

The *LIGHT* shines in
the darkness and
the *darkness*
has *NOT* overcome it.

John 1:5



Pastor's Pen

December 2017

Life itself is in him, and this life gives light to everyone.

The light shines through the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it. John 1:4-5 NLT

Several miles from my hometown the Millers maintained an estate and their family enterprise. They were blessed with money and resources and their annual Christmas display was a sight to behold. Each December their expansive property was lavishly lit with color and wonder, and our family made the trek to Miller's several times a season.

What set their annual display above and beyond all others were the bigger-than-life, one-dimensional stand-up scenes of Christmas complete with movable parts. Wise men repeatedly pointed to the star aloft a nearby grain solo. An organist moved left to right as she played her carols. Elves created toys with hammer, saw and paintbrush in hand. Today, children would be nonplussed because of all the inflatable lawn paraphernalia and the Disneyesque animatronics to which they are accustomed. To this 6-year-old, Millers was magic and made my Christmas.

In time, the family enterprise closed. The last generation living on the property passed. The estate and all of its contents were liquidated and December at the Millers went dark – for good. For many years, even though I knew the plywood stand-ups had probably been burned or put in storage to be consumed by mildew and rot, I would drive to the estate. By some miracle, perhaps the glow beyond the crest of the hill would be there and to my wondering eye should appear again magi, carolers, elves – all of it making another appearance for Christmas just as I had remembered them. I would love nothing more than to tell you this happened. It never did.

What makes *your* Christmas? I'm sure you have your own memories and holiday mainstays that once brought the Christmas Spirit home. Has something gone dark for you over the years? What has disappeared and taken your joy and childlike wonder along with it? I have a postscript to this story that I will probably tell in one of my sermons. But the true joy and wonder of Christmas cannot, will not ever go dark and disappear. Do you see what I see?

Jesus the Christ, for whom the season gets its name, is the same now as he was then and always will be. The world and circumstance would love nothing more than to tell you His light has gone out and He is among the missing. Don't you believe that rumor. Keep looking. As sure as there are angels and stars in the sky, He will be born in the hearts of God's children this year.

Jesus, you are the Light of the world. Be born in my heart and be my Guiding Light. I have the promise that nothing can separate me from you. I choose to trust and believe today that you are here and you will still be here when Christmas comes.

Advent 2017 Announced

Based on the popular Christmas song, our general theme will be *Do You Hear What I Hear?* Starting Sunday, December 3rd, each week we'll use a verse from the song and combine it with God's Holy Word to create a worship experience that is meaningful and glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ.

December 3rd = *Do You See What I See?* Matthew 2:1-10

December 10th = *Do You Hear What I Hear?* Luke 1:26-38

December 17th = *Do You Know What I Know?* Matthew 1:18-24

December 24th a.m. = *Listen to What I Say.* Isaiah 9:6-7 (**Poinsettias will be in church during both worship services and can be picked up at the close of the Christmas Eve Service.**)

Christmas Eve = *Let Us Bring Him Goodness and Light.*



Christmas Eve:

Reception in the BLC Lobby at 6:00 p.m. Hosted by Worship and Music Commission

Pre-service Music in the Sanctuary at 6:30 p.m. - Instrumental music, organ and piano, hand bells

Christmas Eve Celebration Service in the Sanctuary at 7:00 p.m.

Our Christmas Eve service will be a family-friendly service, filled with carols and special music, a children's story, the preaching of God's Word, Holy Communion and, of course, the traditional candle lighting. Plan to bring your friends and family to celebrate the birth of Jesus together.

Message: *What Shall I Give Him?* Luke 2:15-20

New Year's Sunday, December 31st

Worship @8:30 and 10:45 with Sunday School at 9:30.

Message: *Brand New Thing, Same Old Me* Isaiah 53:18-21, Revelation 21:1-5

Camp Eder's Christmas Tree Festival

Camp Eder's Christmas Tree Festival will be December 8 -9, 2017 from 5:00 p.m. -8:30 p.m.
Come enjoy:

- Christmas Lights and Music
- Story Telling/Painter Dave Weiss
- Tree Decorating Contest (you vote)
- Food (per donation) & Bake Sale
- Luminary Garden (honoring our loved ones)
- Decorated Trees
- Warm Drinks and lots of Cookies (free)
- Kid's Activity Cabin and Story Time
- Cozy Fires and Hay Rides
- Candle Light Service at 8:00 p.m. each night.



Heifer International reaches into remote parts of the world to provide small livestock to families in hard to reach places. Join us by donating - \$20 for a flock of geese, \$10 per goats share, and \$30 for beehives for small farmers. This time of year can be very difficult for families. Please bring any amount of the following items for local families in need: Small bags of rice, oatmeal, applesauce, and cereals. All donations will go to Fairfield families in need via Fairfield Mennonite Church Food Pantry.



JANUARY SERMON SERIES ANNOUNCED:

I'm planning sermon topics and themes for 2018. Because I strive to offer sermons which are biblically sound as well as culturally relevant, I thought it might be fun to develop a series in the new year based on your questions.

What bible passage don't you understand? What issue do you face is the most troubling?

What area of the Christian walk have you always wondered about or struggled with?

What question do you have for this pastor?

Beginning January 7th, I will take one question per week and build a sermon that speaks to it. The series is... "You Asked For It." Today through December 10, there is a box in both the narthex and the BLC lobby for you to submit your question. I will sort through them after Dec. 10 and select 8 that seem to reflect the spirit of all those submitted. We will announce the 2018 series questions on Christmas Eve.

You may ask any question that is important to you and for which you'd like a biblical answer (not my opinion). I do reserve the right to disqualify any questions which may be politically-charged, or might potentially be divisive to the congregation, or are contrary to long-held Brethren teaching and values.

I hope you have fun with this and we will see where the Lord leads us. ---Joel

Youth Events

December

Note:
Due to the winter season,
Please be advised that if Chambersburg Area School
District is closed or is dismissed early due to weather
conditions,
REVOLUTION will NOT be in session.



- **REVOLUTION:** Come and join us for Worship, a youth message, small groups, games and great food! Don't forget to bring a friend and your Bible!!
 - **December 6th**- Normal Youth Group
 - **December 13th** – Normal Youth Group
 - **December 20th** – Christmas Party
 - **December 27th** – No Revolution, due to Christmas Holiday.
- **Couple's Night Out!** The youth will be hosting a Couple's Night Out for couples and individuals of all ages. The night will begin on **Saturday, December 9th at 6:00pm (Snow Date: Sunday, December 10th)**. Our special dinner will be served at 6:30pm in the Brethren Life Center. This fundraiser will be going towards 2018 National Youth Conference!
 - All youth who will be participating in this fundraiser will need to wear...
 - Boys: black pants with a black or white button down shirt (tie would be great!)
 - Girls: black skirt or pants and a white or black top (colorful scarf would be great!)
 - All youth will need to be at the church to help finish setting up the tables and helping with food prep by 5:00pm.
 - If any youth are interested in helping with food prep on Friday, December 8th at 4:00pm that would be a BIG help!! Please Let Jamie know that you will be showing up early to help.

- Also, all youth parents are welcome to stay and help clean up after the evening is over. Thank you for all your help!!



- **Youth Christmas Party:** During Revolution (December 20th at 6:00pm), we will be having a Christmas party! We will be having Games, Pizza and Desserts! Come and join us as we celebrate Christmas!!

Attention All 9th – 12th Graders!!

National Youth Conference: These selected youth members will be going to Ft. Collins Colorado for NYC this upcoming July 2018. If you are interested in attending this AWESOME event, please plan to contribute \$250.00 as a non-refundable deposit. If your family has more than one (1) youth member attending this event, we are asking you to contribute \$375.00 towards the non-refundable deposit. If money is an issue, please contact Jamie Rhodes and assistance for this event can be discussed.

**ALL non-refundable deposits are due by
January 10th, 2018 to hold your spot.
Late deposits will NOT be accepted.**



December Church Family

**Due to the winter season,
Please be advised that if Chambersburg Area School District is closed or is
dismissed early due to weather conditions,**

KidNection will NOT be in session.

- **KidNection:** For Children Pre-K (age 4) thru 5th grade. Come and join us on **Thursday, December 14th**, and will continue every 2nd Thursday of the month. We will be meeting in the BLC for Worship, Bible Story, Games and a Craft!!

Revolution Presents...



The youth will be hosting a Couple's Night Out for couples and individuals of all ages.

The night will begin on Saturday, December 9th at 6:00pm and dinner will be served at 6:30pm in the Brethren Life Center.

Snow Date: Sunday, December 10th.

There will be a reservation signup sheet in the BLC lobby and narthex. All participants must reserve their seats for this event. There is no set cost for this event but donations will be accepted at the end of the dinner.

All donations will be going toward National Youth Conference 2018.

This will be the first year that we will be having Child Care.

If you are interested in Child Care, please note that on the signup sheet.

There is a fee of \$10 per child for this service. All children will be served the main course and will have a modified dessert.

Our Menu

Appetizer:

Holiday Punch
Gourmet Mini Cheese Balls with a Pretzel Stick
Little Franks
Cheese Kabobs

Salad:

Creamy Caesar Salad with Toasted Croutons

Main Course:

*Continental Chicken with Creamy Mushroom Sauce, Greenbean
Almondine, Cheesy Gourmet Potatoes and a Dinner Roll*

Dessert:

NY Style Cheese Cake with a Holiday Topping
Coffee and Tea



CHAMBERSBURG CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN NURSERY SCHOOL NEWS

Happy Fall! The end of October and most of November have been very busy months for our Nursery School. We have been continuing to learn our letters, numbers, shapes, and colors. We have been learning

about Moses and significant times in his life. We have been discussing Thanksgiving and being thankful for what we have.

On October 30, we had our Harvest Festival/ Halloween Party. The students had a great time dressing up and going around to different stations to collect treats. The Teacher Assistants did a great job working with them on a craft, playing a game, or telling a story. We all enjoyed a pizza party at lunchtime.

On November 3, we had our Sharing Meal. The class performed a song for their parents and listened to the story "Stone Soup". Thank you again to all the assistants that came in to help us prepare, set up, and serve at the Sharing Meal. Everyone had a great time.

The students are now preparing for their Christmas Program. They are very excited for the Thanksgiving and Christmas season. We are looking forward to having a great December and a fantastic New Year.

We wish you all a happy and healthy Thanksgiving! We also wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Sincerely,
Mrs. Amy

December Events

- 4th-5th - Parent/Teacher Conferences
- 6th - National Mitten Day
- 8th - Cash's birthday Celebration
- 15th - National Ugly Christmas Sweater Day
- 15th - Nursery School Christmas Program 6:00 PM
- 20th - Polar Express Day
- Dec. 22nd - Jan 2nd - No School-Christmas/New Year Break



Wishing you a "Merry Christmas"

The church staff would like to invite members of the congregation to drop by the office between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on Friday, December 15, 2017. Allow us to offer our hospitality and wishes for a blessed Christmas as you help yourself to cookies and punch.



Serving Our Neighbor (S.O.N.)

Your continued support of donations for serving our neighbors deserves a Thank YOU! It has been a great success throughout the year as we have collected and gave out many items at our monthly Midweek program.

During December and January, we will be collecting: hats, gloves/mittens and scarves for men, women and children. These donations will be given out at both January and February Midweek nights.

As always we appreciate your help in Serving Our Neighbors with these generous donations!

Chambersburg Church of the Brethren
invites you to:

Mid-Week Connection
Wednesday, December 6, 2017
Meal served at 5:30 p.m.

**Menu: Fried Chicken, Potatoes,
Green Beans and Cake**




Thank You

Selections from Chambersburg Church of the Brethren Chancel Choir and Christmas Carols

*Mid-Week Connection's purpose is connecting
our Brethren family to the community through
fellowship and service.*

Mid-Week Connection
Wednesday, January 3, 2018

**Meal
at 5:30**

**served
p.m.**

**Vocalist
Mummert
will be
to share
musical**



**Jeanie
Kent
with us
her
talents!**

*Mid-Week Connection's purpose is connecting
our Brethren family to the community through
fellowship and service.*

*A special thanks to all who helped to
make candy! Without your help, we
could not do this. Thank you to all who
ordered candy. We used about 300 lbs.
of chocolate and made over 400 boxes of*

candy. The proceeds will benefit the Good Samaritan Fund and the 2018 National Youth Conference.

--- The Helping Hand Circle

Thank you for your prayers, cards, and visits during my recent kidney stone surgery. It means a lot to know that there are those who care and watch over us.

--Linda Steck

Thank You to all who ate at Hoss's Steak and Sea House on Sunday, November 19th to benefit our Nursery School. We raised \$369.89. We appreciate your support!

--The Nursery School Committee

Wishing there was a special way to say "Thank You" that's as special as the nice things you always find to do. We are always welcomed by those we come in contact with at the church. And, as always, we appreciate the use of the Fellowship Room for our exercise class!

---Limber Ladies

**Finances at a Glance
November 19, 2017**

*It is all about your heart....
Everything we have is a gift from God
that we are to use to help others.*



Our Sympathy to:

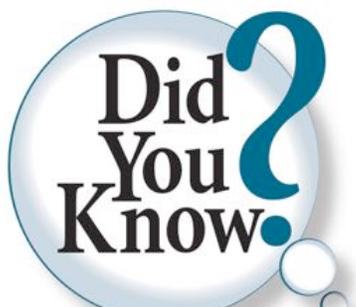
Ronald and Jane Hughes and Family;
Rhonda and Gary Deshong and Family
following the death of their sister-in-law
and aunt, Jean R. Hughes on Friday,
October 27, 2017.

Donald Fogelsanger and Family; Debbie
and Stan Shilling and Family following
the death of their brother-in-law and
uncle, Dale E. Kann on Wednesday,
November 8, 2017.



Library News - December

**It's Christmas! All Christmas!
Nothing but Christmas ☺**



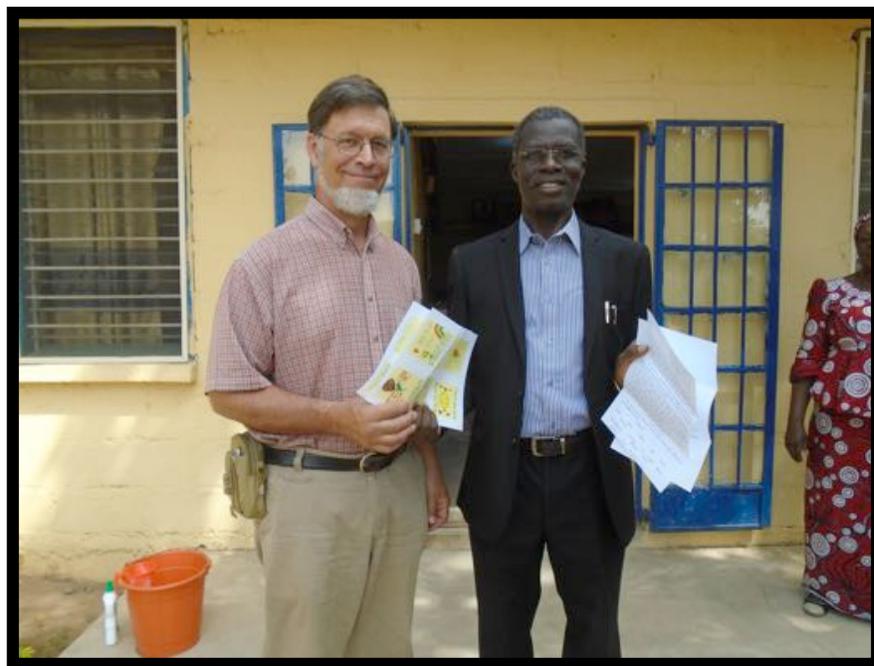
That the Children's Church Ministry of Chambersburg Church of the Brethren wrote a letter with drawings to our Nigerian friends, and that it was hand-delivered by Chris Elliott.

Dear Brother Joel,

While in Nigeria a couple of weeks ago, at EYN headquarters in Kwarhi, we presented your letter with the children's drawings to EYN President Joel Billi. I will be submitting the photo for the district newsletter. It is attached below so you might share it with your congregation.

Thanks for sending the letter. It didn't get past us that both pastors are named Joel. It was greatly appreciated!

Blessings, cwe.



Franklin County
Jail Ministry
Holiday Family
Connection

For
those
incar
cerat



ed, the upcoming holiday season offers promises of despair and guilt. They have disappointed their families. Their separation adds to their sense of failure. To overcome these dreary promises with the joyful promises of God, the Franklin County Jail Ministry is creating the Holiday Family Connection.

During the days just prior to Christmas, when an inmate's child visits, the inmate will be able to tell their child there is a gift waiting for them that the child can choose. In this way the parent will have the joy of providing a gift for their child.

You can help this happen.

We are asking for churches and individuals to purchase either a sports ball (soccer ball, football, etc.) or stuffed animal. Gifts should be less than \$15. Gifts may be dropped off at Salem United Brethren Church, 4349 Letterkenny Road, Chambersburg December 11-15, from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.

Do Not Wrap the Gifts.
(Please, no used toys)

The chaplain and jail staff will oversee the distribution. If you have questions, contact Chaplain Isaac Burkholder at the Jail, 264-9513, ext. 21663.

Church Yard Sale

Dates: Friday, January 19, 2018
Saturday, January 20, 2018

Place: Brethren Life Center

Time: Friday: 9:00 AM thru 3:00 PM
Saturday: 8:00 AM thru 12 noon



Please **DO NOT** bring the following items for the Yard Sale: Electronics, televisions, computers, computer monitors, encyclopedias, and textbooks.

Items can be brought to the church Monday through Thursday the week of the sale. Please make sure clothing is clean and in good condition and that other items are in good working order and will provide good service to our neighbors.

We need your help on Wednesday and Thursday (January 17 and 18) to set the items on the tables and Friday and Saturday to assist shoppers or help in the kitchen. Please prayerfully consider helping to make this another successful Yard Sale.



- 1-2 Salvation Army Red Kettle Ringing at Chambersburg Mall from 11:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m.
 3 Searchers Sunday School Class Celebrating Christmas at the home of John and Margie Diller at 5:30 p.m.
 Believers Sunday School Class to Christian Life Assembly Church for Christmas Play
 4 Pickleball at 6:30 p.m. in Brethren Life Center
 5 Worship and Music Commission Meeting at 6:30 p.m. in the Conference Room
 6 **Mid-Week Connection – Meal at 5:30 p.m. in Brethren Life Center – Chancel Choir & Christmas Carols**
 Revolution at 6:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary
 Hand Bell Rehearsal at 6:00 p.m.
 Chancel Choir Rehearsal at 7:15 p.m.
 9 **Couple’s Night Out in Brethren Life Center – Appetizers at 6:00 p.m. and Dinner at 6:30 p.m.**
 10 **SNOW DATE for Couple’s Night Out**
 11 Church Board Meeting at 6:30 p.m. in the Conference Room
 Pickleball at 6:30 p.m. in Brethren Life Center
 12 Helping Hand Circle Christmas Party at 6:00 p.m. at the home of Margie Diller
 Missions and Service Commission Meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Conference Room
 13 Pickleball at 8:30 a.m. in Brethren Life Center
 Revolution at 6:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary
 Hand Bell Rehearsal at 6:00 p.m.
 Chancel Choir Rehearsal at 7:15 p.m.
 14 Loving Hearts Christmas Celebration in the Brethren Life Center at 12 Noon
 KidNecton at 6:30 p.m. in Brethren Life Center and Mini-Fellowship Hall
 15 **Church Christmas Open House - 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. in the Church Office area**
 Nursery School Christmas Program at 6:00 p.m. in Brethren Life Center
 18 Pickleball at 6:30 p.m. in Brethren Life Center
 19 Staff Christmas Luncheon at 12 noon in Conference Room
 20 Pickleball at 8:30 a.m. in Brethren Life Center
 Revolution Christmas Party at 6:00 p.m. in the Brethren Life Center
 Hand Bell Rehearsal at 6:00 p.m.
 Chancel Choir Rehearsal at 7:15 p.m.
 24 **Christmas Eve Worship –Reception in BLC Lobby 6:00 p.m.; Pre-Service Music 6:30 p.m. – Worship 7:00 p.m.**
 25 **Merry Christmas!! – Office Closed**
 26 **Merry Christmas!! – Office Closed**



- 1 **Happy New Year! – Office Closed**
 3 **Mid-Week Connection - Meal at 5:30 p.m. with Vocalist Jeanie Mummert Kent**
 4 Properties Commission Meeting at 6:30 p.m. in Library
 Christian Education Commission Meeting at 6:30 p.m. in Conference Room
 7 January/February Combined Newsletter Deadline
 10 Fellowship & Recreation Commission Meeting at 6:00 p.m. in Conference Room
 11 KidNecton at 6:30 p.m. in Brethren Life Center & Mini-Fellowship Hall
 15 Deacons Commission Meeting at 6:30 p.m. in Conference Room
 19 **Church Yard Sale – 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. in Brethren Life Center**
 20 **Church Yard Sale – 8:00 a.m. – 12 Noon in Brethren Life Center**
 25 Baby Boy Rhodes due!