



the Voice parish newsletter



Mt. Lebanon United Lutheran Church
975 Washington Road Mt. Lebanon, Pennsylvania 15228

The one who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints. Amen.
--Revelation 22:20-21

Advent begins on Sunday, December 3. The 4th Sunday of Advent falls on December 24. On this day, there will be *ONE* morning worship at 9:30 AM, followed by *THREE* Christmas Eve liturgies at 5:00 PM (for children and families); 7:30 PM (with the Voice Choir); and 10:00 PM (with members of the Voice Choir). During Advent, the Monday evening Bible Study will go on hiatus, but brief Advent Mid-Week Devotional Liturgies will be held on Wednesdays—December 6, 13, and 20—from 6:15 PM to 6:45 PM. Chairs will be arranged at the altar. We will sit to hear God’s word and receive Holy Communion. I invite you to attend.

The Advent Mid-Week Devotional Liturgies will include a remembrance of saints whose festival days fall on the Wednesdays of Advent this year.

- DECEMBER 6** **Saint Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, d. 342**
- DECEMBER 13** **Saint Lucy, martyr, d. 304**
- DECEMBER 20** **Katharina von Bora Luther, renewer of the church and wife of Martin, d. 1591**

Advent is a season of hope. We look ahead to our secure future in Christ. The saints we will remember in the Devotional Liturgies were transformed by Jesus and lived expectantly for his return. Advent means “coming” or “arrival” and its themes are hope and preparation for the 2nd Coming of Christ.

The verses at the top of this page are the last ones in the Bible. Jesus says, “Surely I am coming soon.” We joyfully reply, “Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!” Stop by the sanctuary on the Wednesdays of Advent this year for the devotionals in remembrance of the saints listed above and for Holy Communion. Mark your calendars also with our Christmas Eve worship times and plan to attend. A blessed Advent and Merry Christmas to all!

In Christ,

Pastor Doug Heagy



December, 2023



FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Rediscover Advent for a Holy Christmas

In accordance with Jesus' promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish. -2 Peter 3:13

With the Hamas terrorists' premeditated, barbaric slaughter of Jewish people, war criminal Vladimir Putin's continued assault on Ukraine, political gridlock in the U.S., worsening climate change around the world, and other deep problems, 2023 is ending on a sad note for humanity. The world is adrift.

That's a good reason to rediscover Advent this year. Lost amid the nonstop commercialism of Christmas, Advent is the church's traditional season of careful preparation and waiting – two things our “get-it-now” culture abhors.

If we don't prepare our hearts and minds for Jesus – Emmanuel, God with us – how will Christmas be anything more than just another secular shopping season? How can we expect the arrival of Christ to give us strength, courage, insight and wisdom to deal with these troubled times?

Embracing Advent helps us to be good stewards of the Christmas season by reminding us that it's not about Santa Clause or shopping or parties, but the miracle of God arriving in human form to save us from ourselves. Let us prepare for Christmas by committing ourselves to keeping Advent holy.

Here are some ways to rediscover Advent:

- Find – and follow – an Advent devotional.
- Increase your disciplines of prayer, scripture reading, and worship.
- As much as possible, hold off celebrating Christmas until December 25.
- Remember we need Christ in order to live full and meaningful lives.

Advent prepares us to receive Jesus with a full and joyful heart, to live in the abundance Jesus promises.

--Rob Blezard / Copyright © 2023, Rev. Robert Blezard.



Beginning in November...continuing into December...

THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY



“What Are We Waiting For?”

Enduring in faith; waiting for God

10:00 AM-11:15 AM

November 30

Luke 17:11-22

December 7

Revelation 22

December 14

Zechariah 4:11-14

December 21

Luke 1:5-80

December 28

Matthew 2

Led by Pastor Heagy, this November/December Bible study will focus on endurance and waiting in faith. Bible stories will be read and discussed, including Advent themes. Emphasis will be given to how these stories can serve us in daily life. All are welcome! Invite friends! Participants do not have to commit to each week. Come as you are able!

*I WAITED FOR THE LORD, HE INCLINED UNTO ME,
HE HEARD MY COMPLAINT.
O BLESSED ARE THEY THAT HOPE AND TRUST IN HIM.
-PSALM 40:1*

Musical Musings December, 2023



Pittsburgh Steeler, Pat Freiermuth, and *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

On Christmas Eve in 1865, Phillips Brooks visited Bethlehem and made a journey on horseback to the shepherds' field. The recollection of his view of Bethlehem in the distance that night inspired him to write, *O Little Town of Bethlehem*, first sung at a Sunday School service in 1868. The stanzas outline the hope of the world, the story of Jesus' birth, the spiritual blessings brought by the Christ child, and end with a prayer that Christ will be born in our hearts—Emmanuel, "God with us."

Fast forward 61 years from 1865 to the year 1926. In this year, The Rev. Endicott Peabody founded a private school in North Andover, Massachusetts to educate boys, including instruction in the Christian faith. To honor Phillips Brooks, the composer of *O Little Town of Bethlehem*, Peabody named his new school after him. ***The Brooks School*** has been educating youth for nearly 100 years. One of its graduates is none other than Pat Freiermuth, the starting tight end for the Pittsburgh Steelers.

As you cheer the Steelers and Pat Freiermuth this month, remember that his high school was named after Phillips Brooks. Give thanks for *O Little Town of Bethlehem*, and ***The Brooks School*** in Massachusetts that continues to make faith a priority. Let us all make faith a priority this month. Join us in worship during Advent and on Christmas Eve.

SERVER SCHEDULE —December, 2023

If you cannot serve as scheduled, please switch with another server.
If you cannot get a substitute please call the church office or Pastor Doug.

	8:30		10:00
December 3 Crucifer	Cameron Meyer		Finn Darcy
December 10 Crucifer	Easton Darcy		Nico Provins
December 17 Crucifer	Annaleigh Dwulit		Sam Wetzel
December 24 Advent 4	9:30	Luke Frankovitch	
December 24 Crucifer	<u>5:00</u>	<u>7:30</u>	<u>11:00</u>
	Xavier Graybill	Henry Keplar	TBD
December 25	10:30	Ewan Keplar	
December 31	8:30		10:00
	Addy Wetzel		Milo Bucher



The worship links to Facebook & YouTube can be found on our website:

www.mtlebanonlutheran.org



Sunday's

8:30 AM & 10:00 AM

Virtual Worship 8:30 AM Facebook LIVE

Posted later on our YouTube channel

THE WORD of the LORD

December 3	Isaiah 64:1-9 Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 1 Corinthians 1:3-9 Mark 13:24-37	Advent I
December 10	Isaiah 40:1-11 Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13 2 Peter 3:8-15a Mark 1:1-8	Advent II
December 17	Isaiah 6:1-4, 8-11 Psalm 126 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 John 1:6-8, 19-28	Advent III
December 24	2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26 Romans 16:25-27 Luke 1:26-38	Advent IV
December 24	Isaiah 9:2-7 Psalm 96 Titus 2:11-14 Saint Luke 2:1-20	Christmas Eve
December 25	Isaiah 62:6-12 Psalm 97 Titus 3:4-7 Saint Luke 2:1-20	Christmas Day

Advent Mid-Week Devotions
In-person
December 6, 13, & 19
Wednesdays at 6:15-6:45 pm

DECEMBER WORSHIP NEWS

Prepare for Christmas by joining in the Advent Mid-Week Devotional Liturgies on the following Wednesdays at 6:15-6:45 PM. In-Person Only

Wednesday, December 6 / 6:15 PM

Wednesday, December 13 / 6:15 PM

Wednesday, December 19 / 6:15 PM



2023 Advent Wreath Candle Lighters

Thanks to the following members who will light the candles of the sanctuary Advent Wreath at worship during the four week Advent season.

	<u>Sunday, December 3</u>
8:30 AM	Alan & Mary Beth Trivilino
10:00 AM	James Brentzel
	<u>Sunday, December 10</u>
8:30 AM	Larry & Diane Dattilo
10:00 AM	Pete & Michelle Schocker
	<u>Sunday, December 17</u>
8:30 AM	Jacob & Hannah Morrison (Sylvia)
10:00 AM	Dagmar Gerst
	<u>Sunday, December 24</u>
9:30 AM	Matt & Melodie Frankovitch (Luke)

The Advent wreath is a way the Church counts time until Christmas and the Second Advent of Jesus Christ on the Last Day.



WE REMEMBER in our prayers:

Great God, our healer, by your power, the Lord Jesus healed the sick and gave hope to the hopeless. As we pray, look upon us with mercy and bless us with your healing Spirit. Bring comfort in the midst of pain, strength to transform weakness, and light to illuminate darkness. We pray for our family members and friends, asking in the name of the crucified Lord Jesus that restoration and wholeness may come to:

Craig Elias; Andy Kelemen; Dagmar Gerst; Linda Larkin; Jennifer Meyer, Anne Bidlack, Amy Stabenow

*NOTE: Please contact the church office if there are any changes for the prayer list. Names will remain on the prayer list for **one month**. If a person is to remain on the prayer list or to be added, just call the church office and let us know.*

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES for the January issue of the *Voice* are to be submitted by Sunday, December 12th. Articles may be left in the church office or email: mtleboluth@aol.com.

You're Invited...To the Sunday Morning Fellowship

Each Sunday worshippers have the opportunity to greet one another and welcome visitors at our: ***Sunday Morning Fellowship*** in the Narthex. Join us in between the early and late Liturgies to share greetings and conversations with friends and visitors. Refreshments are available for all.

The Sunday Morning Fellowship also provides opportunities to volunteer:

*Sponsor the Coffee Project of Lutheran World Relief, helping small growers, their families and communities through the fair trade of coffee.

*Volunteer to set up and clean the Fellowship refreshments table. It's easy to do and a member of the Hospitality Committee will show you how. Also, written instructions are available.

*Provide sweet (or healthy) treats for all to enjoy. (Gluten free and nut free treats are also welcomed)

If you'd like to help you can sign up on the bulletin board in the main hallway, or contact the church office.

Offering Envelopes and Stewardship.....

The 2024 Offering Envelopes are now available. They are available in the Narthex. Or call the office to schedule a pick up time. Time and Talent Sheets and giving cards can be mailed to the church office. All financial information provided to the financial secretary will be kept confidential. The third quarter giving statements have been mailed. If you notice any discrepancies, please contact Allan Copenheaver, Financial Secretary - allancope@yahoo.com.

GLOBAL LINKS
Sharing Surplus. Saving Lives.

Global Links—Wednesday, December 6 at 1-3:00 pm.

Please sign up in the Narthex—or call the church office to RSVP.

2023 Thanksgiving Basket Project

Thanks for your generous donations and help with the Annual Thanksgiving Basket Project serving families of St. Michaels Food Pantry. This project would not be possible without many participants who purchased food and gift cards and helped to prepare the baskets. St. Michaels expressed their gratitude for providing Thanksgiving food for 28 families. Each family received a tote bag with a Giant Eagle gift card, non-perishable food items, and crafts made by our Sunday School children and adult volunteers. Appreciation to all who attended the brunch on November 12 to assemble the tote bags and candy jars. Special thanks to Pastor Heagy, Kris Malia, Dave Hazlett, Vedette & Eric Keplar, Lyn & Tom Ultsch, Debbie Lutz, Lisa Honkala, Anne Bryan, Sara Dougherty, and Thrivent for providing a grant for this project.

Yours in Christ,
Deb Hazlett



**What are YOU waiting for?
Visit the Library and learn more about Advent!**




Test yourself with Advent Trivia!



**Starting December 17, 2023
There is a party in the Library!
Come Celebrate Jesus' Birthday!**



Take home a birthday bookmark.

There are so many  about Christmas!
Remember that JESUS is the BEST present ever!



Angel Tree for Glade Run Foundation



Each year, Glade Run Lutheran Services (Glade Run) provides life-changing services to over 4,000 individuals throughout Western PA. Children, adults and families being served by Glade Run often have many challenges in addition to mental and behavioral health issues and autism. During this special time of year, Glade Run is grateful that we can help secure not only gifts for the youth but also the basic necessities and tools that make a difference in the lives of those in their care. Our gifts will support the children and families who would otherwise do without. More than just a present under the tree, donated items received through the annual drive provide joy, relief and comfort all throughout the year — well beyond Christmastime. Some gift requests may seem strange but all are incredibly needed and will mean so much to the youth and their families.

We will once again be participating in the Angel Tree project supporting our friends at Glade Run Foundation in Zelienople, PA. Due to Advent being so late this year, we will be setting up the angel tree one week early. Please look for the tree in the Narthex starting Sunday, November 26. We will have 75 tags to choose from plus there will also be the on-line version available again this year. As always, the need is great and all our support is truly appreciated.

*All gifts will need to be returned **UNWRAPPED** under the tree in the narthex by **Sunday, December 10** as they will be delivered to Glade Run the next day.*

****If you prefer to shop on-line and send the gifts directly to Glade Run, follow the links below. This is a type of registry program where you pick the gift from their list, purchase it and it will ship directly to Glade Run. This was very successful last year so Glade Run is repeating it again this year.*

Purchase gift on line: Shop our Wish List on Amazon or Walmart & Ship Directly to Glade Run

Amazon — Visit www.smile.amazon.com Sign into your account. Under Accounts & Lists, scroll down to AmazonSmile Charity Lists, in the Search Bar, type in “Glade Run Lutheran Services” and then choose “Glade Run Holiday Drive” and start shopping!

Walmart — Visit <https://rb.gy/kbqevk> Sign into your account and shop. *Also, if you would rather, they are always in need of gift cards and those could be brought to the church and I will deliver them with the gifts.*

Suggested gift cards: Walmart, Target, Giant Eagle, Aldi, Amazon, Dollar Tree, Dollar General, The Home Depot, Lowes, Sheetz, Walgreens, Dick’s Sporting Goods

Any questions, contact Sara Dougherty 412-523-1499 or tjdsjd@verizon.net

Thank you for participating in this wonderful mission!!

The History of The Salvation Army Angel Tree



Along with the familiar Red Kettles, the Angel Tree program is one of The Salvation Army's highest profile Christmas efforts. Angel Tree was created by The Salvation Army in 1979 by Majors Charles and Shirley White when they worked with a Lynchburg, Virginia shopping mall to provide clothing and toys for children at Christmas time.

The program got its name because the Whites identified the wishes of local children by writing their gift needs on Hallmark greeting cards featuring pictures of angels and placing them on a Christmas Tree at the mall. Thanks to the Whites, who were assigned by The Army to the Lynchburg area at the time, more than 700 children had a brighter Christmas that first year.

Three years later, when the Whites were transferred to Nashville, Tennessee, Angel Tree was launched in Music City during the 1982 Christmas season. WSM radio, which airs the Grand Ole Opry, came on board that year as the first Angel Tree co-sponsor in the U.S.

Because of the on-air promotion on WSM in Nashville, as well as national publicity on CNN and the Larry King Show, news of Angel Tree spread across the country like wild fire. Since that time, the program has grown to include Angel Trees throughout the Carolinas.

CHRISTMAS SERVICE PROJECT
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2023 4:00 PM

Church social hall and Bridgeville Walmart

Attention all youth!!!

Come join your friends for refreshments and some good social ministry!

We will meet in the church social hall for some snacks, then hop in the car to do some Christmas shopping! We will travel as a group to Walmart to purchase Christmas gifts for children in need at Glade Run Foundation for the Angel Tree.

We will pair up in groups with the task to buy gifts with an allocated amount of money/group. Our goal will be to buy the best gifts within our \$250 budget.

No one can do a better job choosing gifts for kids than
you guys yourselves!!

Everyone will be dropped off at church when done.



YOUTH GROUP NEWS

Youth Group Meeting:

We will plan to have a youth group event (fingers crossed for bowling) on the 17th of December. More info will come in an email. We would like you (middle school or high school youth) to join us. Please let us know you're available by emailing Julia Nelson at: jmnelson26@comcast.net



Ushers Needed

Volunteers are needed to serve as Usher Team members.

Ushers serve individually or as part of a two-person team at one church service for an alternating month, three times throughout the year. Responsibilities include greeting and assisting worshipers, passing collection plates, directing to Holy Communion, counting attendance and delivering offerings to treasurer's office.

Please contact the church office or Cindy Brown ([412-779-2020](tel:412-779-2020) or cindysgb@icloud.com) to volunteer or for additional information. Your service to the church will be gratefully appreciated -
THANK YOU!



ONLINE GIVING

Is now available in association with

 myEoffering

www.mtlebanonlutheran.org

WHAT IS myEoffering?

myEoffering is a service we've teamed up with to give you the ability to send your offerings online in the same way that many of you already pay bills and purchase products. We chose to use myEoffering because they are part of a trusted, Christian family-owned company, who have been serving the needs of churches for nearly 100 years. Their product is solid, secure, easy, and convenient.

WHY SHOULD I USE myEoffering?

Many of you already pay for most of your purchases electronically, whether online or with a credit or debit card. So we have decided to offer this service as a convenience to you - you can stop writing checks or having to remember to bring cash every Sunday. Simply log in to our service and set up your offering. You can set the donations to match your pay periods, and even send your one-time donations to the special offerings we may have from time-to-time. This new service allows you to give any amount, at any time, from home or on the road, with your computer or even your mobile device. Now you can control how and when you give your tithes.

HOW DOES IT HELP?

Online giving is the future. In the lifetime of our young people, we will see electronic payments overshadow traditional methods of paper payments. In order to position ourselves to continue doing the work of God in the future and to make it as convenient as possible to be a cheerful giver to God's work, we have decided to offer online giving to you. In addition to easier access to giving and more engagement with young stewards, online offering has many benefits for the church. It allows us to more easily track contributions for budgeting. It saves us from manually tracking those contributions every week. It saves us from large fees on check processing and allows us to more accurately forecast expenditures and needs.

HOW DO I SIGN UP?

Signing up is as simple as going to our church website listed above and look for the green computer mouse icon. That button will take you to the myEoffering page for our church. Simply sign up and begin giving online today! Or scan the code to the right with your mobile device to get started now.



SCAN THIS
CODE WITH
YOUR MOBILE
DEVICE NOW



Mark your Calendars for the
 **Annual ADVENT PAGEANT** 

**“The Christmas Story: Jesus Christ is the Same-Yesterday,
Today, and Forever!”**

by Kendra Smiley

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2023

ON STAGE IN THE SOCIAL HALL

Pageant at 11:15 am, after the Late Liturgy

Saturday Rehearsals: 9:30-11 am on December 2 & 9

Sunday School Rehearsals: December 3 & 10

Volunteers welcome! To participate or help, please contact:

MBTrivilino@verizon.net

**To attend the luncheon following the Pageant, see separate VOICE
RSVP announcement for details.**

Thanks to our planning volunteers this year:

**Elizabeth Rheinfrank (Director), Mary Beth Trivilino (Casting), Carol
Vogele and Barb Heagy (Music), Melodie Frankovitch (Educational
Ministries), Jeff McGraw (Congregational Life)**

You are cordially invited to
Mt. Lebanon United Lutheran Church
Advent Pageant & Congregational Luncheon

On Sunday, December 10, 2023

at 11:15 am in the Social Hall

Entrée and side dish will be provided.

Please bring a traditional dessert or cookies that
represent your family heritage.

RSVP for Advent Congregational Luncheon

Name _____

Number Attending: _____ Adults _____ Children

Return to Church Office by December 3.

OR Sign-up on the bulletin board in the Narthex **OR** email Church Office at mtleboluth@aol.com with the information by December 3.

Please consider staying after the luncheon to help with clean-up.

Thanks to Jeff and Sharon McGraw for preparing the meal and all volunteers that assisted with the preparation and serving of the

TURN BACK TO PAGE 4 AND READ THE *MUSICAL MUSINGS* ARTICLE TO LEARN THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THESE TWO PHOTOS!

See you in church on Christmas Eve!

Three worship times...

5:00 PM, 7:30 PM, 10:00 PM



Advent Devotionals for all Ages

Advent Devotions are available in the Narthex.

Adults have 3 choices: *The Light of Grace* is in honor of the 250th anniversary of the beloved hymn "Amazing Grace." These devotions enlighten the heart, mind and soul with the good news that God graces us with his presence every day of our lives.

A Season of Peace Advent Devotions for Seniors are appropriate for adults of all ages that appreciate **Large Print**. They encourage us to faithfully share with younger generations the reason for our peace—Jesus.

My Spirit Rejoices is a pocket-size booklet for those on the go. It includes daily prayers for Advent echoing the Magnificat of Mary as we anticipate the birth of Jesus.

For families with children, *Open Before Christmas* is a devotional that welcomes children to open their eyes, ears and hearts to the greatest surprise of all: the baby Jesus!

For Youth, *Advent Seasonings* offers a Daily Delivery of Advent Appetizers for teens and young adults. These were distributed in Catechetics and Youth Group, and included in care packages to college students. Please email the Church office with your college student's mailing address.

It's About Time booklets will be distributed in Catechetics and also available for college-age youth. These devotionals provide a time and place each day to reflect on God's current blessings and encourage youth to make "now" the time for Christ-like action in the world.

**PLEASE JOIN US ON DECEMBER 16
AT 10:00 AM TO HELP DECORATE
THE SANCTUARY FOR CHRISTMAS.
INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES AND
CHILDREN ARE WELCOME!**



The Jesse Tree of Advent

Just as the Christmas Season has its own special tree, so Advent has its special tree: the Jesse Tree. It is in a prominent place in our Narthex so it can be seen up close.

It is a bare, and not particularly attractive tree, because in Advent, we are reminded of the incompleteness of the fulfillment of God's promises in the Old Testament.

In Advent, we wait for their fulfillment. Many of our Advent hymns, include the favorite "Oh, Come, Oh Come, Emmanuel," speak of the "strong branch of Jesse."

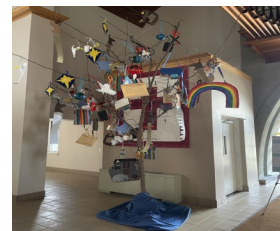
But who is this Jesse of whom Jesus is called the "Branch" and whose name is given to the Advent tree?

Jesse was the father of King David. The Gospel of Saint Matthew begins with the words "The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David." The Gospel of Saint Luke is also careful to establish that Joseph was of the "house and lineage of David" and it was for that reason that he went to Bethlehem, the city of David, for the census. It was there, of course, that Jesus was born.

Since Jesse was David's father, Jesus was also a descendent of Jesse. He was the "Branch" or "Rod" which grew from the stump of Jesse. So the Jesse Tree is a kind of family tree of Jesus, which gives all of our congregational family an opportunity to appreciate the mighty acts of God in preparation for the fulfillment of the prophetic promise in the birth of Jesus.

The decorations on the Jesse Tree, which have been made by the children of our Sunday School, symbolize the important people, and events of the Old Testament leading toward the birth of Jesus. They include a globe symbolizing creation, the serpent and an apple from the Garden of Eden, the ark which Noah built and the rainbow sent by God, the flaming torch and burning firepot, the lamb and the blade from the near-sacrifice of Isaac, Jacob's ladder, Joseph's coat of many colors, the burning bush through which God spoke to Moses, and the lamp of Samuel.

Please take time this Advent to look closely at the Jesse Tree in the Narthex and remember our loving God's work to redeem His creation.



Christmas Poinsettias, Wreaths and Trees

The beautiful poinsettias, wreaths, and trees to adorn our Sanctuary for the celebration of the Holy Nativity of our Lord [Christmas] and the Epiphany of our Lord [the arrival of the Magi at the birthplace of Jesus] as well as contributions to the Fine Arts Fund, are the memorial and honor gifts of our congregational family.

You are invited to participate by contributing a poinsettia[s], wreath[s] tree[s] or the Fine Arts Fund by placing the form below in the offering plate, or by mailing to the Church Office *to arrive no later than Sunday, December 3rd.*

Poinsettia Plants

Wreaths to be hung on the doors and glass Narthex/Nave divider

Trees—2 large trees on sides of altar

Fine Arts Fund

Acknowledgements will be made as desired in an insert to the worship bulletins for Christmas Eve/Day and on the Festival of the Epiphany of our Lord.

We will be decorating our Christmas Trees on Saturday December 16 at 10:00 am.
All are welcome.



**PLEASE JOIN US ON DECEMBER 16
AT 10:00 AM
TO HELP DECORATE THE SANCTUARY
FOR CHRISTMAS.
INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES AND CHILDREN
ARE WELCOME!**



ALTAR FLOWER CHARTS



Altar Flower and Bulletin Reservation Charts for the Year 2024

are available in the Narthex. *If you have a particular Sunday or Festival Day on which you wish to reserve Altar Flowers or bulletins, please **reserve early** to avoid disappointment. You can also call the church office to be placed on the chart.*

The cost of donating is \$30.00 per vase of Altar Flowers, or \$25.00 per Sunday or Festival Day for worship bulletins.

- *No reminder notices are sent* and so you must be responsible for paying for the items you reserve.
- If both vases are already taken for the Sunday you would have preferred, please find another date. [Do not simply add your name to a name already there.]
- Call the Church Office by Tuesday with the exact wording you prefer for the acknowledgment.

I/We wish to donate:

_____ Poinsettia[s] - 6 " plant at \$9.00 each

_____ Poinsettia [s] -8.5 " pot (comes with 3 assorted plants in one pot) at \$25.00

_____ Wreath[s] at \$20.00 each

_____ Tree[s] at \$75.00 each (we need 2)

_____ *Fine Arts Fund* for Christmas Music

Donor: _____

Acknowledgement: _____

Christmas



Due by December 3rd



I would like you to consider participating in our online giving designed to simplify weekly giving in our congregation.

Electronic giving will enable every household or individual to make their church offering using electronic funds transfer or credit card. You may already be using online bill pay for your mortgage, car payment, or insurance premium through an automatic withdrawal from your checking or savings account. Many of you also have used your credit cards to purchase goods online through Amazon, eBay, or a number of other sites.

We have teamed up with myEoffering to enable you to use the same process to give your offering electronically from your bank account, credit or debit cards.

There is no cost to you for this new giving option. If you are currently giving on a weekly basis, you will no longer need to write out 52 checks a year or prepare 52 envelopes. And when travel, illness or other circumstances prevent you from attending services, this program will allow your weekly offerings to continue uninterrupted.

You can participate in the electronic giving program immediately. Just visit our church website and look for the "Donate Now" button.

Thank you for considering this new giving opportunity.



Merry Christmas
& A Very Blessed
New Year!

from the Staff at
Mt. Lebanon United
Lutheran Church



Blessed Christmas

A Table Liturgy for the Feast of the Holy Nativity of Our Lord



Speaker 1: Blessed are You, Lord our God, who has gathered us together at this our Christmas feasting table.

Speaker 2: As we light our candles on the feast of light, may the eternal light of God that shines with splendor in the stars shine upon our table and fill our home.

All: May the Spirit of God that shone in the star of Bethlehem surround our table and fill our food and our hearts with its holy light.

[The candles are lit.]

Speaker 1: Let us each, on this great and holy feast of the birth of our Savior, pause now and in silence, lift up our hearts to God in gratitude.

[Pause for silent prayer.]

Speaker 2: Lord of all gifts, our home is filled with joy and great beauty on this feast of Christmas.

Speaker 1: We each come to this our Christmas feast with eagerness and a happy heart. As a family, we thank you for the gifts of food upon this table, mindful that You, our God, make every day of the year a Christmas wherein we are gifted by You. We thank you that we are together to share in the happiness of this holy day.

[We thank you for the presence of our guests who by their being present in our home have added to the brightness of our celebration.]

Lord of all gifts, Holy Father of our Savior Jesus, with fullness of heart we now ask your holy blessing upon our food, and upon our family and guests.

May your blessing be upon us all, in the name of the Father, and of the Son [+] and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

All: Merry Christmas!

December 2023



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 9:30 Advent Pageant Rehearsal- Social Hall
3 Advent 1 8:30 & 10:00 Worship 8:30 Live Virtual Worship 10:00 Pageant Rehearsal Pageant Lunch RSVP DUE FLOWER ORDERS DUE	4 12:30 ESL 7:00 ESL	5 4:30 Catechetics 1	6 12:30 ESL 1:00 Global Links 6:15 Midweek Devotions 7:00 Choir	7 10:00 Advent Bible Study 4:00 Youth Service Project 4:30 Catechetics 2	8	9 9:30 Advent Pageant Rehearsal- Social Hall
10 Advent 2 8:30 & 10:00 Worship 8:30 Live Virtual Worship 9:45 Pageant Rehearsal 11:15 Advent Pageant Luncheon ANGEL TREE GIFTS DUE	11 12:30 ESL 7:00 ESL	12 4:30 Catechetics 1	13 12:30 ESL 6:15 Midweek Devotions 7:00 Choir	14 10:00 Advent Bible Study 4:30 Catechetics 2	15	16 10:00 Sanctuary Tree Decorating
17 Advent 3 8:30 & 10:00 Worship 8:30 Live Virtual Worship 10:00 Sunday School 11:15 Council Meeting	18 12:30 ESL 7:00 ESL	19 4:30 Catechetics 1	20 12:30 ESL 6:15 Midweek Devotions 7:00 Choir	21 10:00 Advent Bible Study 4:30 Catechetics 2	22	23
24 Advent 4 9:30 Worship & Livestream Christmas Eve 5:00 Worship 7:30 Worship 10:00 Worship	25 Christmas Day 10:30 Worship 10:30 Live Virtual Worship	26	27 12:30 ESL 7:00 Choir	28 10:00 Bible Study	29	30
31 8:30 & 10:00 Worship 8:30 Live Virtual Worship						





1 World AIDS Day Remember in prayer all who have been and continue to be affected by HIV and AIDS, and pray for the work we do together through the ELCA's HIV and AIDS Ministry — building awareness, serving people who live with HIV and AIDS, advocating for change, and supporting effective, affordable prevention, treatment and care globally.

2 The United Nations estimates that 90% of wartime casualties are suffered by civilians. Pray for an end to the violence, loss of life, suffering and injustice caused by war and conflict in the world, especially in Ukraine and the Middle East.

3 First Sunday of Advent Praise God, source of our hope, strength, healing and new life, and Jesus Christ, who lived among us to reveal God's grace.

4 Approximately 15% of the world's population lives with some form of disability, including about 42.5 million people in our country. Pray for the Spirit to sustain our commitment and guide our efforts to welcome, respect and fully include people with disabilities in every aspect of society and the church. Give thanks for the work and resources of ELCA Disability Ministry, the Evangelical Lutheran Deaf Association and the Lutheran Services in America—Disability Network.

5 Pray that we will not lose heart when we read stories of the church in decline or hear fewer people expressing faith in Christ. Ask the Spirit to strengthen our trust in God's unwavering presence and work in the world and to help us bring the gospel to those still yearning for hope, healing and good news. "Your people long to greet you, my hope, my heart's delight" (*ELW* 241).

6 Pray for ELCA missionaries serving alongside our global companions and churches around the world. Give thanks for communities of faith where our mission personnel worship and celebrate their faith with siblings in Christ.

7 Hanukkah Pray for our Jewish neighbors around the world who are beginning their eight-day celebration of Hanukkah — the Festival of Lights.

8 Remember in prayer people for whom the Christmas season stirs depression, loneliness and grieving. Promise to welcome these struggling people into our communities of faith and to connect them with new friends and siblings in Christ who will offer care and support during the holidays and throughout the year.

9 Reflect prayerfully on the symbolism of the Advent wreath and candles, which help us anticipate and celebrate God's boundless love and the promise of eternal life fulfilled in the birth of Christ — a light that breaks through the darkness of the world and changes everything.

10 Pray that we will be faithful and enthusiastic witnesses to the good news of Jesus Christ for all people in every circumstance of life.

11 Give thanks for our church's commitment to service, generosity, justice and ending hunger and poverty for the sake of our neighbors in need. Pray that the ELCA Good Gifts catalog and the ministries of the ELCA will help us understand the needs of our neighbors and how we can work together to make a lasting impact in the world.

12 Praise God for the diverse Advent and Christmas traditions of the Christian church around the world, traditions that enrich our faith and understanding of how Christ has impacted communities, cultures and nations.

13 Pause during the busyness of the holidays and pray for our neighbors in need, especially those experiencing suffering, poverty, war, recovery from disasters and displacement from their homes. Pray that they will find relief, hope and renewed strength in the certainty of God's attention and love, evidenced in the gift of Jesus Christ and reflected in our concern, response and advocacy.

14 Give thanks for the seasons of the liturgical year and the Scripture, colors, symbols, prayers, music and rituals of faith that help us live in the rhythm of life as children of God and siblings in Christ.

15 Ask God to help us reflect on those who are not present whenever we gather and to remember that these children of God bring unique voices, gifts and life experiences to the worship, activities and gatherings of our congregations.

16 Las Posadas Give thanks for the tradition of Las Posadas, which recalls Mary and Joseph's Nativity journey and is observed in parts of Latin America and in some Latino communities in the United States.

17 Pray that we will have the humility, honesty and boldness of John the Baptist, who did not shy away from expressing his faith in Jesus Christ even when challenged and threatened.

18 International Migrants Day Pray for those who, with great risk and uncertainty, have left their home countries and familiar surroundings to seek welcoming communities where they feel safe, respected and free to reestablish their lives and raise their families.

19 Give thanks to God for the assurance of life eternal in the kingdom of heaven and for the Spirit equipping us to embody God's compassion in the world while we await the return of Christ.

20 What stirs joy in you today? Give thanks for the people and experiences that bring joy into your life, even if only briefly. "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

21 Winter solstice As the days of the Northern Hemisphere grow shorter, pray that we will be guided and reassured by the light of Christ, which illuminates God's love, mercy and truth in our lives and in every corner of the world.

22 Praise God for this time of remembrance, anticipation and celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, a birth that changed the world and our lives in ways that exceed our imagination and comprehension.

23 Give thanks for those who serve our communities during Christmas, including people in health care, elder care, law enforcement, the hospitality industry, emergency services and the military.

24 Christmas Eve Shout "Glory to God in the highest!" The good news of the birth of the promised Messiah and Savior for all creation and humankind has been made known to us and is the foundation of our faith and life.

25 Christmas Day Lift up shouts of thanksgiving and praise for all to hear! God lives among us in the birth of Jesus Christ and pours hope and joy into our lives to fill their voids and mend our brokenness.

26 Kwanzaa Pray for our African-descent neighbors and siblings in Christ who celebrate Kwanzaa, a weeklong observance of African culture and traditions that emphasizes family, community and shared principles. Give thanks for the rich and enduring practices of our African-descent siblings and the global African community.

27 Give thanks that the gift of grace found in Jesus Christ is both deeply personal and for all humankind. "Of what benefit would it be to me if Christ had been born a thousand times, and it would daily be sung into my ears in a most lovely manner, if I were never to hear that he was born for me and was to be my very own?" (Martin Luther, 1522).

28 Christmas may have come and gone, but we carry into every day the joy of Christmas and the birth of the Christ child, the manifestation of God's love for humanity. Give praise and thanks to God!

29 Lift up prayers of relief and thanksgiving for God's mercy, which is fair and generous and is never swayed by our actions or words, no matter how good or well-intended.

30 Share with God your hopes, concerns, uncertainties and aspirations for the year ahead. Pray for the Spirit to strengthen our faith in God's concern for us and in God's attention to our prayers — spoken and silent.

31 New Year's Eve Our baptism with water, the word of God and the blessings of our siblings in Christ marks us as children of God and followers of Jesus, loved, forgiven and made new every day of our lives. Alleluia!

December 25

Happy Birthday Jesus

*To you is born this day in the city of David
a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.*

Luke 2:11



COMING ON DECEMBER 17TH

PROJECT PRAY FOR PEACE



**Starting December 17th
Bulletin Board located in the “Café”**

**SIGN YOUR NAME ON A DOVE
POST DOVE ON THE BULLETIN BOARD
PICK UP A PRAYER CARD**

NOVA
UKRAINE



SAVE THE DATE

THIRD BENEFIT
CONCERT FOR
UKRAINE

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2023 AT 5:00 PM
PARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

275 COMMERCE STREET
BEAVER, PA 15009.



DTCare

Featuring Solo and Chamber
Performances by:

Katie Manukyan

*Soprano and Teaching Associate Professor of Slavic
Languages and Literatures, University of Pittsburgh*

David McCarroll

Concertmaster, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra

Marta Krechkovsky

Violin, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra

Sean Juhl

Viola, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra

Regi Papa

Violin, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra

Michael DeBruyn

Cello, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra

Carolyn Semes

Violin, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra

Victoria Luperi

Associate Principal Clarinet, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra

Eric Kochanowski

Director of Music, Park Presbyterian Church

dtcare.org/ukraine-benefit

Mt. Lebanon United Lutheran Church

975 Washington Road
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15228
Church Telephone: [412] 563-0300
www.mtlebanonlutheran.org



The Reverend Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
The Reverend Kurt Kusserow
Bishop
Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod
The Reverend Douglas M. Heagy
Senior Pastor

Dr. Christopher Keenan, DMA
Director of Music and Organist
Mr. Larry Allen
Director of Music and Organist Emeritus
Mrs. Kris Malia
Parish Secretary



Festive Worship Celebration of The Nativity of our Lord Candlelight Worship Liturgies Christmas Eve 5:00 PM, 7:30 PM and 10:00 PM

Festive Worship for Christmas Day — 10:30 AM

**Festive Worship for the Epiphany of our Lord
Sunday, December 31 at 8:30 and 10:00 AM**

Commemorating the arrival of the Magi at the birthplace of Jesus.

(Note: We're celebrating Epiphany early! January 6 is the traditional Epiphany date)

