

Newsletter Update

DECEMBER 2022

Christmas worship

Celebrate the Lord's nativity Dec. 24 at 7:30 and Christ's birthday on Dec. 25 at 11am

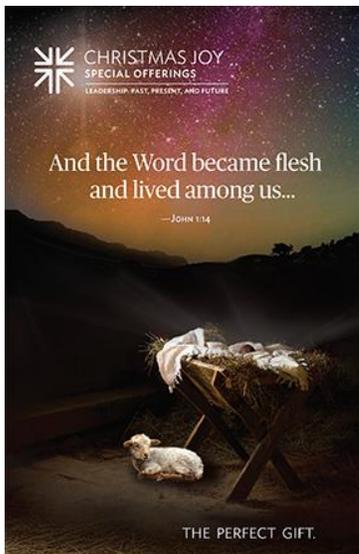
We at FUPC are planning a traditional Christmas Eve worship service for Saturday, December 24. The sanctuary worship will begin at **7:30 pm** and will include the Bible story with readings by our young adults, special music, and our annual candle lighting ceremony with the singing of "Silent Night".

We will continue to celebrate the birth of our Lord on Christmas morning at **11am**, with readings from Scripture, hymns and Christmas carols.

"Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people."

— God's angel, in Luke 2:10-11

December Missions:



By giving to the **Christmas Joy Offering**, you honor God's gift of Jesus Christ by providing assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and developing our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

The Christmas Joy Offering dates back to the 1930s when the former Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) began an offering to supplement inadequate retirement income and provide supplemental medical insurance for former ministers, missionaries, church workers and their families. It was first officially called the **Joy Gift** in 1949.

Christmas Eve offering to benefit the **Erie City Mission**.

5 Simple Ways to Prepare Your Heart for Jesus This Advent

Adapted from beliefnet.com

Advent is a Season for Preparing

If you have ever entertained guests, or even made the slightest effort to get ready for any company, you will see how those experiences lend themselves well to your own groundwork this Advent to invite Christ to dwell within your heart—and thus truly be ready for His second coming.

- **Prepare Room at the Inn**

Your heart is where Christ wishes to dwell, and Advent is the perfect time to make room in it for His presence. If your heart is filled with unforgiveness, it has no room for Christ. Begin Advent by an Examination of Conscience wherein you ask your Heavenly Father to reveal to you any unforgiveness that exists in your heart. Remember that as God has forgiven you, you are also asked to forgive others.

- **Clean Out the Cobwebs**

After an Examination of Conscience where you ask God to reveal any unforgiveness that you are holding, it is important to clean out the vestiges of cobwebs that may still be lurking in the dark corners of your heart. Especially those ones that have been hanging on for so long they no longer get your attention.

- **Hang New Curtains**

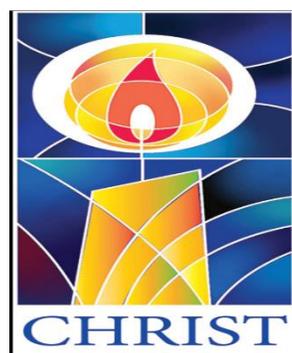
The room of your heart is ready: unforgiveness and cobwebs have been cleared out. Now it is time to hang new curtains! Many of us fall into a rut in our daily lives and forget how to live in joy. You are preparing for Christ's indwelling, and He abides best in those who have delight in their hearts. So, throw out the old curtains of fear and despair and exhaustion and hang new curtains of hope and joy and anticipation.

- **Get Out the Fine China and Set the Table**

Company is on its way! We aren't doubtfully thinking that maybe He's going to drop by and thus we're making only superficial efforts to get ready. We are certain in our belief of His arrival and every cell in our body joyfully shouts, "He's on His way!" This is the time we get the fine china out of the cupboard—our attitude is one of enthusiastic expectation. Our hearts pound in anticipation of His presence. Our fine china goes so well with our new curtains!

- **Open the Front Door**

Our company approaches, the preparations are complete, all the work is finished, and we are ready. It is a time of quiet. So, in preparing our hearts for Christ this Advent, the last step after all the prep work is to simply "be." In this state of "be-ing" we don't question how time slipped through our fingers; we don't worry if there was more we should have done. We've been good and faithful servants and are ready for Christ.



Congratulations – and **thank you** – to our officers-elect

Brian Long and **Rick Walker** were recently elected to be elders on our Session for new three-year terms. At the November 20th meeting, the congregation also elected **Marilee Wnek**, **Harriet Smaltz**, and **Leslie Lawton** to our Board of Deacons, also for three-year terms. All are the class of 2025. The 2023 Nominating Committee will be Session member, Sue Payne, Deacons, Linda Rummel and Jan Schulz, and Powell Smith, at large from the congregation.

These officers-elect will meet with current leaders for a period of orientation and preparation for their God-given callings: elders carry out ministries of governance and discernment, and deacons lead us and teach us ministries of compassion, care and service. The formal installation ceremony will be scheduled on a convenient date after the first of the year.



CAROLING ANYONE?

We are hoping to get a group together to go caroling again this year. We normally meet at the church about 4:15, distribute song books, load up the cars, and start out at Edinboro Manor where we sing for the residents and socialize a bit. Then we visit various homes around the area. After returning to the church, we enjoy refreshments and fellowship.

Several dates are being considered during the week of December 18th. I would appreciate input from those interested as far as dates and suggestions for who we might visit. I would especially like to invite children and teens to join us.

Please contact Mary Walker (814)434-6452 mwproudone@gmail.com

Congratulations to Doug and Margo Roberts on the birth of their first grandchild, Alexander James Roberts, on November 20th. God's blessings to Jamie and Jenna Roberts as they enjoy the adventure of raising a precious son.



Congratulations to Joe and Dianna Markiewicz on the birth of their baby boy, Landon Brian, on November 22nd. Landon is also welcomed by siblings Callen and Madison, Grandparents - Brent and Joann Walker, Joe Markiewicz, Terri Markiewicz, Great Grandparents, Dick and Evelyn Walker, as well as many aunts, uncles and cousins.

Best wishes to both families!

FUPC SERVES THE LORD AND THE WORLD



Thank you to everyone who helped make Thanksgiving dinner special for members of the Edinboro community. Your generosity supplied 30 grocery bags with all the extra treats needed for a delicious Thanksgiving dinner. The bags were distributed by the Edinboro food pantry. Thank you to Jan Schulz for organizing this mission project.

Our church has once again joined other community churches in giving gifts to kids whose families rely on the Edinboro Food Pantry. 30 gift tags were provided to our congregation by the Edinboro Kiwanis who organizes this annual program. The gift tags that were displayed on our tree provided the age and size of each child and a small wish list. Members of FUPC purchased gifts and returned them to the church. Kiwanis distributes all the gifts to the families in time for a Merry Christmas.



In November, FUPC also generously supported The Warming Center coordinated by The Mental Health Association of Northwestern PA. The Warming Center opens from 11 PM to 7:30 AM when temperatures are 20° or below. Men, women, and families who are homeless, or otherwise unable to have shelter through the night, can come in from the cold to get warm, have something to eat, talk to someone, watch a movie and above all, be safe.

Compassion is Active

Christians are sometimes accused of being so heavenly minded that they are no earthly good. We get caught up in choir rehearsals, studies of the end times, or other church activities, and ignore the needs around us. When problems are brought to our attention, we content ourselves with feeling sorry about them while doing nothing. But sympathetic thoughts or kindly musings are not true compassion.

With the divine power he possessed, Jesus could have met the multitude's needs merely by forming a thought or speaking a command. He could even have done it from heaven without coming to earth. But his compassion caused him not only to come and live and die among us, but also to touch lepers (Mark 1:40-41) and blind men (Matthew 20:34), and to take little children in his arms (Mark 10:13-16). True compassion is personal, active involvement that expresses God's merciful heart in words and deeds.

God's chosen people are to "clothe" themselves with compassion (Colossians 3:12). We are to meet others' needs, not to continually satisfy our selfish desires. As God showers us with comfort through his Word and through other believers, we in turn are to redirect the stream of mercy to others. We are not to hoard God's love, but to overflow with the good news of his compassion to all. *-Barbara Bush, a pastor's wife and mother of four children.*

Share a ride to church event

Some people may need a ride to worship, once in a while or on a more frequent basis. This could include our members and friends with mobility limitations, those who no longer drive, or perhaps even college students who are in Edinboro without a car.

If you can offer a ride (occasionally or more often), please let one of the deacons know. Or call Sue in the church office. If you would like to carpool here on Sunday mornings or for another event, please do let us know.

The Fellowship Team is looking for the round, gold tablecloths. Perhaps they were borrowed or taken home to launder. Please return them to the church as they are needed for future dinners and special events.



Let There Be Light!

You may have noticed an improvement in the parking lot and driveway lighting. On November 10th, just before the weather turned cold and snowy a lighting project, recently approved by Session, was accomplished which has made a significant improvement in the safety, security, and aesthetics of the church.

The effort, coordinated by Art Crawford saw the old “box style” area lights on the drive retrofitted from metal halide lighting to **LED**. Many of the old fixtures and lamps had failed with only a few still working. The job was performed by Jay Megat of the former *Chernichky Electric* and accomplished in one day. All the fixtures and poles were cleaned, painted, and repaired in preparation for the **LED** installation.

The installation cost of \$1608 will be recovered in about 17 months through the energy savings and reduced operating costs for the lights which equated to an 88% return on investment. The **LED** lamps were acquired through a donation.

Our gratitude to Art for pulling this project together prior to being delayed by weather.

OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP OUT!

Each Sunday, we have opportunities for people to get involved. If you would be willing to be a greeter, usher, pass the offering plates, help with coffee/refreshment time, or read a prayer or a reading (training and practice offered!), call or email Sue in the church. She will get you connected to the right person to answer your questions or get you scheduled.

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