



December 2020

The Pastor's Pen...

*O come, Thou Day-Spring, come and cheer our spirits by Thine advent here.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night and death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel*
O Come, O Come, Emmanuel words by John Mason Neale

"Christmas is probably not gonna be possible this year"

That was Sunday, November 15th's top story after CNN's Jake Tapper's interview with Dr. Anthony Fauci. Fauci was talking about the surge in COVID cases that is tampering with the hopes of millions seeking to restore a sense of normality with the upcoming holiday. Fauci said that even with the advent of a vaccine the public "can't abandon fundamental public health measures." That prompted Tapper, the Chief Washington correspondent for CNN, to observe that Christmas is "probably not gonna be possible." Technically speaking, I know what Tapper was suggesting. He was suggesting that many of our beloved American Christmas traditions that involve crowded rooms and places – parades, parties, caroling, services of worship, shopping, to name a few – would best be observed with restraint this calendar year.

But Christmas not possible? I can assure you we can put a halt to all our traditions but that won't stop Christmas or Jesus from coming. Herod the Great already tried that once!

One of my favorite poems by Ann Barr Weems is called "Christmas Comes." It's part of her 1980 collection, *Kneeling in Bethlehem*, by the Westminster Press. It begins.....

Christmas comes every time we see God in other persons.
The human and the holy meet in Bethlehem or in Times Square,
for Christmas comes like a golden storm – determinedly, inevitably...

Even now it comes
in the face of hatred and warring,
no atrocity too terrible to stop it,
no Herod strong enough,
no hurt deep enough,
no curse shocking enough,
no disaster shattering enough.
Someone on earth will see the star,
someone will hear the angel voices,
someone will run to Bethlehem,
someone will know peace and good will:
the Christ will be born!

I don't know if we'll be forced to ungather. I can't say what Christmas Eve online would be like. I'm not wild about the necessity of masks and social distancing, though I respect why we're doing them. I have no idea how many will sit at my holiday table.

I just know that the One who is the resurrection and the life resurrected me this year and gave me new life. In my hour of need, nothing prevented Him from coming. So do not let one trace of doubt enter your mind: He will come to a weary people who need Him now more than ever.

Christmas Blessings!

Pastor Joel



**Advent 2020 Begins Sunday, November 29th
Sent
Delivering the Gift of Hope at Christmas**

Two thousand years ago, a baby was delivered who changed the world! God sent Jesus and you and I are sent to deliver God's gift of hope to a world in need. Where does Jesus need to be born today? Does He make a difference?

November 29th – *Jesus, the Answer to Our Deepest Longing*

Luke 2:8-14 NRSV

December 6th – *What if Everything on Your Shopping List Were Free?*

Luke 4:16-21 CEB

December 13th– *Immanuel God, Will You be with Me?*

Hebrews 4:14-16 GNT

Matthew 1:18-25 NIV

December 20th – *Where It All Began*

Luke 1:26-38 the Message



**Christmas Eve on 4th Street
Thursday, December 24th
Your Choice of two Services
5:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.**

Both services will feature the Word, seasonal music and carols, holy communion, and candle lighting. Our Praise Band will lead the music at 5:00 p.m. and Pastor Joel will share a special Children's Story. Our organist, choir and bell choir will share music at 7:30 p.m.

Starting Tuesday, December 1st a survey will be posted to our website – www.chambcob.org – so that you may indicate what service you wish to attend, so we are prepared for you.

**Sermon Title: This Changes Everything!
Text: Luke 2:15-20**

Coming January 2021

The Grand Sweep: 365 Days From Genesis through Revelation

This year-long comprehensive Bible Study guides adults and youth to read through the Bible in one year. Daily readings are very manageable and neither the beginner nor the expert need feel threatened or inadequate. By the time participants complete the year, they will have a grasp of the Bible from beginning to end.

WHEN: Every Thursday evening from 6:30-7:30 p.m. beginning Thursday, January 15th and continuing through Thursday, December 23rd, 2021.

This will begin as a ZOOM Bible Study with a link being sent to your email each Wednesday. Pastor Joel will serve as the facilitator.

You must register for the Bible Study by Sunday, December 20th this year. You will need to purchase a Grand Sweep study guide for \$20. We will order one per household on Monday, December 21st. They will be available for pick up on or after December 27th.

Special Announcement Concerning Christmas Eve

COVID-19 cases are surging in Franklin County and Chambersburg is no exception. Some of you are asking, "What IF we must ungather again and can't celebrate the birth of Christ in person?"

Your staff is already strategizing and preparing for the possibility of an online Christmas Eve in the event the virus numbers would compel us to ungather.

Be assured, one way or the other, there will be a celebration of the Christ child.



"A Milk Truck For Christmas"

In the spring, our congregation was asked to help raise funds to support local organizations that were doing the good work of helping those in need during the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic. And how did this church contribute? When all was said and done, over \$8,000 was collected and distributed to nearly 10 local organizations. But the pandemic and need remains...

As a continuation of this effort, Missions and Service Commission is conducting a special offering during December to raise funds for Maranatha Ministries. Maranatha oversees multiple ministries in the local community that are helping many people through this current environment. But one of their most important outreaches is helping those with food insecurities. They have done this through several avenues including the food pantry. This year they have helped out by conducting several food and milk give-a-ways in the Chambersburg area (much like their upcoming partnership with our church).

For each of their distributions they have had to rent a refrigerated truck. To that end our church would like to help them purchase a truck to continue this mission in the new year without the cost of having to always rent a truck.

During December contribute to purchase "A Milk Truck For Christmas" for Maranatha by using special offering envelopes or taking it directly to the church office.

Thank you for your support.

DECEMBER



Youth Events

Youth Group!

We will continue each Wednesday of the month; December 2nd, and 9th.

We will **NOT** be meeting on December 16th, (due to Christmas party being moved to Thursday the 17th) and we also will **NOT** be meeting on December 23rd and 30th due to the Christmas Holiday. If anything changes, we will notify all youth and parents ASAP.

- **Christmas Party at Roll-R-Way!** On **Thursday**, December 17th at 6-8pm, we will be having Pizza, Desserts and of course, some roller-skating fun! Come and join us as we celebrate Christmas!! This event is **free**, and we hope you can bring some friends! Permission Slips are available!



Transportation Option 1:

If you would like to drive and pick up your youth at the roller rink, please arrive at 6pm and pick up at 8pm.

Transportation Option 2:

If you would like a ride to the roller rink and back to the Church, please arrive at the church at 5:30pm. Those who will be getting a ride will be back at the church by 8:30pm.



SMART COOKIES PRESCHOOL NEWS

Happy Fall! The end of October and most of November have been very busy months for our Preschool. 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 30th, 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 6th, we had our last Soccer Shots time for the fall season. All the children received a medal and we look forward to participating in the program in Spring 2021.

On November 16th, we had a visit from the Franklin County Dairy Princess. The children loved meeting a princess and learned a lot about dairy farming and made a cute craft. They also made Thank You cards for local dairy farmers.

On November 19th we had our Thanksgiving Program. The class performed songs, finger plays, and shared what they are thankful for. Thank you to everyone that shared non-perishable foods with Maranatha.

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 Special Events

December 2nd- School Pictures

December 4th- Wear Your Mittens to school

December 7th-9th- Parent/Teacher Conferences

December 15th- Christmas Program

December 18th- Polar Express/Pajama Day

December 21st - Christmas Party

December 22nd- Early Dismissal

December 23rd- January 1, 2020- Christmas Break



Thank you to those who supported Camp Eder's Fall Fest. The event was able to raise over \$18,000.00 to help support the camp's goal of never having turned a camper away for financial reasons, and its people like you who help make this a reality. The camp is very appreciative of your prayers and donations through the years. Plan to attend the Christmas Tree Festival on December 11 & 12th from 5 pm – 9 pm.

---Camp Eder

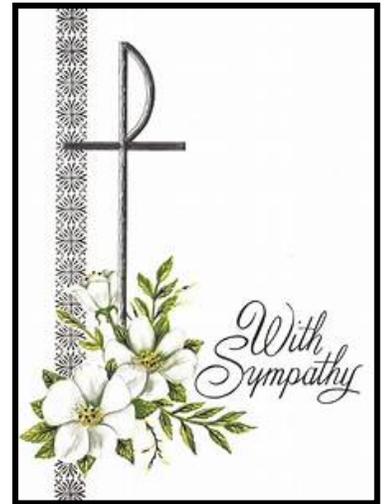
To the Pastors' and Congregation, Our family would like to offer our sincere thank you for prayers and cards during this very sad time in the passing of our brother, Thomas Danzberger Jr. He will remain in our hearts always.

---Sincerely,

**Donna and Gary Russell
Loretta Funk and Family**



Please take note that the next Pastor's Pen will combine the months of January and February. Deadline for the January/February Pastor's Pen is Sunday, January 3rd. Please submit all information to the church office.



Our sympathy to:

Bob and Gail Appenzellar and Family following the death of Bob's brother, Merle Fred Appenzellar, Sr. on Friday, November 13, 2020.

The Family of Dorothy N. "Dottie" Mummau following her death on Monday, November 2, 2020.

Robert and Kim Frazer and Family following the death of their brother-in-law, Robert "Bobby" J. Monn, Jr. following his death on Sunday, November 1, 2020.

Genevieve Kiser Family; Dennis and Vicki Kiser Family following the death of their brother and uncle, George H. Hykes, on Wednesday, October 28, 2020.

Leon and Ellen Yoder and Family following the death of Leon's father, Dean L. Yoder on Monday, October 26, 2020.

Raymond and June Hawbaker Family; Eugene and Mary Hawbaker Family, Mabel Hawbaker Family, following the death of their sister and sister-in-law, Dorothy H. Grove on Friday, October 23, 2020.

WHAT: Mid-Week to Go.....

WHEN: Wednesday, December 2nd
between 5:30 p.m. - 6:15 p.m.

WHERE: Chambersburg COB

Meal delivered to your car!
First come-first served basis.



POSTPONED

**Church Yard Sale will not
be held in January this year.**

**Due to COVID we are going
to reschedule for a later
date.**

**Please watch for details later
in the new year.**



Food Distribution

Opportunity to serve.

On Saturday, December 12th at
3:00 pm our church will be
partnering with Maranatha
Ministries for a dairy and food
distribution.

This will be conducted as a drive-up
give-a-way in our Brethren Life
Center parking lot. Starting at
2:00pm between 15 to 20
volunteers are needed to help with
putting the boxes into vehicles.



Winter Sunday School Classes

We will continue to gather as a combined Adult Sunday School Class. We will meet at 9:30-10:30am in the Sanctuary. There will only be one class at this time. We ask you to keep the current guidelines that are in place during our normal worship services. This is a time for us to deepen our relationship and knowledge of Jesus! We hope you will join us!

Youth Sunday School is located in the Brethren Haus Youth Room.

Children's Church is still temporarily closed. Christian Education will continue to monitor this and decide when it is best to regather again.

New Arrivals in the Library for January 2021

Fiction

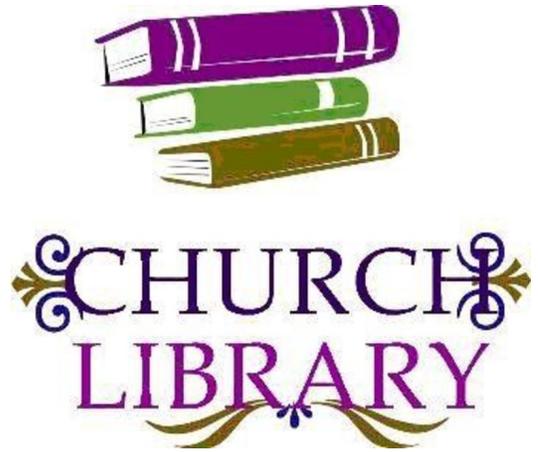
The Pieces We Keep by Kristina McMorris

Letters From Home by Kristina McMorris

The Farmer's Daughter by Tracie Peterson

DVD

I Still Believe



The Church Library is open during the week if you wish to check out books!



- CHRISTMAS LIGHTS & MUSIC
- HAY RIDES Friday & SATURDAY NIGHT 5-8pm
- TREE DECORATING CONTEST (you vote)
- DELICIOUS TURKEY DINNER & SOUP (per donation)
- LUMINARY GARDEN (honoring our loved ones)
- DECORATED TREES
- WARM DRINKS AND LOTS OF COOKIES (free)
- BAKE SALE
- KID'S ACTIVITIES
- COZY FIRES

GIVING JOYFULLY 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.

HONOR A LOVED ONE. DEDICATE A LUMINARY.

On Friday and Saturday, Dec. 11 & 12, Camp Eder will hold our annual Christmas Tree Festival. In addition to our holiday lights, we will be lighting luminaries to honor our loved ones.

Luminaries are \$5 each and one dedicated person per luminary. Please print and fill out the form below and return with payment.

DECORATE A CHRISTMAS TREE

Have some fun decorating a tree at Camp Eder. Everyone is invited to compete in the tree decorating contest. Voting will be during the Christmas Tree Festival December 11-12. The Christmas Tree Festival is a great opportunity to get involved with Camp Eder and our surrounding community.

Trees are limited, so you will want to sign up soon.

Trees are assigned on first come first serve basis and we must receive your Christmas tree sponsor form to reserve your tree.