



THE PANORAMA

The Newsletter of
The Lewistown
Presbyterian Church

February 2021

Greetings! We are moving towards the year anniversary of when the COVID-19 pandemic started, and it causes me to stop for a moment and think about what this year has been like. We can all agree that it has been a year we never imagined before. The learning curve inside our church while we learned how to do online worship, Christian Education classes and activities, and began new ways to stay connected in a world that required us to isolate and social distance has been wide.

And yet, despite the challenges the pandemic has given us, we have carried on as a church family. Not always perfectly, but certainly faithfully. There were hiccups in online worship when we started, but thankfully we found help in our new Tech Director, Cole Cullen.

I'm grateful for our Deacons who worked hard to reach out to church members and friends along with me, so that I could also focus on worship planning and unexpected administrative work that came along with COVID-19. Our Elders have been faithfully serving through their committees to bring a full church experience for us all, while also making decisions so that we can stay safe.

And YOU. As a church member, you have remained flexible when needed, helpful when asked and supportive to one another. That's reflective of the kind of community Christ asks us to be...loving each other at our very best, forgiving when our expectations are not met and seeking to serve one another and our community, even with pandemic limitations in place.

When I think about what we have endured together this past year, I just want to echo the words Paul wrote to his friends in Philippi, "I thank my God every time I remember you." Thank you for extending grace while I've simultaneously have tried my best to care for my family and for my church family. None of us will fulfill the desires of each other's hearts. We will disappoint, frustrate, and make mistakes, but we still extend love and friendship to each other.

You have done so with one another and you have continued to share the gospel message in the community despite experiencing a world-wide pandemic. It is a joy and honor to serve alongside you as the pastor of Lewistown Presbyterian Church. I yearn for the day in which we can return to something more normal. Where I can walk into the nursing homes and visit you or invite your family over for dinner at the manse. That time will come, but until then, please know that I pray for you and give thanks for you.

In Christ's love,

Pastor Sarah



ONLINE LENTEN WORSHIP SERIES

A poster for Lewistown Ministerium Weekly Lenten Services. The background is a sunset or sunrise over a dark horizon, with a large, faint cross visible in the sky. The text is in a mix of purple and white. The title is in a purple script font. The invitation is in a white script font. The schedule is in a white sans-serif font.

*Lewistown Ministerium
Weekly Lenten Services*

Come Worship Together

**Every Wednesday
12 noon to 12:30 pm,
beginning 2/24/21**

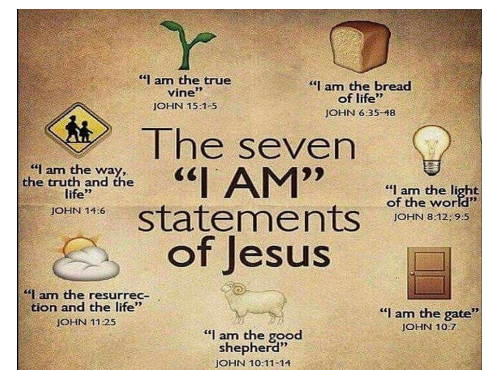
Zoom Meeting Code:
81095037129
Zoom Password:
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Feb. 24 - St. Marks Episcopal Church
March 3 - First United Methodist Church
March 10 - Lewistown Presbyterian Church
March 17 - Sacred Heart Catholic Church
March 24 - St. Johns Lutheran Church

LENTEN WORSHIP SCHEDULE AT CHURCH

Our worship theme for the upcoming season of Lent will focus on the "I AM" statements Christ makes in the gospel story written by John. The "I AM" statements in the gospel of John are Jesus Christ's self-portraits, his own way of describing himself. These statements not only tell us who Jesus is, but they also say something about his mission, his purpose, and his reason for taking on flesh. Let us learn from these attributes of Christ as we walk towards the cross of redemption on Easter Sunday. On that day we will then be asked a question. . . "Who Do You Say I Am?"

Feb 17, Ash Wednesday	7 PM Worship, Ashes and Communion
Feb 21, 1 st Sunday of Lent	I Am the Light of the World
Feb 28, 2 nd Sunday of Lent	The Way, The Truth and The Light
March 7, 3 rd Sunday of Lent	Bread of Life; communion
March 14, 4 th Sunday of Lent	The Gate
March 21, 5 th Sunday of Lent	The Vine
March 28, Palm Sunday	The Good Shepherd
April 1, Maundy Thursday	6 PM Dinner and Worship
April 2, Good Friday	Ministerium Cross Walk (TBA)
April 4, Easter Sunday	Who Do You Say I Am?; Communion



CHRISTIAN ED

Ginny Westover, Christian Ed Director

"THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME! – 'Come, spend forty days in the wilderness!'" I don't know too many people who would get excited over this invitation, never mind make plans to go. Yet, this is the invitation that we, as a church, have been given as we stand on the threshold of this year's Lenten season. Why does it seem we just put our Christmas decorations away?

The forty—some days between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday have a much different feel than the weeks of the Christmas season we celebrated not too long ago. Unlike the season of Advent, there are no festive decorations; no adornments beyond the seasonal paraments; no greenery, no lights. We enter Lent in a somber mood, needing to set our wills both to begin and finish the course. It is a season of humility and surrender. Of repentance and fasting. Of quiet and waiting. Of connecting with the suffering of Jesus and the suffering of our fellow humans. Of drawing deeper into the love of Christ. These practices are difficult enough for adults. Can we really expect children to "get it" (can we count trying to lead our family through a devotional reading and activity as part of the suffering we enter)? I must confess that a weekly family time is way easier and more attractive to do during Advent! And yet, the desire to go deeper, to understand more fully the call to be a disciple of Jesus and encourage my family (grown kids and grandkids, now) to do the same, seems even greater during this time of year.

While I'm confessing, I'll also admit that though the thought of being able to go off on a forty-day retreat by myself (minus the forty days

of no food...) is initially appealing, I'm sure I would go stir-crazy after a week—maybe sooner. Every year it seems I ask myself the same two questions: how can I help make this Lent meaningful for our church families and for myself in the midst of our normal (busy) schedules?

While forty days of solitude and contemplation is not an option, moments of the same are do-able. Sometimes even daily moments of time set aside seems overwhelming—especially for families with varying ages of children. Setting aside some focused moments once a week, on the other hand, is not out of reach. And the spiritual rewards are so worth the effort!

For the 2021 Lenten Season (Wednesday, February 17—Saturday, April 3) the Christian Education Committee (thanks to the suggestion of Pastor Sarah) will be offering "Lent in a Bag" to our church family. In the bag you will find a collection of objects—symbols to be used as conversation starters (questions included) and individual reflection.

There is a story from the Bible included with each object. All that you will need for the season of Lent is included in the bag. **Everyone** is encouraged to participate, whether single or in a family, child or adult or in between.

The Lenten bags will be distributed at the Ash Wednesday service and also available for pick-up at the church office throughout Lent. Feel free to pick up a bag for a friend! I think you will find Lent in a Bag to be a meaningful and engaging encouragement in your Lenten journey. It may just be "the (stay-at-home) trip of a life-time"!



Dear Sarah, Elders and Congregation,

Thank you so much for the "love offering" given in my honor to the Christmas Joy offering. It means a lot to me that you would help others as a tribute to my ministry. You all, together, are a great church, and it is my honor to know you. As the months unfold, the vaccines roll out and life gets back to some version of normal, I'll look forward to worshipping with you in the pew more often than in previous years.

Love in Christ, Joy Kaufmann



Scarlett Olivia Gregor
was born to
Macey Fultz on
January 9, 2021

She weighed
5 lbs. 14 oz.

Proud grandparents
are Ryan and Laurie
Fultz

Congratulations!

NEW KIDZ ZOOM ZONE LINK!!



FINANCIAL REPORT

Susan L. Ferguson, Church Treasurer

BUDGETED INCOME AND EXPENSE as of December 31, 2020

	Jan - Dec 2020	Budget	% of Budget
Income			
BUDGETED INCOME	175,417.79	201,121.00	87.22%
INVESTMENT INCOME	140,801.92	135,672.00	103.78%
Total Income	<u>316,219.71</u>	<u>336,793.00</u>	<u>93.89%</u>
Expense			
BENEVOLENCE	25,005.82	30,000.00	83.35%
MINISTRY OF THE WORD	77,510.48	82,462.00	94.0%
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	3,262.92	5,700.00	57.24%
MUSIC AND WORSHIP	668.07	2,750.00	24.29%
PROPERTY	41,822.14	47,740.00	87.6%
ADMINISTRATION	26,976.33	25,873.00	104.26%
PERSONNEL	133,901.97	136,968.00	97.76%
FELLOWSHIP	456.95	1,800.00	25.39%
PRESCHOOL	1,679.64	3,500.00	47.99%
Total Expense	<u>311,284.32</u>	<u>336,793.00</u>	<u>92.43%</u>
TOTAL INCOME	<u>4,935.39</u>		

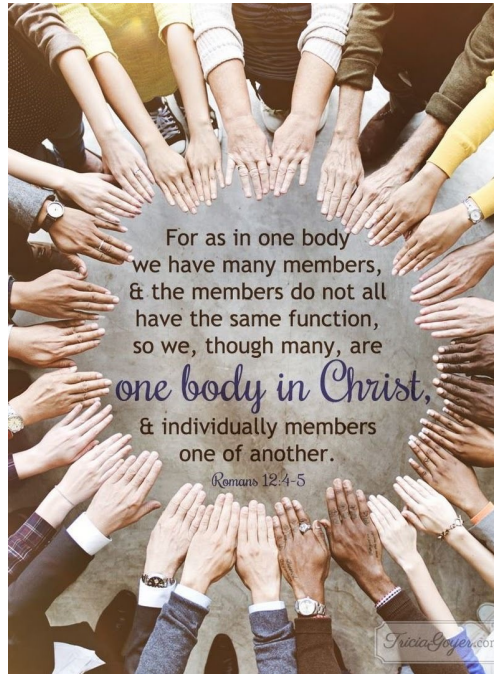
Received a Payroll Protection Loan \$38,000.00

JANUARY THAW

Rev. Robert L. Zorn, Pastor Emeritus

At this writing, all of the snow has gone out of here in Treaster Valley. Even the shaded areas beneath the hemlock trees now show only dead leaves and broken branches. Our January thaw came early this year, and we all have been enjoying the unusually warm weather. Many of us can remember years when we were not so lucky. One particular winter stands out in my memory when I was a sixth grade student at the little one room school where I began my public education. The ground had been covered with snow since Thanksgiving Day. Almost weekly blizzards piled up more snow. So it was a welcome relief to see the temperature rise to above freezing, and the snow blanket considerably reduced in depth.

When this happened, Miss Wiggins, our teacher thought that we could all play outside during our lunch hour. It was a welcomed opportunity after months of inside games, such as eraser tag and marbles (would you believe that we boys even played mumblety-peg with our ever present pocket knives). Once outside we soon tracked the whole schoolyard with cow catchers, figure eights and other designs. Then we found that we had a field of fine "packing" snow which made wonderful snowballs. Now, we knew that snowball fights were not allowed; so the next best thing was to build a snowman. We boys started first and rolled a ball until we could no longer move it. Then the copy cat girls rolled one of their own right next to ours. Thus began a competition to see who could build the highest snowman. Snowballs were piled upon snowballs until both were higher than any of us



kids. Coal shovels and scuttles were pressed into service to add mass to our molded mountains of snow. Miss Wiggins, undoubtedly enjoying the quiet classroom, did not ring the bell to end our fun. Loud arguments broke out as to which snowman was taller, wider or prettier.

Soon, a strange thing happened. The snowmen, built hurriedly without sound engineering, began to lean toward each other until they actually touched each other and held each other up. Their contact formed an arch bridge under which we could, from the tallest to the smallest, march in a row until the bell rang.

We all went gleefully back to our classes. For at least one day we had learned that much more can be accomplished by cooperation instead of competition. A return of cold weather preserved our bridge for a few more days, until a well meaning parent, fearing a collapse, broke it down.

We, of many faiths and denominations are to be building the Church of Christ. Competition will not work—cooperation will. At the beginning of a new year it is our opportunity and obligation to build the ministry and mission of our church together. Concepts and ideas long frozen by habit and tradition need to thaw. The warmth of our fellowship and worship will enable us to build a strong Christian Witness in our community.

"For as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another." Romans 12: 4,5



"This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life. God didn't go to all the trouble of sending his Son merely to point an accusing finger, telling the world how bad it was. He came to help, to put the world right again. Anyone who trusts in him is acquitted..." John 3:16-18 The Message

PRESBYTERIAN PRESCHOOL

Ginny Westover, Preschool Director

And...WE'RE BACK!!

The church office hallway is sporting a line of coats, backpacks and artwork once again and the preschool classroom sounds as it should when children are going about the joy-filled business of learning. January 11 was a happy day of re-opening in-person Pre-K! Everyone was **very** excited to get back to school! In the words of one preschooler, "I like this better than ZOOM!"

We were grateful to be able to maintain a schedule and connection during the five weeks of on-line learning. Certainly not ideal, especially for four and five year olds, but God faithfully provided energy and creativity for three ZOOM's a week. A shout-out to our families who were able to make the switch to this platform and kept showing up with their child/grandchild each class time! We applaud your consistent (sometimes "insistent") efforts! It was fun to meet brothers, sisters and pets, and get a peek into our kiddos' classrooms at home. Most days, the hour flew by so quickly that we could hardly believe it was time to sing our goodbye song!

The theme for four of the five weeks online was "Choices." One of the children's favorite choices of ZOOM activities was a scavenger hunt. We used many variations on the theme: "find a food that's shaped like a square, triangle, etc.;" "find something red, yellow, etc." "Find something that begins with the sound that "B," "L," etc. makes." Our thanks again to parents for being flexible and allowing your cupboards to be upended! We talked about making helpful and healthy choices with help from the story of *The Little Red Hen*. Sadly, we weren't able to make our own bread this year, but we still sequenced the process of bread making from seed to loaf. Then, positioned with two pieces of bread and a butter knife in front of them, each child sliced into the basics of fractions. More lessons about healthy choices included talking about the importance of regular dentist and doctor visits. One send-home packet contained a zip-lock bag of paper "teeth" that the children used to



practice counting, pasting, and brushing. Another packet held a "Doctor's kit" and "Physician's report" that we used on ZOOM to give one of our favorite teddy bears its annual check-up. Then, right before Christmas, we were very happy to

learn that Santa had chosen to ZOOM with us from his workshop at the North Pole! Apparently there was some sort of collaboration with Amazon and Santa's elves to insure that gifts were delivered to the classroom and then sent to each kiddo's home.

We began a new theme for the new year and rhymed our way into 2021 via ZOOM. Traditional nursery rhyme favorites like "Humpty Dumpty," "Hey Diddle Diddle" and "The Three Little Kittens" gave lots of opportunity for fun activities. Trying to keep the beat to "Miss Mary Mack" brought lots of giggles, and some YouTube "Exercise, Rhyme and Freeze" kept us on our toes quite literally. But the words that made us clap our hands, jump for joy, and spin around, were words that became the talk of the town. Not many words, but oh, so cool: "Students will return to school."! (Sorry—the rhyming thing grows on you).

There's been lots of energy in the classroom these past five days! Even Rex the turtle is noticeably happy to see the kids again! We've jumped right back in to circle time, centers and Chapel time with famous fairy tales from the Brothers Grimm and faith-filled truth tales from the Bible. There are beanstalks planted and waiting to sprout in their containers on the windowsill, puffy paint snowmen on the bulletin board and shape dragons hanging in the hallway. Watch for a soon to be "published" volume of original fairy tales from our favorite four and five year olds, and an upcoming video of circle time singing. We'll end the month learning some ballads, folktales, and fables that have been passed down through many generations. We're hoping to be back in the classroom for quite a while, but who knows for certain? We're back for now, though, and grateful to be here!



Lewistown Presbyterian Church
17 East Third Street
Lewistown, PA 17044

Address Correction Requested



Please contact us if you would like more information.

Phone: 717-248-4561

Email: lewispres@comcast.net

Visit us at Website: www.lewistownpresbyterian.org

Find us on Facebook!

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