also mentioned that when an Accompanist comes in to practice for us, the session is \$50.00.

Building and Grounds – Pat Durborow/Phil McCloughan/Don Pidcock

The **new technology** to Livestream on YouTube is ongoing, and we received the grant from the Presbytery which we will use. Don Pidcock will reach out to Stephen M. to get the process started on the new equipment for the Livestream. This most likely to happen in November. Stephen will come and talk to Session about what kind of equipment that the church will need. Our Livestream is appreciated.

Martinez Landscaping- Pat will call and inquire about a fall cleanup.

Church Roof- This was discussed and estimates were gotten from different companies by Phil. He is still waiting for another estimate. Also, we will be looking into getting permits for the roof to see if we need a permit or not, but should we look into getting permits, due to the church being close to the canal, and are we using gutters? There is also an historical element to our church in whether we need permits or not.

Skating and Friday Night Hang – Skating was discussed earlier. Steve Chernoski is the point of contact for skating. Friday Night Hang is in need of being revamped. More information to follow.

Church Organ- Sue will talk to Stephen M. to see if the Organ needs to be tuned at this time.

Hallway in Church- Not discussed tonight, but issues about the **Front Doors** to the Church are sticking and Phil suggested to take the sill up and the doors off to fix them. Phil suggested the date of Saturday November 18. Phil will talk about this at the Nov. meeting.

Budget and Finance – Heather McIntyre

Our Year-to-Date Summary was given out and was discussed, from 1/1-10/23/23, and we are under in our Plate by \$2388.86

Lowell Hunter Estate- No update at this time. Heather will keep Session informed of any progress.

Usage of the Gym for LPS during the 2023-2024 School year- LPS has been using the gym on Mondays and Fridays sporadically.

Westminster House Heating System-Heather will follow up with Justin at Elizabethtown Gas regarding the heating system, if she isn't able to contact him, we will look for another company.

Wells Fargo Bank- Heather and Debbie have transferred our accounts out of Wells Fargo and to the new bank. Which is - **First National Bank of Newtown**. There is a local branch in Solebury, which Heather and Debbie will be working with on a regular basis.

Boy Scouts- No updates regarding the lawsuit at this time, but we have received a bill for our portion of \$238.00. The bill was paid to the attorney.

Sunday School/Junior Deacons – Joanne DiBlasi/Don Pidcock

Sunday School- Don talked about the Children's Sunday school and it will be starting on November 12th. Heather Pursell, Dana Garrenger and LaNelle Gallagher will be teaching the children. Jim Gallagher is continuing with the Adult Sunday School.

Junior Deacons- Joanne- When the Jr. Deacons are in church, they participate in the Worship Service.

Missions – Joanne DiBlasi

Nothing at this time.

Notations

Holy Communion- Was on Sunday October 1, 2023 which was World Wide Communion Sunday and performed by Pastor Peter Gregory.

Continuing of Education- Elders are encouraged to continue in and share the word of God through reading His Word, devotions, prayer and to be involved in education.

Elders-Are to continue Pastoral Care as needed.

Prayer Meetings- Will be held on the first Monday of each month. Members will be sharing His Word through readings, thoughts, scripture and prayer, and will be in person. For those who cannot make in person, a livestream will be available. If for personal reasons keep session members from attending, the session resolved to pray wherever they are during the 7 o'clock hour.

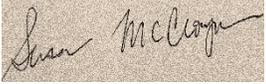
Baptisms & Weddings-Were talked about by Don and Session. It was suggested to contact Pastor Peter Gregory to see if he is available for them if the occasions should arise. Also, funerals were discussed. For a funeral, you may not need to be ordained, but Brad will check into this. For weddings and baptisms, they have to be done by an Ordained Minister.

Session Devotion Rotation- The devotion for the November meeting is Pastor Morgan-this being due to Joint Session/Deacon Meeting. December is Heather McIntyre and January is Don Pidcock.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm and was closed in Session prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

A rectangular area containing a handwritten signature in cursive script, which reads "Susan McCloughan". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored, textured background.

Susan McCloughan
Clerk of Session