

December 3, 2023

Volume XXXX, Issue 401

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Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! Happy Advent!

I am so excited to celebrate my second Christmas with you, my Church Family. As I remember our first Christmas when it started out at 46 degrees in the sanctuary and warmed up to 60 degrees by the end of the night, I remember the spirit of love and unity that continues to grow among the people. This is an awesome testimony to the power of God and the work He is performing in each one of you. The Bible makes it clear that people will know we are Christians by the love we have for one another: John 13:35 – “By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

Christmas is such an exciting time of year for most. It will do us well to remember that for those that have lost loved ones over the last year, this holiday, especially, may be difficult. So please reach out to your friends and family who may be struggling and remind them that Jesus is always there for them.

Billy Graham, in Hope for Each Day, says, “I never come to Christmas without thinking of the thousands of people who are lonely and troubled at this time of year. I have had psychiatrists tell me their schedules are overloaded with people who find the Christmas season almost more than they can bear because of their loneliness and isolation. Christmas is God’s reminder that we are not alone. God revealed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus a reconciling love that rescues us from separation and loneliness. We are not alone; God has come down from Heaven to tell us He loves us! At this Christmas season you can be assured that Jesus Christ is here. He is here to give us hope, to forgive our sins, to give us a new song, to impart faith, and to heal our spiritual wounds if only we will let Him.”

We have a wonderful opportunity to invite our neighbors and friends to come with you to the Advent, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services this year. Our Advent series is The Wonder of Christmas. Please invite your family and friends to join us.

I want to wish you and your loved ones the most blessed Christmas as you once again pause and remember the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

I joyously give my life in service to the King and look forward with great anticipation to 2024 as our ministries continue to impact our community and the world with the Gospel message of Jesus Christ.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Blessings ~ Pastor Lori

**December Mission Project:**

**Gatehouse Hospice**

By providing a peaceful, home-like environment, The Gatehouse makes a difficult time easier for both the patient and his or her loved ones. Families can spend quality time with patients in private bedroom suites, a comfortable family room, a kitchen and a meditation room - all while patients receive around-the-clock, skilled nursing care to manage their difficult symptoms.



## A Night in Bethlehem

**Who:** You and your family and friends

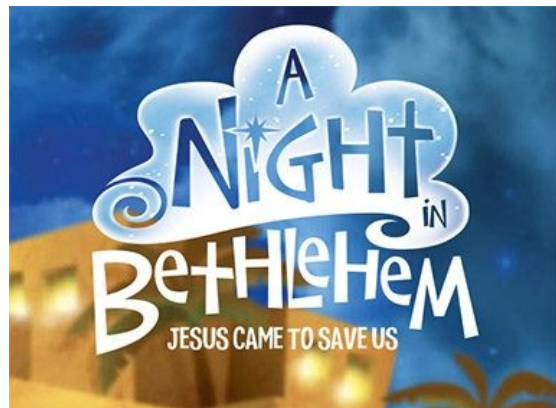
**What:** A night to go back in time

**When:** Sunday, December 10, 2023

**Time:** 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

**Where:** Saint John's-Newberry, UMC

**Why:** To help you get into the spirit of Christmas



Attendees at A Night in Bethlehem will be transported back through time to the city of Bethlehem as its residents celebrate the birth of Jesus. The citizens of Bethlehem just can't stop talking about Jesus and his incredible birth. You will be amazed at all the authentic, multisensory activities you will find.

You will venture to The City Gates, The Village Photographer, The Bethlehem Marketplace which will include the Bethlehem Bakery, the metal shop, the carpentry shop, the scribe's tent, the pottery shed, the painter's hut and the stable.

This fun event will not happen on its own. It needs YOU! Please check the red bulletin board in the hallway outside the Fellowship Hall for items that are needed, people that are needed, and little tidbits about what will be happening. Please invite your family and friends so they can learn that JESUS CAME TO SAVE US!



There will be a Blue Christmas service for anyone who wants a quiet time during the hustle and bustle of the Advent season. The service is also known as Longest-Night service. This year we will have this service on Friday, December 22 at 7:00 p.m.

## The Miracle of the Poinsettia

*A Mexican Christmas Legend*



In a small village in Mexico, many people believe that a miracle happened.

On Christmas Eve, in the year 1834, people in the village were bringing gifts to the church altar. Maria, a poor peasant girl, had no gift.



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## CHURCH COUNCIL REPORT NOVEMBER 2023

The monthly meeting of the Church Council was held November 15, 2023. This report is submitted to communicate to our congregation the work of the Council. By way of background, the Council serves as the Administrative Board, Trustees, Finance and Staff Parish Relations Committees in a governance and oversight role over all ministries. Church Council meetings are open meetings except when the Council deals with Staff Parish Relations matters.

The following are the major items from the Council's agenda discussed at the November meeting:

- For our spiritual development we discussed chapter twelve in the book "Autopsy of a Deceased Church – 12 Ways to Keep Yours Alive" by Thom Rainer. We will identify those ways to stay healthy and alive. The prayer commitment for Chapter Twelve, *Is There Hope for the Dying Church?*, was the following: *Lord, let me see my church with honesty and open eyes. Help me to grasp where we have gotten out of balance with inward and outward ministries. And give our church a vision to make a difference in our community. Even more, God, use me to be a catalyst and instrument for the changes that must take place in our church.* We encourage the congregation to also consider this prayer and the challenge it poses for us.
- Approved October Council meeting minutes.
- Reviewed October Council newsletter report.
- As we do every meeting, we reviewed the monthly financial report and balance sheet. After ten months of the year we are running a deficit of \$18,606.98. The deficit would be larger were it not for the fact we take income from our investment account. We will continue to monitor this as it may impact ministries. We encourage the congregation to consider our response to the membership vow to support the ministries of the congregation through our prayers, presence, witness, service and gifts. To address this need, last month Council authorized a special mailing to the congregation to encourage a year end gift to enable us to catch up. To date we have received \$13,905.00 which covers much of the deficit. Council thanks the congregation for your generosity. There is still time for anyone to consider your year end gift.
- Heard from the maintenance team that a control valve on the old classroom wing zone has been replaced. We will have the computer representative and Steam Specialists in next week to help us trouble shoot the heating system. We have some zones that are not responding properly. Also replaced the 21-year-old refrigerator at the parsonage.
- We discussed the two open positions on our staff – that of secretary/treasurer and vocal choir director. We have not had any applicants for the secretary/treasurer position and will continue to advertise for the position. We have a plan for coverage until we fill the position. It is our goal to have a new vocal choir director in place by the year's end.



- The Lay Leadership Team reported three new members of Council were approved at the recent church conference – Lynne Girardi, Lee Ann Ditty and Ann Allison. Members leaving Council after two terms are Bob Weaver, Erin Kuriga and Jan Walters.
- The Congregational Care Team continues to explore fellowship opportunities for the congregation. They have events lined up for the next six months.
- Reviewed and approved a final budget for 2024. As part of that process approved the Endowment Fund Election and Spending Policy for 2024. We will once again take a 7% distribution to balance our budget.
- Moving forward, we will continue the practice at the beginning of our meeting to provide time for any member of the congregation to address Council with any comments or concerns. Time will be limited to five minutes. This will permit input without the need to stay for our entire meeting.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns please talk to me or to any member of the Council

(Pastor Lori, Bob Burns, Mark Ertel, Scott Hall, Elaine Hinston, Nancy Jacobs, Erin Kuriga, Cathy Prowant, Ed Souter Sr., Jan Walters).

Bob Weaver, Church Council Chairman

## *Memorials and Honors*

The following have made contributions to the Memorial and Honor Fund to the Glory of God and in Memory of **Ray Mahaffey**: Lori Mahaffey; in Memory of **Curtis Ertel**: Karen Ertel; in Memory of **Peggy Elder**: Anonymous; in Memory of **Dorothy Douty**: Ronda Fleming; in Memory of **My Family**: Susan Toti

## *Thank You*

“Thank You” doesn’t begin to express my gratitude for the love that I’ve been shown by so many here at Saint John’s-Newberry following the announcement that I’ve returned to my position as Secretary/Treasurer. Sometimes I think I know what path is best for me, but, thankfully, God has spoken loudly enough for me to listen to Him leading me on a path that leads in a different direction - this time back to Saint John’s-Newberry.

I’m eternally grateful to you all!

God Bless You!

Kris Michael



## December Celebrations...

## Happy Birthday

June Shireman	1	Dalton Kriner	8	Kenzee Burns	20
Emily Turner	1	Kaitlyn Michael Berkheimer	9	Kathy Yaw	20
Veronica Jones	2	Arlene Brown	9	Christin Lovell	21
Jared Mahaffey	2	Angela Krebs	10	Diane Turner	21
Layla Barr	3	Pat Hart	11	Dee O'Donnell	22
Dan Brown	3	Sharon Kuriga	11	Mark Ertel	23
Linda Confer	4	Paul McBride	11	Anne Bosch	27
Bev Stroble	4	Denny Davis	12	Sharon Lindauer	27
Sierra Frantz	5	Gladys Archambault	13	Lew Litz	28
Cathy Piccolo	5	Gerry Kabat	13	Mark Stroble	28
Carla Hoover	6	Xavier Lyon	13	Sherrie Benson	29
Gianna Rupert	6	Kris Krebs	17	Bailey Luna	29
Sally Metzker	7	Denise DeArment	19	Barry Rake	29
Faye Carlisle Thomas	7	Mary Ruth Barner	20	Jerry Bennett	30

## Happy Anniversary

Michael & Kristin Slagus	December 1, 2007	Bill & Lana Encke	December 19, 1970
Tim & Stacy Conklin	December 2, 1993	Dave & Peg Bross	December 23, 1978
Butch & Susan Hunsinger	December 7, 1991	Max & Joanne Ameigh	December 29, 1962
Jeff & Christin Lovell	December 8, 1996	Ron & Lea Frymire	December 31, 1973
Mike Knarr & Deb Bisbee	December 17, 2011		

## January Celebrations...

## Happy Birthday

Bob Thomas	1	Jake Lusk	17	Michael Luna	22
Ethan Kuriga	2	Sam Penman	18	Bob Burns	23
Bruce Brossman	4	Karter Barr	12	Cindi Jo Miller	24
Janice Brossman	7	Stefanie Steele	13	Colton Conklin	27
Ann Allison	8	Jessica Hepler	14	Grant Fausey	27
Sammie Pick	8	Heather Council	15	Noah Springman	28
Hunter Cero	9	Marissa Kontz	15	Benjamin Springman	28
Spencer Hepler	9	Matthew Turner	16	Sarah Bastian	29
Jill Confer	11	Elissa Weaver	18	David Wertz	29
Lori Kriner	11	Meadow Wertz	19	Julie Bittner	31
Dave Bross	17	Madolyn Jacobs	20	Muriel Cupp	31
Loren Harris	17	Diane Brown	22		

## Happy Anniversary

Jack & Wendy Decker	January 11, 1975	Ed & Sally Souter	January 25, 1969
Bruce & Janice Brossman	January 14, 1961	Bob & Faye Carlisle Thomas	January 29, 2005
Dale & Sally Metzker	January 19, 1963	Steve & Deb Martin	January 30, 1982
Ernie & Donna Wheeland	January 24, 1976		

## Prayer Chain Report

Please pray for: Beth Ziegler, Cheryl Kontz, Patty Wehr, Vicki Schneider, Dan Walmer, Denny & Kim Davis, Danielle Fantaskey, Barb, Riley O'Connell, Nancy Sanders, Beth, Cody Michael, Art & Patty DeParlos, Merle Campbell, Bernie Helminiak, Frank Connor, Cindy Cybulski, Grant Fausey, Mark Lauchle, Nancy Hembree, Frounchetta Keller, Mike Jacobs, Bob & Faye Thomas, Frank Sanders, Heather Council, Wendy Keller, Robert & Nancy Eiswert, Eric Barr, Paul Cohen, Jim Bufford, Debbie Helm, Stan Jacobs, Nancy Gair, Doris Hunsinger, Lew Litz, Jerre Paulhamus, Wendy Decker, Hallie Luppert, Roberta Kupel, Dick & Della Mae Carothers, Denise Miller, Waylon Harlan, Lori Webb, Mark Ertel, Max Ameigh, Barb Breining, Cal & Darlene Phillips, Dan Brown, Jane Lowery, Carol Eiswert, Tiffany, Lila Lauchle, Rayven Delaney, Bonnie Hetrick, Rob Snyder, Chris Rafter, Joy Connly, Rose, Marie Cummings

**The Prayer Chain contacts are Shirley Morris (570 323-4310). If unable to contact her, please call Ann Allison (570 326-4671).**

**The prayer chain team is asking that when you have someone added to the list that you keep them up to date on the situation. Prayer requests will remain on the prayer list for 2 months. If after that 2 month time period they need to remain on, please notify either Shirley Morris or Ann Allison. Thank you for your willingness to pray for others!**

## Prayer for Others

### Our Bishops

Cynthia Moore Koikoi &  
Sandra Steiner Ball

### Our Superintendent

Rev. Dr. Paul C. Amara

### Our Local United Methodist Churches

Jersey Shore Trinity

### †Those serving in the Military...

John Affield, Jeffrey Bache, Joel Barr, Josalyn Bradley, Nathan Byer, Chase Bower, Richard Campbell, Brian Clarkson, Joey Cummings, Robert Daugherty, Joe DeArment, Cameron Dickey, Aaron Fillman, Joe Fioreth, Ron Furman, Randy Hosier, Jeremy Johnson, Eric Miller, Andrew Pepperman, Taylor Prosba, Matthew Ricci, Jeffrey Richard, Sarah Sanner, Col. David Smith, Brett Snauffer Jr., Jason Starr, Charlie Wolf, Jason Work.

### † Our College Students...

Jocelyn Cruz, Juliana Cruz, Jordan Downey, Spencer Fogelman, Hannah Freezer, Maria Davis Johnson, Spencer Karasek, Makenzie Karasek, Kylie Kirkendall, Lydia Kirkendall, Ethan Kuriga, Sam Litz, Lane Lusk, Ben Manetta, Gabe Manetta, Alicia Meyer, Jordan Phillips, Gianna Rupert, Julia Yeagle



**SAINT JOHN'S-NEWBERRY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

**October and November 2023 Attendance & Financial Reports**

<b>October</b>	5:30 p.m.	9:00 a. m.	Total	Sunday School
week 1	15	92	107	40
week 2	18	81	99	42
week 3	19	84	103	44
week 4	20	95	115	45
week 5	19	108	127	42
<i>average</i>	18	92	110	43
<b>November</b>	5:30 p.m.	9:00 a. m.	Total	Sunday School
week 1	32	94	126	43
week 2	23	90	113	36
week 3	21	90	111	52
week 4	17	85	102	57
week 5				
Thanksgiving Eve	36			
<i>average</i>	23	90	113	47

**FINANCES:      Budget Fund \$343,845 for 2023      Needed each month \$28,654**

**Month End (October 2023):**

Offering envelopes	\$20,192.40		
Mission Conference Benevolence	\$90.00		
Endowment Fund Income	\$2,881.41		
Church Use/One Time Gifts	\$250.00		
SOTA Contribution for Utilities	\$1,590.50		
Miscellaneous	\$3,077.93		
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$28,082.24</b>	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$28,405.21</b>

**Year to Date (as of October 2023)**

Offering envelopes	\$185,276.31		
Mission Conference Benevolence	\$1,175.00		
Endowment Fund Income	\$30,213.40		
Church Use/Donations	\$1,385.00		
SOTA Contribution for Utilities	\$6,940.75		
Miscellaneous	\$25,743.00		
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$250,733.46</b>	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$269,384.12</b>

**If you have any questions regarding the financial report, please feel free to contact the church secretary/treasurer, Kris Michael, at the church office (phone 570 326-5569 or e-mail [secretary@stjnumc.com](mailto:secretary@stjnumc.com)).**

**Should you have any questions about your giving, please contact Joyce Paulhamus at the church office (570 326-5569 or e-mail [administrator@stjnumc.com](mailto:administrator@stjnumc.com))**

## Saint John's-Newberry, UMC

2101 Newberry Street  
Williamsport, PA 17701

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E-mail: [secretary@stjnumc.com](mailto:secretary@stjnumc.com)

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## Reminders

The **NOVEMBER/DECEMBER UPPER ROOM** daily devotionals are now available on the literature rack located in the Lounge area. The cost is \$1.00 for the regular print, \$1.50 for the large print.

**Church Office Hours** are Monday - Thursday 9am to 1pm, **Please call before you come to make sure someone is here.**

During lunch breaks, staff meetings and after office hours you may leave messages on the voice mail answering system (570 326-5569).

**All general information and questions may be sent to:** [secretary@stjnumc.com](mailto:secretary@stjnumc.com)

Newsletter articles may be submitted  
via e-mail to:  
[secretary@stjnumc.com](mailto:secretary@stjnumc.com)

**Take a look at our website at:**  
<http://stjnumc.com>



<https://www.facebook.com/saintjnumc/>

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• Rev. Dr. Lori Betsworth, *Pastor* •  
• Joyce Paulhamus, *Office Assistant* • Kris Michael, *Secretary/Treasurer* •  
• Gayle Page, *Sexton* • Jennifer Jacobs & Vanessa Bennett *Child Care Providers* •  
• Todd Kendall, *Director of the School of the Arts* • Cal Phillips, *Director of WECCC* •  
• Church Office, 570/326-5569 • WECCC, 570/323-6297 • Saint John's School Of The Arts, 570/327-5575 •  
• Communicator articles, [secretary@stjnumc.com](mailto:secretary@stjnumc.com) • Home Page, <http://stjnumc.com> •