

The MESSENGER



December 2020-January 2021



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Staff

the Rev. Jeffrey Lang

Amy

Director of Music and Organist

Kate

Choir Director and Vocalist

Megan

Vocalist

Deborah

Administrative Assistant

Logan

Vocalist

Items for the February edition of this newsletter are accepted in the church office through 9:00AM, Monday, January 25, 2021.



Early submissions are joyfully accepted.

Submitted information will be edited for clarity, accuracy, and length.



For religious denominations that celebrate Advent, this special season marks the beginning of the church's liturgical year. As Presbyterians, we take part in this tradition. Advent lasts through December 24. Although it probably would be easier for us to wrap our minds around the concept if Advent *began* on exactly the same date each year; this is not the case. Typically, it begins on the fourth Sunday prior to Christmas day, OR on the Sunday which falls closest to November 30. In 2020,

therefore, the first Sunday of Advent will be November 29. And naturally, the fourth and final Sunday of this season of spiritual preparation falls on December 20, again with Christmas Eve marking the final day of Advent.

This year, just as so many other things have been modified in deference to public health concerns, we have needed to make major changes in the way we celebrate the season. Thankfully there will still be beautiful vocal and instrumental music! On December 13 (the third Sunday in Advent) we will present our traditional Lessons and Carols service. Kate, along with Megan and Logan and a guest bass vocalist, will grace us with selections featuring the music of George Friedrich Handel. Supporting them will be a violinist along with cellist Maggie M, who is familiar to many of us. Amy, of course, will provide her consistently out-standing organ accompaniment. We in the congregation will be *listening* though, rather than singing along when the *Hallelujah* chorus is performed. Those of us who usually are in choir are truly missing the "worshipping through singing" aspect of our church lives. I'm absolutely sure that all of us are.

This year is a very different year, to say the least. Advent though, by its very existence, is a joyful season in which we celebrate the birth of a baby who would become our savior. In 2020, and while at church, we will sing in our hearts. In 2021 we will surely once again join together and sing out loud.



From the Pastor's Desk

An Advent Meditation

As we head into the seasons of Advent and Christmas, media accounts of rising rates of covid-19 infections are appearing in the news. The session continues to plan on meeting for weekly worship in the sanctuary each Sunday. However, those plans could certainly change if gathering indoors is discouraged by authorities in order to protect those at risk. We will communicate any changes if and when they occur.

We are waiting for this era of masks, social distancing, and disruption to be over, and to return to the normal and familiar. Gatherings with family and friends, sporting events, concerts, worship and more have all been disrupted by the pandemic. We are expectant, hoping for a widely available and effective vaccine. Perhaps we are expecting, with some trepidation, a repeat of this past Spring's closure of businesses and restaurants in the event hospitalization rates rise. We look with hope for an end to the disruption of the normal, and a return to the routine.

The season of Advent, which begins this year on Sunday, November 29, is premised on themes of waiting and expectation. The birth of Jesus occurred during a season of waiting and expectation for the nation of Israel.

Some first century Jewish believers looked for the arrival of Israel's messiah to free God's people from Roman domination and the religious declension that came with Rome's cultural influence. There had been no word of prophecy, no 'word from the Lord,' for some four centuries prior to the birth of Christ. One can imagine a strained expectation that some new word would be revealed to Israel with a promise of redemption and an offer of hope.

That word came as Gabriel announced to Mary that she would give birth to the messiah. The pregnant expectation of a people would be realized through her. The word came as angels announced to shepherds that a child had been born in Bethlehem. The word came as John the Baptist some years later thundered, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." The word came as Jesus who was himself God's Word shared a message of forgiveness and mercy to the hopeless, despised, and rejected.

However, before the Word of the Lord arrived, there was a prolonged wait, delay, and no doubt some frustration. "When would God act?" "When would a deliverer appear?"

(continued on page 3)

(From the Pastor's Desk continued)

The question, "How long?", is common in scripture, posed to God by believers over and over again. It is a query born of delay, deferral, and disappointment.

The prophet Habakkuk asked, "O Lord, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not hear? Or cry to you "Violence!" and you will not save? (Hab. 1:2)

The psalmist frequently had the expectant words on his lips, "How long?"

Psalms 6, 13, 79, 80, 82, 89, 90, 94, and 119 all contain the sentiment, "How long?"

"How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?" (Ps. 13:1)

The scriptures record that honest, if plaintive, question, "How long?" At the same time, the scriptures witness to God's answer, even if it seemed slow in coming, in acts of deliverance and redemption for God's people, especially in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

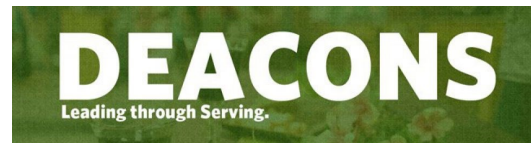
"the Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness" (2 Peter 3:9)

Advent is an invitation to the discipline of waiting in hopeful expectation, even when the waiting offers more frustration than not.

To a world which was waiting, in darkness, for the arrival of God's light, Jesus was born two millennia ago. And now, to a world which seems to be waiting, in expectation for the return of normal family, business, and community life, the Christmas message is proclaimed anew.

"Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. (Luke 2:10,11)

Jeffrey Lang



The Deacons offer prayer, companionship, rides, or meals, but don't always know where care is needed. If you know of a need (your own or another's), call the church office or any of our Deacons: Susan A, Susan G, Jane J, and Susy S (Moderator).

William B
Howard and Dottie E
Mike F and family

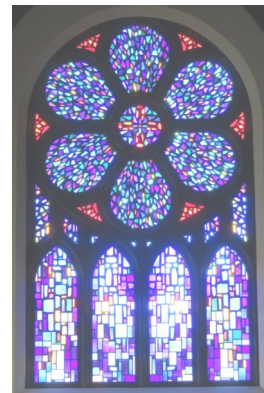


We extend our sincere and heartfelt sympathy to Mike F and family as they transition to life without their beloved Bridget, who died Monday, November 16, 2020.

Her memorial service will be at the church on Friday, December 4; 2:00pm. Please keep Mike and family in your prayers as they transition to life without Bridget.

Sanctuary Open House

Sunday, December 6
2:00PM-4:00PM



Come, see the new Rose windows and other Sanctuary improvements.

Please contact a member of Session if you would like to volunteer some time in the Sanctuary during the Open House.

Missions

For many years, our congregation has been most generous during the Christmas Season by donating hats, gloves, mittens, and scarves for the Mitten Tree to benefit the children and families served in the GLAD House program. Due to the pandemic, this year has been a very challenging year for families served in this program; their needs have increased significantly.



In speaking with the Director of GLAD House, we have learned there is a need for coats, shoes, and boots for the children. She and the staff are always most appreciative of your generosity, but thought perhaps this year it would be very beneficial if our gifts could be gift cards that would allow the staff to purchase the needs they see. They would appreciate gift cards for Wal-Mart, Target, Odd Lots, or other stores you may choose. I know some of you may have already purchased hats, gloves, scarves, and mittens. These are most welcome and will be accepted with gladness.

Some of you may have purchased hats, gloves, scarves, and mittens in anticipation of the arrival of the Mitten Tree. These are most welcome and will be accepted with gladness.

You will find a tree in the Narthex for hats, scarves, mittens, and gloves. Envelope for gift cards can be found beside the offering basket. They are clearly marked “for GLAD House”, so you can be certain your gift reaches the proper destination. Your gifts will be accepted through Sunday, December 13.

Again, we thank each of you for your continued thoughtfulness, kindness, and generosity.

You will have the opportunity to contribute to this special PC(U.S.A.)



offering on Sundays, December 13 and 20. Fifty percent (50%) of your gift assists current and retired church workers and their families who are in financial need and fifty percent (50%) makes it possible for students to learn and grow in faith at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

*Offering envelopes
will be in the bulletins
and beside the offering plates
in the Narthex on the designated Sundays.*

*Your support of this offering
is greatly appreciated.*



Spotlight on



Your Mission committee delivered 350 jars of grape jelly to VICRC in November. This is part of Valley's annual 'Holiday Baskets' program.

Thanks to your resourceful Mission committee, Kroger donated 125 jars. Our share for the remaining jars of grape jelly is roughly \$250.00.

If you would like to contribute to this worthy cause, cash or checks can be marked 'grape jelly' and dropped in the offering basket on Sunday. Donations are accepted any time. We always help 'make a difference'.

Late breaking news! Seventy-six pounds of food, personal care products, and paper items was delivered to VICRC following the Monthly Food Offering on November 15! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!



*Thank
you*

... to the folks who filled 25 boxes with food for Glendale families in need. Your Mission committee added a \$25 gift card for a turkey and perishables. A special thank you to Chief Dave Warman and to his fellow officers who delivered the boxes.

... to the folks who filled 26 Operation Christmas Child shoe boxes. Tom delivered the boxes to a local distribution center on



Tylersville Road. From there, they will be sent to children in need not only in the United States but abroad. A simple shoebox filled with toys and necessities we take for granted, lets a child know they are not forgotten but loved and remembered this Christmas. Thank you!

... to everyone who provided Target gift cards or monetary gifts so the Mission committee could purchase them. We didn't have the joy of shopping for the children VICRC supported this year, but we know Santa did not forget them.





Hello Friends,

It looks like we are at 19 pledges for the year, totaling just over \$117,000. No new pledges have come in for several weeks, so this looks like all we will have this year. This is quite a bit below our budget so as the end of the year approaches and you are in a situation where you need to do something for tax purposes, please keep the church in mind.

Respectfully your,
Matt, Financial Secretary



Leslie M	1
Ken C	10
Pat C	11
John C	13
Jane and Bob J.....	16
Susy S	19
Gary M	20
Susy and Richard S.....	27



Howard E	6
Robert K	7
Mary S	7
Gene M	12
Diane B	13
Mark B	16
Frank L	18
Leslie and Gary M	18
Anthony O	20
Bill F	31

Men's Lunch

All men are invited to join the Men's Group for lunch at Skyline on Springfield Pike in Woodlawn on Wednesday, December 9.
Lunch begins at 12:30PM.



Men's Lunch

All men are invited to join the Men's Group for lunch at Gold Star Chili on Springfield Pike in Springdale on Wednesday, January 13, 2021.
Lunch begins at 12:30pm.



Merry Christmas

The staff wishes for you all the peace, joy, and happiness of this season.
May your Christmas be filled with people and things that bring you joy ,
and may you always remember the reason we celebrate.



Happy New Year!

We wish you a happy, healthy, and prosperous new year.

First Presbyterian Church, Glendale

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Glendale, OH 45246

Phone 513-771-6195
glenpres@fuse.net
firstpresbyterianglendale.org



The Reverend Jeffrey Lang

worship—10:30AM
September 13, 2020-June 6, 2021

worship—10:00AM
June 13, 2021-September 5, 2021

Shared with you in Christian love



Church Office Hours

Monday, 9AM-3PM
Tuesday, 9AM-1PM
Wednesday, 9AM-1PM
Thursday, 9AM-3PM
Friday, closed



Sunday, December 13; 10:30AM



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
December 24; 5:00PM



DECEMBER

This calendar is a living document subject to frequent changes.
Check the website (firstpresbyterianglendale.org)
for the most accurate calendar.
Please call the church office with calendar updates.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3 6:30PM- Choir Rehearsal	4	5
6 10:30AM- Worship 2:00PM- Sanctuary Open House 	7 9:00AM- Session reports due 3:00PM- Mission Meeting	8	9 12:30PM- Men's Lunch (Skyline) 6:00PM- Session Meeting	10 6:30PM- Choir Rehearsal	11	12 Choir Rehearsal
13 10:30AM- Worship (Lessons and Carols) 	14	15	16	17 6:30PM- Choir Rehearsal	18	19
20 10:30AM- Worship 	21 	22	23	24 5:00PM 	25 <i>Unto Us a Child is Born</i> 	26
27 10:30AM- Worship	28	29	30	31		

January



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 	2
3  10:30AM- Worship	4 3:00PM- Mission Meeting	5	6	7 6:30PM- Choir Rehearsal	8	9 9:00AM-12:00PM Officer Training (incoming and returning officers)
10 10:30AM- Worship	11 9:00AM- Session reports due	12	13 12:30PM- Men's Lunch (Gold Star) 6:00PM- Session Meeting	14 6:30PM- Choir Rehearsal	15	16
17 10:30AM- Worship 11:00AM- Congregational Meeting	18 10:00AM- Deacon's Meeting	19	20	21 6:30PM- Choir Rehearsal	22	23
24 10:30AM- Worship	25 9:00AM- February newsletter items due	26	27	28 6:30PM- Choir Rehearsal	29	30
31 10:30AM- Worship			This calendar is a living document subject to frequent changes. Check the website (firstpresbyterianglendale.org) for the most accurate calendar. Please call the church office with calendar updates.			