

THE CARILLON

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St. Mark's United Church of Christ
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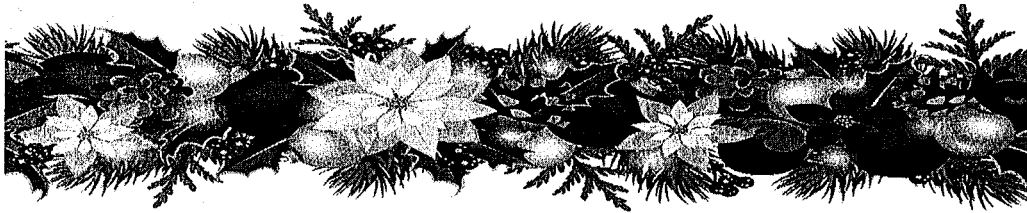
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Office Hours – Monday through Friday – 9:30 AM to 1:30 PM

STAFF

Rev. David A. Jones, Pastor
Sam Brandt, Custodian
Cindy Klahr, Secretary
Cynthia Johnson, Organist
Kathy Follett, Consistory President
Ron Follett, Church Treasurer
Dawn Shultz, Consistory Secretary
Pine Acres



A PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS

*Dear Father,
It's Christmas and
We humbly kneel close to the stable,
Listening to the low rustling of hooves in hay.
Our breath is snatched up
By the sight of the Christ Child
Lying in a manger.
Basking in the light of the glorious star,
We stand in awe and wonder.
No Room?
How could it be!
Yet while we try to understand
The inn with no space for God's Son,
The rooms of our very souls are overcrowded
And even the closets of our minds are outsourced.
Will you forgive us, Jesus,
For making no room in the inns of our hearts?
May we focus this day on the ultimate gift -
Your love.
In the precious name of Jesus.
Amen.*



Lessons from a Christmas Tree

- *Be a light in the darkness.
- *We all fall over sometimes.
- *You can never wear too much glitter.
- *Bring joy to others.
- *Sparkle and twinkle as often as possible.
- *It's okay to be a little tilted.



*Christmas brings
family and friends together.
It helps us to appreciate
the love in our lives
that we often take for granted.
May the true meaning of
the holiday season
fill your heart and home
with many blessings.*



Are you
PART OF THE
INN CROWD
Or are you one
OF THE **STABLE**
FEW?

*If you look for Me
at Christmas*

you won't need a special star –
I'm no longer just in Bethlehem,
I'm right there where you are,
You may not be aware of Me
amid the celebrations –
You'll have to look beyond the stores
and all the decorations.
But if you take a moment
from your list of things to do
And listen to your heart, you'll find
I'm waiting there for you.
You're the one I want to be with,
you're the reason that I came,
And you'll find Me in the stillness
As I'm whispering your name.

Love,

Jesus

MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE

The Journey Continues...

In our fast paced world, we value titles more than ever. A well conceived title can sum up a song, a book, or a movie in a single word or phrase that grabs our attention and gives us a reason to listen, read, or watch. A good title can also tell us where the author wants to go, and we can decide if we want to go with them. Personally, I like to glance at a title and decide if I want to listen to the song, watch the movie, or read the book. So I like titles and I see values in titles, but you may have noticed that it's been a long time since I've given my sermons a title in the bulletin. And there is a reason why.

Before the pandemic, I would email a draft of the bulletin – including the sermon title – to the church office Sunday afternoon or evening. The sermon title chosen was based on my first impression of the scripture and what I guessed the theme of the sermon would be that week. Sometimes I guessed right and sometimes I guessed wrong. As the sermon began to come together, I would have to keep checking to make sure the content of the sermon remained relevant to the title. It was a frustrating process because I felt handcuffed by the sermon title chosen when I didn't truly know where the scripture was going to lead me that week. No matter how well I chose a sermon title, I always felt restricted.

When the pandemic caused us to pause our in person worship services, I didn't need to worry about a sermon title because we didn't have printed worship bulletins. That was one of the good things of the pandemic because I realized after a few weeks how much easier it is to come up with a sermon without being constrained by a sermon title. I felt free to allow God's Word to speak to me and through me in a whole new way.

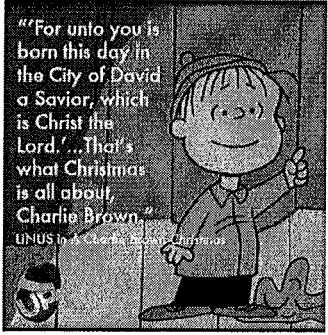
Ever since this revelation, I've pondered the idea of how titles limit our thinking, even when we aren't writing a sermon. I've discovered the labels we use to describe people work in the same restrictive ways that titles worked with my sermon. We label people by race, gender, age, beauty, income level, political affiliation, and countless other ways. In the same way I felt handcuffed in coming up with a sermon by the sermon title I chose ahead of time, I discovered we are handcuffed in our opinions of others by the labels we place on them. And while we are VERY proficient about labeling people, God never directed us to label people. We are called to love people, not label them.

But what if we decided to do something different? What if we stopped using labels on ourselves and others? What if we no longer ranked people's worth or made judgments about them based on labels? What if we learned about people instead of labeling them so that we can see our neighbors as God sees them? And better yet, what if the removal of labels showed us a path to love our neighbors as God loves them?

Everyone I know from every political persuasion cherishes the freedom we have as Americans, but imagine the freedom we have as Christians on the path our Savior has laid out before us. A path where we don't label one another except to label them as children of God who are worthy of God's love. As we head into the season of Advent and await for the coming of the Christ Child once again, may we remove the labels from our lives and our thoughts so that we are free to embrace the Hope, Peace, Love, and Joy the Christ Child seeks to bring to our lives this year.

The Journey Continues...

Pastor Dave



Kathy's December Blog

As I was working in the yard today, raking leaves, prepping my flower beds for the winter, I pondered what to write in this month's blog. I could write about how the weather is feeling like winter. I could write about the caterpillar predictions for the winter. I could write about some of the recent events of the last week. But then I determined much of that is so depressing and reason many of us want to stay in our homes with the TV news off.

I determined the best thing for us is to be reminded what December, Advent and Christmas are all about. I reached out to one of my most special moments being a Peanuts fan and reached out to Linus to remind us about what Christmas is all about.

The story begins with Charlie Brown asking:

Charlie Brown: Isn't there anyone, who knows what Christmas is all about?!

Linus: Sure Charlie Brown, I can tell you what Christmas is all about. Lights please?

And there were in the same country shepherds, abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them! And they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, "Fear not! For, behold, I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all my people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ, the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." And suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude of the Heavenly Host praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the Highest, and on Earth peace, and good will toward men.

That's what Christmas is all about, Charlie Brown.

This month's column may seem simple, may seem an easy way out. Both are true. But I think what drove me to think this simple reminder of Christmas was how much the story of the father killing his two young daughters caught my attention. Even during these difficult times of all that is going on, the reminder of Christmas's true meaning seemed appropriate.

Stay safe and Snoopy and I'll see you in January. Don't forget to get your meat for Christmas dinner early.

Kathy

What's happening at St. Mark's

Upcoming Special Services

As we move to the holiday season, we will have a couple additional services.

Christmas Family Day Service – Dec 19th – 9:00 AM. See Faye Fox or Diane Vogel if you'd like to participate

Christmas Eve Service – Dec 24th - service time is **7:00**

Children's Church

Children's Church is being offered the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month at this time. The weeks that we don't offer children's church, we will offer activity sheets for the kids to pick up on their way into church. The activity sheets will be on clipboards, so pick up the clipboard and some colored pencils. If you would like to help with Children's Church, please reach out to Becky Colban or Marilyn Reppert.

Change in the Office

At the November Consistory meeting, we accepted the resignation of Gayle as our church secretary. Gayle had been the secretary for 5 years. We thank Gayle for all her contributions over those 5 years. Also at that Consistory meeting, we hired Cindy Klahr as an interim secretary. We will evaluate in a few months to determine if Cindy wants to do this long term or if we need to post for a secretary. Thanks to both Gayle and Cindy.

Sunday School

Sunday School for adults will begin on Sunday January 9th. Sam will be leading the discussion. The discussion will take place in the Fellowship Hall. As we start to see more young people returning, we will provide more options for Sunday School.

Music Update

Thanks to all who were able to join the Music meeting on Nov 14th. It gave us a good idea of how to move forward with the music coordinator position. Next step is to create the appropriate job description and then post the position. Stay tuned for updates.

Congregational Meeting (s)

The annual congregational meeting will be held on Sunday January 23rd after church. If you are not able to attend in person but would like to participate, there will be a Zoom option like last year. Please let Pastor Dave know if you'd like to participate through Zoom no later than Sunday January 16th to ensure we get everything to you in time. In addition, we are proposing a change to the bylaws that impacts the makeup of Consistory. This will be discussed at this meeting. For the bylaw change to be made and approved, we must have a second meeting. This meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 27th after church. Again, Zoom will be offered. Please notify Pastor Dave of this date as well.

Coins for the Parking Lot

The large water bottle is back in the Narthex to collect coins that help reduce the Parking Lot debt. Pennies make nickels which make dimes which make quarters which make dollars which help reduce the debt.

Pine Acres Update

I shared in the November carillon, we needed to take down an 85 foot pine tree as the woodpeckers, carpenter ants and other critters were causing concern of it falling and causing damage. The tree came down in one fell swoop. It was 34 inches wide at the base, thus a very large base to a very large tree. 85 feet of tree that has two main branches is a lot of firewood. We were blessed to give 60 feet of the tree away. We reached out to Luke Brightbill of Lucas Brightbill Woodworks to determine if he could use any free wood. Luke jumped at the idea. He was glad to help out however he could because of all the fond memories he had at Pine Acres in his younger days. He milled the wood in 10 foot slabs to be used for a future project of his or another wood workers.

Inclement Weather Policy

As we are approaching the winter season, a reminder to our inclement weather policy.

When events or services need to be cancelled or rescheduled, an announcement will be placed on the St Mark's UCC Facebook page, the St Mark's website and a message on the answering machine. The announcement on the St Mark's Facebook page is open to the public.

Church Services will follow this as a guideline

. Lebanon County is in a Winter Storm Warning - In Person church services would be cancelled. Church Services will be broadcast through Facebook Live and the Conference Call. Exception would be if electric or internet are impacted by the weather.

. Lebanon County is in a Winter Weather Advisory - In Person church services are optional. If the weather is ice, in person church services would be cancelled. Church Services will be broadcast through Facebook Live and the Conference Call.

. Lebanon County is under no advisory or warning - In Person church, Facebook Live and the Conference Call are all options.

Kathy

SENIOR CORNER

Jeanette Heim
Lebanon Valley Home
550 E. Main St.
Anville, PA 17003

Betty Bartal
Lebanon Valley Home
550 E. Main St.
Anville, PA 17003

Please send notes, cards or give them a phone call. Let Jeanette and Betty know that St. Mark's has not forgotten about them.

To Plank or to Puddle

by Jim Schucker

The Union Canal Tunnel was the last structure to be completed before the Union Canal could be opened for commerce, and anticipation was high as the Summit (from the South Portal through Lebanon to Prescott) was watered for the first time. Anticipation quickly turned to anxiety as President Samuel Mifflin and Resident Superintendent William Lehman realized this stretch of canal would not hold water. The Summit had been moved from its original course of following the Quittapahilla Creek through Lebanon, a natural water drainage stream for the Valley, to a bed 33 feet higher through a limestone floor filled with fissures and its susceptibility to sink holes. William Weston, the first engineer hired in the 1790's had decided to leave the Quitty route also, but he would have headed northwest roughly where WalMart stands today and run the canal through the shaly soil located north of Maple Street and Tunnel Hill Road. His plan ended when the canal company ran out of funds and work came to a standstill for many years.

Superintendent Lehman, having been a carpenter by profession, concluded that the best way to prevent the leakage was to line the entire prism of the canal, both bottom and sides, from the South Portal six miles through Lebanon, with oak planking. President Mifflin, desperate for a solution, agreed to the suggestion, and two-inch tongue and groove lumber was soon on its way to Lebanon. It arrived on August 1, 1827, and the installation began on August 6. In 120 workdays the task was completed - December 20 - and 8 days later the first boat cleared the Summit. At a cost of \$9000 a mile or a total of \$54,000, the six miles had been made relatively watertight. In the process 232,000 linear feet or 1,728,500 board feet of timber were used. The challenge for the time had been met.

In a few short years, however, the construction had to be repeated. As expected the oak planking rotted underwater, and the canal boats knocked sections of the timber loose by striking the sides and by scraping the bottom of the canal during periods of low water. After 24 years William Lehman stepped down as superintendent and his son, Benjamin B. Lehman, took the position held by his father - and the replanking continued.

The 1850's saw the enlargement of the canal to accommodate the larger boats from the surrounding canals. This expansion was under the the direction of Engineer James Worrall. His approach to making the Summit watertight was entirely different. Worrall favored puddling the canal bed to impede water loss. This process involved filling deep fissures with various sizes of gravel to within inches of the surface. A mixture of clay, burnt limestone, and water was then packed into the remaining portion of the openings. Teams of mules, especially trained for this task, were brought into the bed and run over and over the clay mixture driving it into the cracks.

Feeling his method was far superior to that of Lehman's, Worrall quipped that if William Lehman had been a saddler he probably would have lined the canal with leather. This remark raised the ire of the children of William!

KIDS KORNER

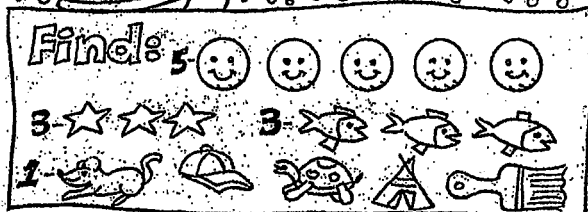
CHEDDAR BACON DIP

- 8 slices bacon
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- 4 scallions
- 4 tbsp fresh parsley
- 4 dashes hot sauce
- 1 C mayonnaise
- ½ tsp dry mustard
- 2 C grated cheddar cheese
- 1 C sour cream

Fry bacon and crumble – put aside

Mix all other above ingredients, then add bacon except for 2 tbsp.

You can either use a bread bowl, hollow it and fill it with the dip and sprinkle the 2 tbsp of bacon on the top. Cover the bread bowl with the bread lid and serve with crackers, or you can serve the dip in a dish and serve with crackers.



Here's a funny picture—
a circus in the snow!



There are 16 objects hidden in the
scene—can you find them all?

CHRISTMAS FAMILY DAY – DECEMBER 19, 2021 – 9 AM

Come One, come all –



To our Christmas Family Day

We will have special music by the
Bell Ringers, Heidi Fox, Tim Brown and Ken Shultz.

Special Readings by Jay and Susie Fisher and Dawn Shultz.

Special gift presentations.

Please contact Faye Fox or Diane Vogel if you would like to
participate in this special Christmas event.

Hope everyone can join us and get in the Christmas spirit!



Let's remember to fill the jar in the narthex
with your change. This money goes to the
Parking Lot Fund.

Thank you.



THANK YOU

THANK YOU

THANK YOU

The fellowship and Mission Committee would like to thank everyone who supported our recent sale of Texas Roadhouse Gift Cards. Your help in this project is greatly appreciated. Proceeds from this sale will go towards expenses for the Christmas Family Day. Thanks again to all who purchased gift cards. We are hoping it made your holiday shopping just a little easier!

Diane Vogel and Faye Fox
Co-chairmen
Fellowship and Mission Committee

NOTE FROM MEMBER --

I have decided it was time to find someone else to be chairman of The Church In Community Committee. Melissa Furman has served on the committee, has grown up in the church, has served on consistory and knows the workings of Church In Community. She will be an outstanding person to take my place.

I was appointed to the Church In Community Committee when I served on consistory. It first was formed thru Mrs. Sincavage's term. Many good things have developed during the committees leadership and we have helped not only community needs but also church members needs. We also sponsored refugees and settled them in the community. They all became good citizens. Our church was known that "we would help."

Serving others was how our church serves and I was brought up to serve others. Jesus taught us to do for others and that was what I tried to do all these many years as Chairman and with the help and generosity of our church members who supported the Good Samaritan fund all these years.

Bish Wolf



Christmas Gift Suggestions

The Lebanon Valley Home:

550 East Main Street, Annville, PA 17003: (717) 867-4467

Please mail or drop off Christmas gift cards by **December 15, 2021** to the attention of Amy Tillinger. Please include the name and address of the sponsoring church and/or individual along with donated gift cards. Thank you!

The Lebanon Valley Home requests gift cards for the following stores:

**Giant Food Stores
Boscov's**

**CVS
Wal Mart**

Amazon



Kindred Place at Annville

One Kindred Place, Annville, PA 17003: (717) 867-5572

Please mail or drop off Christmas gift cards to Kindred Place before or on **December 8, 2021**. Please include name and address of the sponsoring church and/or individual along with donated gift cards. Thank you!

Kindred Place at Annville requests donations of gift cards for the following stores:

**Giant Food Stores
Boscov's**

**Dairy Queen
Michaels**

**Dunkin Donuts
Wal Mart**

Please Note: It is helpful if the Gift Cards are in \$5 or \$10 denominations so there are more for distribution to the residents.



DECEMBER

PRAYER AND EVENTS CALENDAR

2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Ginny & Greg Gruber	2 Keith Gruber Ashley Gruber Nichole & Annie Gruber	3 Mary Anne Gutwalt	4 Betty Hackman
5 Sandra Hanley	6 George Heckard	7 Jeanette Heim	8 John & Carole Hoffman	9 Robert Hoffman Spiritual Council Mtg. 6:45 PM Consistory Mtg. 7:30 PM	10 Larry & Carol Houser	11 Gloria Howard
12 Brenda Hummel	13 Charles & Blanche Hummel	14 Doug & Marjorie, Seth & Blaine Hummel	15 Cindy Johnson	16 Rev. David, MJ, and Isaac Jones	17 Raymond & Philomena Keath	18 Jeanine Keefer
19 Emily King Family Day Service – 9 AM	20 Michael & Cindy Klahr	21 Beulah Kline	22 Glenn & Nell Kline	23 Richard & Susan Kline	24 Jennifer, Patrick & Micha Knight Christmas Eve Service – 7 PM	25 Chad, Amy, Adam, Noah, & Joel Koehler Christmas Day
26 Stephen & Joyce Koehler Sunday Worship – 9 AM	27 Carl & Julie, Kali & Casey Krause	28 Anna Marie Lauer	29 Gary & Kim Lehman	30 Janet Lehman	31 Robert & Rose Leiby	