

Happy Advent! This month we prepare ourselves, our homes, and our church for the celebration of our Savior's birth. Although we can certainly celebrate our Savior's birth any time of the year, the gift of Christmas brings with it a season of preparation and reflection. This particular season is known as Advent. Most people around us don't celebrate or even think of Advent. They are moving from Thanksgiving to Christmas, and in many ways my heart hurts for them. It's not that Christmas won't come to them and for them, it's just that Advent is such a special time to prepare ourselves for the coming King, Emmanuel, God with us.

I don't know about you, but I need that time of preparation for my heart and soul. Too many other things throughout this year have occupied my time, and honestly, has taken my time away from preparing a room for the Christ Child to enter into my life. Watching the world around me and the way I respond to what feels like chaos, conflict, and fear is a clear reminder to me that I need to be reminded of the Kingdom that will come which will encompass Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love.

Lately, I've had an urge to blow the dust off my set of the Chronicles of Narnia and read through the series. The last time I read the series, I believe, was back in 2009 while attending seminary. I don't know if you have ever read this series by C.S. Lewis, but Lewis once explained that the whole Narnian story is about Christ.

The story was written in the 1950's and depicts a country that has been living through a "Long Winter," for nearly 100 years. Jadis, the White Witch, has commanded and controlled nature to remain Winter. Although Winter can be beautiful, when there is no Spring or Summer, no thawing or warmer temperatures, creation cannot take care of themselves very well. There is also a darkness that rises, literally and figuratively, when winter sets in. There is less daylight and more night.

There is something about the "Long Winter" of Narnia that reminds me of our "Long Pandemic." The other day I told someone I felt like we've been living in the longest year ever—just one long time period of pandemic, right? Especially, now, as we find separation among the vaccinated and unvaccinated, often times it's hard to decide how to navigate forward.

I'll admit that I've felt a heaviness within my own soul living in a changing world. Admittedly, a changing world that doesn't always feel right. It still feels uncomfortable, as if we are in limbo, waiting for one who will come to save the world by bringing it back to the way in which it was created to be. In the Narnia series, it was the lion, Aslan, who saved Narnia from Jadis and redeemed the people. In our world, it is Jesus who will save this world and redeem God's people.

Continued on page 3



OUR CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Rev. Robert L. Zorn, Pastor Emeritus

The first Christmas pageant that Carol and I had the opportunity to be associated with took place many Christmases ago in a small country church in Western Pennsylvania. We were just beginning our Seminary years at Western Theological Seminary in Pittsburgh. My family's small congregation was without a regular minister at the time, so they invited me to be their student pastor. Every Saturday we would drive 50 miles to the church, stopping at Carol's home for supper and to stay overnight. On Sunday morning, we would drive on to the church that had employed us. After Sunday School and morning worship, we would have Sunday dinner with my family at the farm.

Sunday afternoons were spent visiting church families and catching up on news of the congregation. In the early evening we would return to the church, where the young people would meet as the Westminster Fellowship, which was the Presbyterian Youth organization at that time. Our trip back to Pittsburgh was always after dark. Monday morning would call me back to classes and Carol to her employment as Secretary to the Credit Manager of Gimbels Department Store.

The seminary setting was a place of constant inspiration and encouragement where ideas could be exchanged. During one of our discussion periods, we were challenged to make the rapidly approaching Christmas Season a very memorable experience. It was suggested that an audio-visual approach may be the way to go; a reel-to-reel tape recorder and a 35mm camera and slide projector to present a Christmas Pageant.

It seemed like a good learning experience that would serve to help us over the years of our ministry. We also would produce a new and most memorable experience for the people of the little church.

The next few weeks were spent in setting up the scenes to portray the Biblical nativity story. As each episode was staged, it would be photographed and printed to a 2" x 2" slide transparency. Rented costumes, along with spirit



gum and hair transformed our young people into Joseph, the shepherds, the innkeeper and the wise men. A fierce looking Herod even had his bit part. The choir, outfitted in white robes, cardboard wings and tinsel halos, provided the Heavenly

Messengers appearance. A providential accident happened as the angels were being photographed. As the shepherds cowered in a neighbor's hayfield, the angels gathered in a semi-circle behind and above them. The photographer forgot to advance the film in the camera. This resulted in a double exposure, which doubled the number of angels and made them to appear to be descending from the sky.

The local farm animals cooperated with our efforts. Several cows and sheep became the audience in the humble stable of Bethlehem. A tired old riding mare for Mary to ride lent authenticity to the scenes. The main character of the story was yet to be chosen. My older sister (now 93), who had been baptized in that very church, offered her six-month old son to lie in the manger. When the show was presented with a narrator and various scenes of costumed characters, interspersed with hymn slides, someone noticed something strange and commented: "Look, baby Jesus has red hair."

It was a most memorable Christmas Pageant. It is still remembered by everyone in the church and community who contributed to its success. So, what began as a classroom project, became a timeless, inspirational church and community-wide pageant. That experience of so long ago has been re-enforced many times over. The more we involve ourselves in the hearing and telling the Christmas story, with all of its tidings of comfort and joy, the stronger and longer lasting the Christmas message remains in our hearts and lives.

Please let us all join in the opportunities offered by our church and community to truly celebrate Christmas so that we, like the shepherds, may return "glorifying and praising God for all that we have seen and heard." (Luke 2:20)

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

Ginny Westover, Christian Education Director

Snowflakes are dancing outside as I type, and as I watch them spin through the air and float to the ground, I am reminded that small things matter. Hopefully this little flurry of flakes will not accumulate beyond a dusting, but the potential exists. The cumulative effect of many individual snowflakes united in purpose can change the daily course of an entire state's population!

It's easy to forget the impact of small things. Details can often be overlooked, especially during this season of the year when everyone seems to be in more of a rush than usual and schedules scream, "OVERLOAD!!" But small things matter. We've all experienced the disappointed "bleh" of a recipe without salt. The frustration of forgetting that "one thing" on our list. On the flip side, remember the big encouragement you've received from a warm smile, a kind word, or the simple act of holding open a door for another. ***Small things matter.***

This Advent season the Christian Education Committee invites you, individuals and families, children and adults, to focus on the "small things" as we begin a new tradition of service to Jesus with the help of the story, "Soft Enough for a King".

In this fictional re-telling of the true account of Christ's birth, you will meet Abe, the inn keeper's son, who helps those in need while preparing a manger for the very special Baby. Through small acts of compassion, Abe unknowingly participates in the smallest big thing that God has ever done.

Here are the details

Listen to the story, "Soft Enough for a King" (read and recorded by the grand duo of Elaine and Abi) on the Lewistown Presbyterian Church You Tube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8IPzmwVmLjg>)

Be inspired to serve others through small acts of compassion and kindness throughout the days of

Advent. Write down each act of kindness or service on a special piece of paper "straw". (It is not necessary to include your name)

Bring the "straw" back to Lewistown Presbyterian Church and place it in the manger. (bundles of paper "straw" along with instructions will be given in person or mailed to church families and preschool students. Additional bundles can be found at the entrances to the church sanctuary).

(Just to be clear...What this is not: "Soft Enough for a King" is not a contest to see who can produce the most pieces of straw. It is not a focus on individual effort or a platform to display our good deeds and receive praise for them. Our desire and goal is to "let your (our) light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." Matt 5:16)

By the time we celebrate the birth of Jesus, the manger will be soft enough for the King! It is our prayer that the cumulative effect of our collective small acts of service will have a big impact for the Kingdom of God!

Small things are a big deal in God's Kingdom! In the words of Jesus, "Then the King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you have done for me.'" (Matthew 25:40) Let's be intentional about finding small ways to serve Jesus through blessing others this holiday season!



PASTOR SEDGWICK (CONTINUED FROM THE FRONT)

Until that time comes, you and I are invited this Advent to "Come Home for Christmas." "Coming home" requires a conscious effort on our part to carve out daily time to gather with the One who created us. Sometimes it means making church attendance a priority so that we can rest in the promises we find as we listen to scripture, sing hymns, and are greeted by church family members.

Sometimes it means we engage in familiar Christmas traditions that make us feel hope, peace, joy, and love—emotions hard to come by these days in our world. Other times it requires us to participate in creating a more beautiful world around us by helping those we know and those we don't know.

As your pastor, I encourage you to "Come Home for Christmas," and be reminded again and again that the one to come, our Savior, is coming home for YOU. Why? Because you are beloved. A "Long Winter" did not overcome the Narnians; and a "Long Pandemic" will not overcome us.

God bless you! Pastor Sarah

WORSHIP WITH US!

Advent is an invitation. For many, it is the invitation to get into that Christmas spirit, to count down the days to the grand celebration, and let the holiday transform everything around us.

We're not all about Christmas, the holiday, about December 25 with all the jingle bells and tinsel. We are about Christmas, the celebration of the Incarnate one who comes to remind us that we are not alone, and God is with us. We are about the longing for the coming kingdom, where we will study war no more, where people will walk in the light, where joy will be found, and love will be the tie that binds us together.



That's the home for which we long. That's the invitation this Advent season to God's church and the world: "Come home for Christmas."

Come home for Christmas at Lewistown Presbyterian Church. Join our church community through Advent (Nov. 28 – Dec. 19) and Christmas (Dec. 24 – Jan 2). Discover again why,
"There's no place like home!"

December 12 – Chancel Choir Cantata

December 19 – The Blessing of Home; Congregational Meeting

December 24 – Welcome Home; Candlelight Service at 7 PM

December 26 – Lost at Home

January 2 – The Light of Home; Holy Communion

Advent & Christmas Activities for All!

You are invited to engage in some special activities to celebrate the season

LPC Memory Tree: Located in the narthex, you are encouraged to write the name of a deceased loved one who remains in your heart and mind this season. Snowflakes, markers, and ornament hangers are located beneath the tree.

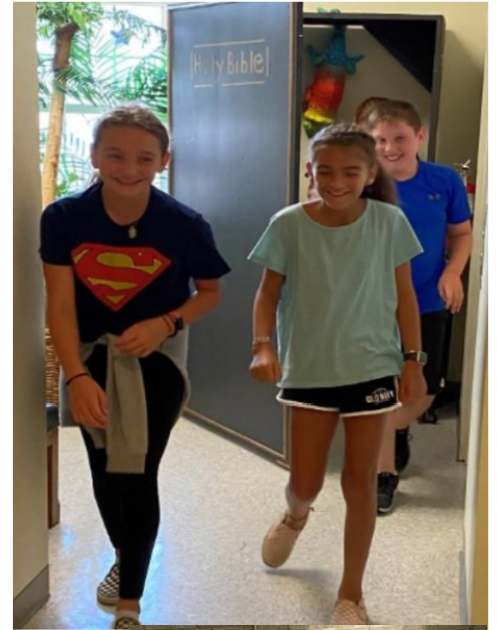
LPC Angel Tree: Bring in an angel ornament (store-bought; handmade; used) with your name somewhere on the ornament and hang it on the big tree near the baptismal font. Extra angels, markers, and stickers for your name are located to the left of the tree. At the end of Christmas, you will select a different angel ornament to take home and will pray for the person listed on the ornament in the coming year. Homebound individuals can call the church office to request an angel be placed on the tree with their name.

Soft Enough for a King: The CE Committee is filling a manger for Baby Jesus with paper straw and invites you to take the paper straw they provide, write on each piece an act of kindness you offered to someone, and place it in the manger in the sanctuary. Names are not necessary on the slips of straw. As you write your act of kindness, give thanks to God for the ability to bless others!

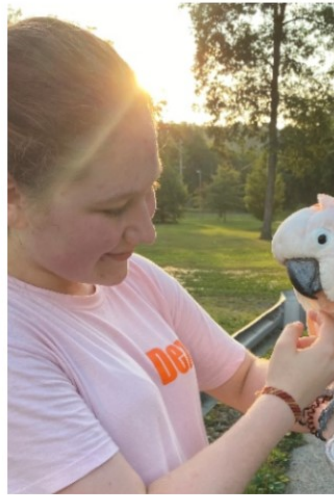
Share Your Nativity Set: Tables are set at the front of the sanctuary for you to bring in a nativity set to share. Feel free to add a description, story or memory of the nativity set you share. And be sure to take time to view all the sets on display!



LPC Youth Group



**The Oldest Computer
Was Owned By Adam
And Eve. It Was An
Apple With Very Limited
Memory. Just 1 Byte
And Everything
Crashed!**



YOUTH GROUP CALENDAR

December 12 - Regular mtg. 6:00- 7:30 PM

**December 19 - Christmas Party at the Manse;
6:00 - 7:30 PM**

December 26 - Youth Community Luncheon

December 26 - IMPACT registration form due!

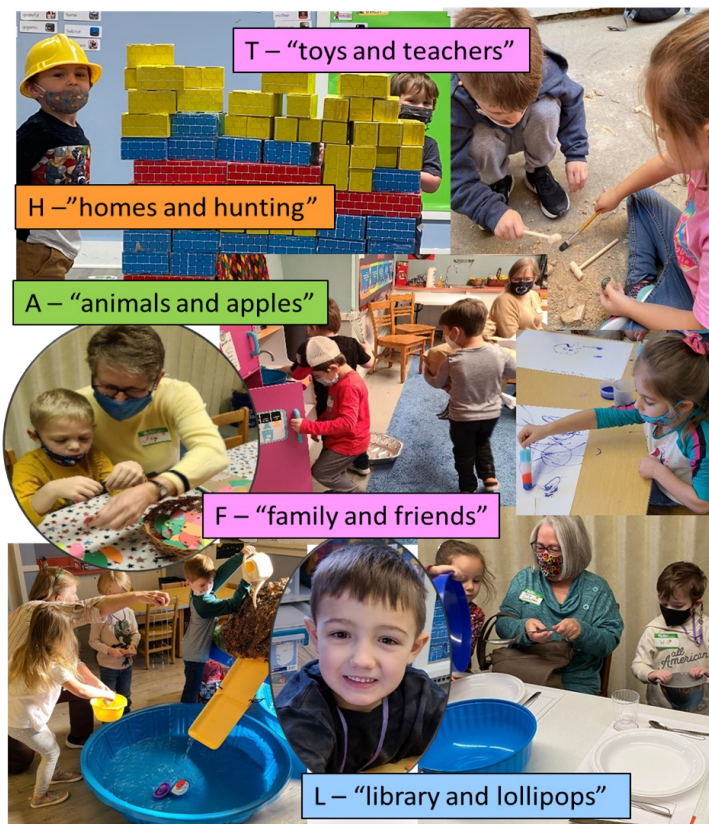
**February 25-27 - IMPACT Radisson hotel,
Camp Hill**

PRESCHOOL NEWS!

Ginny Westover, Preschool Director



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MISSION AND EVANGELISM



A thank you to the Mission and Evangelism committee members who prepared a delicious pot roast dinner for The Neighbor's Table on Thursday, December 2. We were grateful to have as our guests Lillian Myers and Bob Richards, volunteers for Mother Hubbard's Cupboard, who talked about their service to people in Mifflin County who are food insecure. The committee hopes to resume The Neighbor's Table in 2022. If you have a suggestion for a "neighbor" we can invite to speak, please speak to Kevin or Kathy Hardin.

RIGHT NOW MEDIA NEWS

Don't forget! **Right Now Media** has something for everyone! This free online library of adult and children videos and Bible study resources is free to YOU. If you are not registered, please contact the church or email slf615@gmail.com for an invitation to join.



FINANCIAL REPORT

Susan L. Ferguson, Church Treasurer



	Jan - Oct 2021	Budget	% of Budget
Income			
BUDGETED INCOME	149,871.74	173,100.00	86.58%
INVESTMENT INCOME	113,433.41	139,560.00	81.28%
Total Income	263,305.15	312,660.00	84.22%
	263,305.15	312,660.00	84.22%
Expense			
BENEVOLENCE	13,855.53	30,000.00	46.19%
MINISTRY OF THE WORD	64,754.82	82,979.00	78.04%
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	2,728.02	4,700.00	58.04%
MUSIC AND WORSHIP	2,595.27	2,000.00	129.76%
PROPERTY	37,855.16	50,365.00	75.16%
ADMINISTRATION	17,221.25	25,722.00	66.95%
PERSONNEL	101,788.84	131,664.00	77.31%
FELLOWSHIP	150.76	1,800.00	8.38%
PRESCHOOL	700.00	1,000.00	70.0%
CAPITAL RESERVE	0.00	0.00	0.0%
Total Expense	241,649.65	330,230.00	73.18%
	21,655.50		

2022 OFFERING ENVELOPES

The 2022 Offering Envelopes are available in the Narthex. If you would like yours delivered to you, please let us know.



Please help us remember, honor, and teach the value of freedom by participating locally in Wreaths Across America at Mt. Rock Cemetery on:

Saturday, December 18, 2021
12 Noon

Sponsor a wreath or volunteer
Invite family and friends to help, too!

www.wreathsassamerica.org

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Address Correction Requested



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Find us on Facebook!

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