
THE BELLRINGER



Volume 2, Issue 1

December 2017

Pastor's Study

Advent begins on Sunday, December the 3rd and with it a new liturgical or church year. The **New Year** that Advent brings is much different than that of the calendar year. There is no ball dropping in Times Square, no champagne toast. And as there are many cookies to be made and eaten in the days ahead, exercise and weight loss goals may be in the distant future. This church **New Year** is so unassuming that we might not even realize its start. And yet, in comes Advent. In comes the **New Year**.

Radio stations, merchants and messages, recipe suggestions, holiday parties, and Black Friday shopping can easily propel us right over these Advent days, the days between December 3rd and Christmas. The focus of our culture on Christmas day rushes us to the manger, and the gifts under the Christmas tree. In the excitement and haste amid the beautiful sights and sounds, shopping deals, and Santa Claus, Advent is like a wallflower at a holiday party, seen but not heard, noticed but not brought in.

As unassuming as Advent can be, and as significant as our excitement and haste can become, we might not realize Advent's importance, or take time to pull it out from the sidelines and focus upon it in these days prior to Christmas. Advent is important. There is a reason that the **New Year** of the church does not begin with Christmas, and instead begins with Advent. Advent is a time for us to prepare for the gift, the Light, to come. Prepare not with decorations and cut-out sugar cookies. Prepare not with shopping lists and lights. But prepare our hearts. Prepare our minds. Prepare our lives for God incarnate in Jesus Christ.

Advent calls us to slow down. To be aware. To be intentional. Advent calls us to resist rushing toward Christmas as beautiful and shiny as it is. Advent calls us to stop and pause long enough to realize that the **New Year** that begins for us as Christians in Advent holds powerful and important opportunities for us. As people of faith Advent brings days to wait, to watch, to pray, to prepare, for the Christ child to be

born, for the Light of the World to be celebrated, for the hope, peace, joy and love of Almighty God to be proclaimed.

Wait? Watch? Pray? Prepare? These things frankly sound much more boring than to eat, open, celebrate and cheer! But waiting for something, watching for something, praying about and preparing for something deepens and enhances that something when it finally arrives. We wait, we watch, we pray, we prepare for the Word who will come into being, the One in whom there is life, the One who will bring light to all people. Our patience, preparation, focus, and prayer will enhance our understanding and experience of the arrival of that One when Christmas arrives. Advent time provides us with time to prepare for the Light of Life so that when the Light comes we are able to receive the Light with all of who we are.

So, may I be so bold as to challenge you? (I also challenge myself

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and hope that you will challenge me too!). May I challenge you to walk through Advent with awareness and intention as a person of faith; to wait, watch, pray, and prepare for the Light of the World who comes to us? May I challenge you to not rush to the manger, but to use the gift of these days, this time of Advent, to prepare yourself for the greatest gift ever given?

Our worship theme for Advent this year comes from the Gospel of John, Chapter 1. **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.”** These Advent weeks we will focus on the Word of Life, Jesus Christ, who is the Light of the World. There are many opportunities in our faith community to seek and prepare for the Light of the World in the coming weeks. *Which ones will you take part in?*

- ✚ Twenty-nine folks started the journey early, by greeting the Peace Light which arrived at The Bellbrook Presbyterian Church on Sunday, November 26th. This special light recognizes and proclaims Jesus as Light of the World and Prince of Peace. (Please see page 7 for more information and opportunities related to the light.)
- ✚ Wednesday, November 29th, a six-week Bible study titled Illuminating Advent begins. Four slots remain! This is a one hour (6:00 – 7:00) discussion and study group - - a great way to journey through Advent in community.
- ✚ Advent devotionals and home worship resources are available in the church office. Consider marking Advent in your home with worship and prayer together.
- ✚ The choir meets Wednesday evenings at 7:00 for an hour practice, and sings during worship each Sunday. Might you consider offering the gift of your voice during this Advent season?
- ✚ On Sunday, December 3rd, we will celebrate the first Sunday of Advent, with worship, the Sacrament of Communion, extended communion, decorating the church, and a carry in lunch and time of fellowship. Come and worship, help, and enjoy a time of fellowship.
- ✚ Sunday December 10th, the Second Sunday of Advent brings another opportunity for worship, and in the afternoon we will gather for viewing and discussion of It's a Wonderful Life. These simple times together are filled with discussion about who we are as the people of God and who God is calling us to be.
- ✚ Sunday, December 17th brings the 3rd Sunday of Advent, and the candle of joy.
- ✚ Throughout the month we will be reaching out to our neighbors in fellowship, sharing the peace light and welcoming folks into the church community.
- ✚ And December 24th we will celebrate the 4th Sunday of Advent during 10:00 a.m. worship, the sanctuary will be open in the afternoon, and then we will gather for a special candlelight worship service at 7:00 p.m.

So the **New Year** begins. I invite you, challenge you, to not rush to the manger, but instead, enter into the season of Advent with awareness and intention. Take in the opportunities that Advent brings, that you might more fully receive the Light of Life, the Light of the World this Christmas. Come to worship. Join Bible study. Receive the Peace Light. Take time to make Advent a meaningful start of the church's **New Year**. Grace, peace, and joy in seeking The Light to you this beautiful Advent and Christmas season.

Christ's peace- Diane 



Session Highlights

The November Session meeting was a long and full meeting! Minutes were reviewed and reports heard from the Trustees, Deacons, Treasurer and Clerk. The Trustees shared that a three-year lease on the manse has been signed. The Deacons are making calls and sending cards to members. Two homebound members received Extended Communion in November. The 2018 schedule of Presbytery meetings was reviewed and Session members signed up to attend. Session members will also attend (on a rotating basis) the meetings of the Ministerial Association as time permits.

Ministry Team reports were shared.

- **Christian Education:** No Sunday School on Sunday, December 24th.
- **Communication:** The survey data from our summer communication survey was distributed and reviewed. The new website is progressing.
- **Mission:** A Bean Supper review meeting was held. Based on the requests for carry-out beans, we will be doing Beans-to-Go in February. Folks will be able to pre-order beans in set amounts and pick them up.
- **Worship:** Youth Sunday was positively received. We will hold another Youth Sunday in February. Advent preparations are being made, with the Hanging of the Greens on December 3rd following worship, and special worship components throughout December. On the 24th, we will have worship at 10 a.m. and again at 7 p.m. The Worship Ministry brought the possibility of including wine in Communion. Session discussed this possibility and determined not to add wine at this time.
- **Nominating:** There are two Session Elder positions that will come open at the end of January and one Deacon position. The number of Deacons and Elders needed for the coming year is being reviewed in light of the potential for significant membership changes related to the review of the rolls. This topic will be on the December Session agenda.
- **Stewardship:** The Stewardship Ministry met on November 3rd for a review. The group will meet again in January to plan a full year of activity.
- **Personnel:** Proposed salaries for staff were presented and approved. Christmas bonus' for staff were approved.

The Pastor's report was distributed.

Per Capita for 2018 was approved based on Presbytery recommendations at: General Assembly, \$ 7.73 per member; Synod at \$ 3.25 per member; and Presbytery at \$ 35.00 per member. Our 2018 commitment is based on membership at year end 2016, or 84 members.

Rolls are being reviewed. We have quite a few members on our active membership who are not actively part of the congregation at this time. These members will receive a letter during the month of December regarding their participation in the life and ministry of the church, inviting them to determine if they are interested in becoming active in the church or would like to be moved to inactive at this time.

For the Good of the Order. No presentation or information was made. Please remember that this is a time in the meeting when comments are welcome (in person or in writing) from members and friends of the church.

The next meeting will be December 21st at 7:00 p.m.

December Happenings



Please join us Sunday December 3rd as we begin the celebration of Christmas.

The Worship Team will host a soup luncheon instead of Fellowship Hour following the 1st Advent service with the Hanging of the Greens after the luncheon. During this time the Tyke shop will be open for the little ones to start their Christmas shopping. Please sign-up to bring a side dish or dessert to share and join in the decorating.



Bible Study. ILLUMINATING ADVENT BIBLE STUDY BEGINS Wednesday, November 29th!

Join the Wednesday evening Bible study (we meet at 6:00 p.m. in the Sunday School classroom) for a six week Advent study. This study will explore the themes of Advent - - hope, love, joy and peace; Christmas; and Epiphany. The class meets for one hour each Wednesday evening and all are welcome. There is a participant's book for this series. The cost of the book is \$ 4.95. Please register for the study by signing up in the office or letting pastor Diane know you will be participating.



We will be planning an evening at the Cedarville University annual Community Christmas Celebration, December 3, 2017, at 6 p.m., featuring the sights and sounds of the University's choral and instrumental ensembles. Your heart will be stirred by powerful renditions of classic carols, including a special performance by a mass choir and symphonic band of the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's Messiah. It's a musical celebration of our Savior's birth, and it's our gift to you this Christmas! Meet at the church at 5:00pm. We will carpool over and then go out for dinner afterwards. If you have any questions contact Alice Wiseman at 862-6021. Sign up at the church.



Annual Committee reports Due by the first of January.



Movies That Matter Film Series

Join us for a movie viewing and discussion led by Rev. Dr. Ed McNulty, nationally recognized film critic.

Our next movie will be **It's a Wonderful Life on December 10th**. After George Bailey (James Stewart) wishes he had never been born, an angel (Henry Travers) is sent to earth to make George's wish come true. George starts to realize how many lives he has changed and impacted, and how they would be different if he was never there. **Join Us! 2:00 pm- 5:00 pm; refreshments provided.**



The mitten Tree is waiting for your donations of gloves, hats, and underwear in the Fellowship Hall. These items will be given to Interfaith Hospitality of Xenia and the Sugarcreek Resource Center. Monetary donations will also be accepted in the office.



We will again adopt-a-family this Christmas. Actually two families. A Christmas Tree will be hung up with ornaments stating the wishes an need of each family member.

Peace light

The peace light will be available for sharing on the following dates and times.

Monday December 4	10-1
Monday December 11	10-1
Monday December 18	10-1
Friday December 22	10-7
Christmas Eve	11-7

If you would like to help distribute the light during one of these times, please contact Pastor Diane or the church office @ secretary@bellbrookpc.org



New Members Class forming

soon! If you would like to explore the possibility of church membership, please let Pastor Diane know. We will be forming a class based on the number of participants and a time frame that works well for folks.



Reading through the Bible Scriptures for December

Day 324 - 1 Peter 3; Jeremiah 35-36; Psalm 136
Day 325 - 1 Peter 4; Jeremiah 37-38; Psalm 137
Day 326 - 1 Peter 5; Jeremiah 39-40; Psalm 138
Day 327 - 2 Peter 1; Jeremiah 41-42; Psalm 139
Day 328 - 2 Peter 2; Jeremiah 43-44; Psalm 140
Day 329 - 2 Peter 3; Jeremiah 45-46; Psalm 141
Day 330 - Galatians 1; Jeremiah 47-48; Psalm 142
Day 331 - Galatians 2; Jeremiah 49-50; Psalm 143
Day 332 - Galatians 3:1-18; Jeremiah 51-52; Psalm 144
Day 333 - Galatians 3:19-4:20; Lamentations 1-2; Psalm 145
Day 334 - Galatians 4:21-31; Lamentations 3-4; Psalm 146
Day 335 - Galatians 5:1-15; Lamentations 5; Psalm 147
Day 336 - Galatians 5:16-26; Ezekiel 1; Psalm 148
Day 337 - Galatians 6; Ezekiel 2-3; Psalm 149
Day 338 - Ephesians 1; Ezekiel 4-5; Psalm 150
Day 339 - Ephesians 2; Ezekiel 6-7; Isaiah 40
Day 340 - Ephesians 3; Ezekiel 8-9; Isaiah 41
Day 341 - Ephesians 4:1-16; Ezekiel 10-11; Isaiah 42
Day 342 - Ephesians 4:17-32; Ezekiel 12-13; Isaiah 43
Day 343 - Ephesians 5:1-20; Ezekiel 14-15; Isaiah 44
Day 344 - Ephesians 5:21-33; Ezekiel 16; Isaiah 45
Day 345 - Ephesians 6; Ezekiel 17; Isaiah 46
Day 346 - Philippians 1:1-11; Ezekiel 18; Isaiah 47
Day 347 - Philippians 1:12-30; Ezekiel 19; Isaiah 48
Day 348 - Philippians 2:1-11; Ezekiel 20; Isaiah 49
Day 349 - Philippians 2:12-30; Ezekiel 21-22; Isaiah 50
Day 350 - Philippians 3; Ezekiel 23; Isaiah 51
Day 351 - Philippians 4; Ezekiel 24; Isaiah 52
Day 352 - Colossians 1:1-23; Ezekiel 25-26; Isaiah 53
Day 353 - Colossians 1:24-2:19; Ezekiel 27-28; Isaiah 54
Day 354 - Colossians 2:20-3:17; Ezekiel 29-30; Isaiah 55
Day 355 - Colossians 3:18-4:18; Ezekiel 31-32; Isaiah 56
Day 356 - Luke 1:1-25; Ezekiel 33; Isaiah 57
Day 357 - Luke 1:26-56; Ezekiel 34; Isaiah 58
Day 358 - Luke 1:57-80; Ezekiel 35-36; Isaiah 59
Day 359 - Luke 2:1-20; Ezekiel 37; Isaiah 60
Day 360 - Luke 2:21-52; Ezekiel 38-39; Isaiah 61
Day 361 - Luke 3:1-20; Ezekiel 40-41; Isaiah 62
Day 362 - Luke 3:21-38; Ezekiel 42-43; Isaiah 63
Day 363 - Luke 4:1-30; Ezekiel 44-45; Isaiah 64
Day 364 - Luke 4:31-44; Ezekiel 46-47; Isaiah 65
Day 365 - Luke 5:1-26; Ezekiel 48; Isaiah 66
Day 366 - Luke 5:27-39; Genesis 1:1-2:25; Psalm 1 [Day 366]



- 6- Jana Harnish
- 11 – Harry Crowe; Lillie Deaton
- 16 – Sharon Sawyer
- 19 – Carrie Carbone
 Theo Gainey; Drew Gainey
- 20 – Marc Gainey; Kyle Reigelsperger
- 23 – Bruce Garrison
- 24 – Nicole Smallwood
- 25 – Sharon Berryhill
- 27 – Ashley Beleny



- 17 – Jim & Andrea Contestable
- 22 – Dennis & Donna Ruschau
- 28- John & Maria Stevens

Special dates!

- First Sunday of Advent, *December 3, 2017*
- Second Sunday of Advent, *December 10, 2017*
- Third Sunday of Advent, *December 17, 2017*
- First day of winter, *December 21, 2017*
- Fourth Sunday of Advent, *December 24, 2017*
- Christmas Eve, *December 24, 2017*
- Christmas Day, *December 25, 2017*
- New Year’s Eve/Watch Night, *December 31, 2017*



We will be ordering poinsettias again this year at a price of \$10.00 each. Please fill out and place the order form below (along with payment) on the desk in the office or in the offering plate.

Orders and payments must be received by **December 22.**

Checks can be made to Bellbrook Presbyterian Church. You may take the flowers home following our Christmas Eve Service.

Number of Poinsettias Ordered _____

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

Ordered by _____

Peace light



You may have heard about The Peace Light. This light is a flame that originates at the Grotto in Bethlehem, the place where it is said that Jesus was born. Each year an Austrian Scout (this year a young man named Tobias) flies from Upper Austria to collect the light. This is not a simple task. It means crossing borders and traveling through territory that can be hostile in order to reach the light and then to bring it back. The light is then flown back to Austria, and from Austria is brought to JFK airport in New York City where carriers of the light meet the light, receive it, and begin distributing the light as far as they are able to do so.

On November 26th, The Bellbrook Presbyterian Church was graced to have the light brought to us. It came by way of one of the light carriers, a man named Brian and his son Thomas, both Scouts. They live in Massachusetts and after receiving the light at JFK, drove The Peace Light across Pennsylvania, into and through Ohio, and after stopping in Bellbrook were heading toward Indianapolis. Twenty-nine folks stayed for this special event after church, and received the light together. The light is being kept during the holiday season in the homes of members, and we will be using it in our worship services this month. Last year we were able to keep the Light through Easter, and that same Light lit the candles of our Easter morning worship!

The Peace Light is truly a gift. And it is a gift that is meant to be shared. We are seeking to make the light available to the community and to provide opportunities for folks to receive the light and then carry it out to others. The Light will be available each Sunday of Advent, and on Monday's in the office between 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. On Friday, December 22nd, we will have the church open from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m. and will distribute the light to anyone who would like to receive it. And then on Christmas Eve, between morning worship and Christmas Eve worship, the church will also be open and the light available.

Your help is needed. We need folks to be at church during the times the light will be distributed. This is an opportunity to talk with our neighbors and welcome them to church. We also are hoping to reach out to neighbors around the church building and let them know that the light is available and that they are welcome.

As we look at the light in worship this holiday season, may we be reminded of The Light, Jesus Christ, Light of the World. May we be blessed by this amazing gift that so many people have worked tirelessly to share with us. May we share the gift with others. And may we seek his peace in Bellbrook and for all people.



						1	2
<p>Hanging of the Greens Communion 8:45 am Keystone Class 10:00 am Worship 10:20 am Children's Sunday School 11:00am Carry- In Luncheon & Tyke Shop 11:30 Hanging of the Greens</p>	4	5	6	7	8	9	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
<p>Birthdays 8:45 am Keystone Class 10:00 am Worship 10:20 am Children's Sunday School 11:00am Fellowship Hour with cake 11:30 Sermon Roundtable 2:00pm Movies That Matter</p>	<p>Peace Light 10-1</p>	<p>11:00am Bellcreek Seniors (FH) 6:00pm Bible Study 7:00pm Choir 7:00pm Troop 75</p>	<p>Ministerial Association 12:00noon</p> <p>Winter's Library 4-8</p> <p>Trustees 7pm Worship 7pm</p>				
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
<p>Anniversaries 8:45 am Keystone 10:00 am Worship 10:20 am Children's Sunday School 11:00am Fellowship Hour 11:30 Sermon Roundtable</p>	<p>Peace Light 10-1</p>	<p>Men's Breakfast 8:30 (BBC)</p>	<p>11:00am Bellcreek Seniors (FH) 7:00pm Choir 7:00pm Scouts</p>	<p>Session 7:00pm</p>	<p>Peace Light 10am-7pm</p>		
24	25	26	27	29	30	31	
<p>Christmas Eve Peace Light 11-7</p> <p>8:45 am Keystone 10:00 am Worship 10:20 am Children's Sunday School 11:00am Fellowship Hour 11:30 Sermon Roundtable 7:00pm Christmas Eve Service</p>		<p>11:00am Bellcreek Seniors (FH) 6:00pm Bible Study 7:00pm Choir 7:00pm Scouts</p>	<p>Winter's Library Teen New Year's Eve Party 10-2</p>				



Douglas Gibson
George Walker
Lori Spraul
Will Wiseman
Linda Riddle
Doris- Ben's sister
Joe Hutchenson Family
Win Sturgell's brother
Doris Trimble
Frank Weller's son
Zinneker Babies Oliver and Cooper
Bob Brust
Ches
Megan- Betty's granddaughter
Family of Frank Luhn
Harry Crowe and family upon the
death of his sister
Lynn Cook Marshall
Tom Marshall and family
Paulette Tyler
June Stiner
Maria Collins
Ben Downing
Family of Sharon Ferguson
Jim Withhorn
Sandy Wieser
Larry Dumford
Karen and Ed. Long
Wildfire Victims
Family of Malcom Mc Millan
Keith and Leslie Clements
Keith St. Pierre
Alzheimer Patients + caregivers
Traveling Prayers
Cancer patients + caregivers



Terry Allen- 620-4811

Dorothy Evans 317-5008 or 287-7219

Valerie Fairchild-Timmons 768-9971

Kim Hensley 848-4756

Allene Circle-Rader 848-8218

Donna Ruschau 429-2107

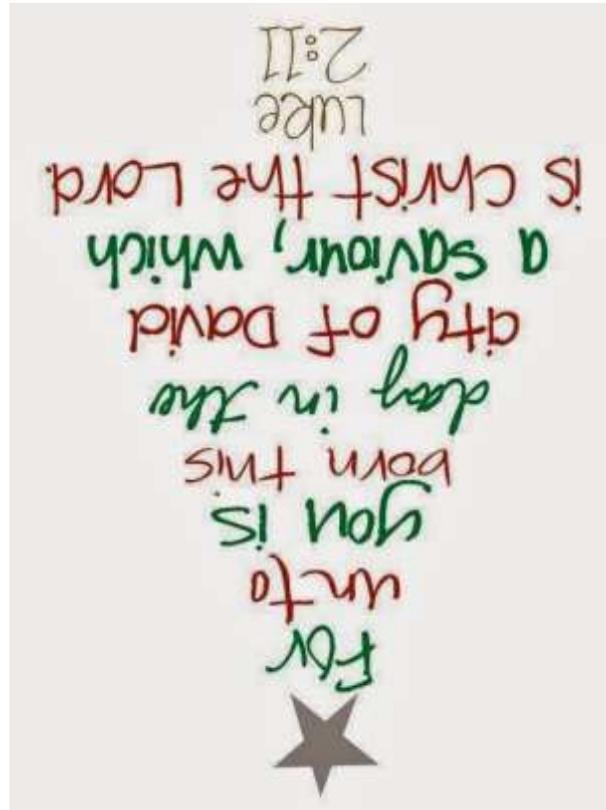
Sue Seiler 848-2043. 478-1426 or
604-1426

Call with assurance of confidentiality, love and
prayer



Susi
Geneva
Virginia
Darlene
Betty
Bud
Don

To visit or send cards please check with office
for addresses.



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