



The Pastor's Pen...

December 2023

For Unto Us a Child is Born

Isaiah 9:6-7 NLT

⁶ “For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ His government and its peace will never end. He will rule with fairness and justice from the throne of his ancestor David for all eternity. The passionate commitment of the Lord of Heaven’s Armies will make this happen!”

I’m sure many of us have heard this scripture passage many times before at Christmas. It is the prophet, Isaiah, from the Old Testament foretelling the coming of the Messiah. This child will be like no other child born before or after. This child is born of humanity, but also is the divine Child of God. The passage foretells of the First and Second Comings of Christ. In the First Coming, Jesus was born and died for our sins. But in the Second Coming, he will reign over all the earth for eternity! *“The government will rest on his shoulders. His government and its peace will never end.”* This is the Advent we now await!

In a time when our world is torn apart by war and division, and our future hangs in the balance – when there seems to be no way out, we can rest in the knowledge that God is still in control and Jesus has already won the ultimate battle. Jesus has conquered death! Praise be to God!

Each year as we approach Advent and Christmas, we celebrate the birth of Jesus and give thanks to God for such a glorious gift to all humanity. But we should also celebrate the Advent of the Second Coming of Christ when the heavens will open, and Jesus will ride down from heaven to call us home. What a glorious day that will be!

This year, enter the season of Advent with anticipation of what it will be like to be a part of the Second Coming of Christ. Our Advent devotional this year, “All Things New” by Kevin Kessler, will help guide you through each day of Advent. A time for you to remember what has been and look forward to what will be.

We can only imagine what it will be like one day to be with the Lord. Let’s be about the business of making disciples for Christ so that all can share in the Second Coming of Christ and be lifted up to heaven.

~ Pastor Liz



Christmas Eve Service, December 24th at 6:30 PM

Pre-Service Music 6:00 PM

The beloved family service that you all remember. There will be plenty of worshipful music and carols; readings from God's Word; a children's story; and, of course, the closing candle lighting service.

Come and celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus in our 4th Street sanctuary.

Bring your family, neighbors and friends and begin your Christmas with all that is essential.

We will have a Sunday morning service at 9:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary. There will be no Sunday School.

Correction In Announcement For Vote Count On Pastoral Call

The 81.5 % favorable vote count for our pastoral candidate, Mark Balilis, was not correct. It should have been announced as an 86% favorable count. There were 86 yes votes, 14 no votes and 5 people abstained. The abstention votes should not be counted in the percentage because anyone who has abstained in a matter is saying that they do not want to weigh in on that matter. To count them in the total gives them the same value as a "no" vote and that would not be correct. Our announcement should have read as follows: "there were 86 "yes" votes and 14 "no" for an approval vote of 86%. In addition, there were 5 people who abstained from voting".

The following were elected to serve on the Church Board: Tim Monn, Laura Shank, Marsha Smith, Bryan Stevenson and Cody Toms.

Elected as Moderator was Jesse Miles.

Annual Conference Delegates will be Ian and Alaina Irvin.

District Conference Delegates (2-year term) will be Ray and Linda Burkholder and Brian and Ann Deardorff.



A WORD FROM PASTOR GRETCHEN,

My time here serving the Fourth Street congregation and the Chambersburg community has been a true blessing to me and my family. You have loved, supported, and cared for me in many ways. I am forever grateful.

As I move forward into my next venture, I want to remind you that you are ***PeaceKeepers***. I want you to remember to ***Follow the Leader, Obey the Thirst, and Water your Seed***. Our ***God is Monumental*** and that's ***Something to be Excited About. Oh, What Joy!***

God shows us ***In Challenge is Purpose***. When we make a ***Resolution to Relinquish*** and practice the art of ***How Low Can You Go***, we can rely on ***The Word*** and ***Let it Go***.

Our Father has given us ***The Gift of the Holy Spirit*** which is the key to ***Getting our Groove Back. Are you ready?***

I pray you take the ***Lesson from Biscuits*** and the ***Letter from God*** and use them both to be closer to God.

Thank you, God

In Great Love,
Pastor Gretchen

A WORD FROM CHRISITIAN EDUCATION

How is it possible that the holidays are already here again? As we move into Christmas and the New Year, we want to remind everyone that our Sunday School programs are ready to offer you learning and fellowship on Sunday mornings. For December Sunday School will operate as normal every Sunday except Christmas Eve. We hope you will join us.

A reminder that each classroom has an attendance sheet that serves both to track how many are coming to class and those that we can check in on and invite to join us. We encourage you to use this tool to recruit new classmates.

Our nursery and toddler rooms continue to grow as we have three new babies on the way. Please consider volunteering in our programs as they can only run by all of us working together. Our students also need teachers and we'd be happy to sign you up for our 1st thru 6th grade class, our preschool class or our Youth room. Teaching others our knowledge is a great way to keep our own minds sharp and hearts full.

Finally, ladies please consider joining our women's bible study on Tuesdays at 9:00 a.m. This is a great time of learning and sharing with each other. All are welcome.

Have a wonderful holiday season.

In Love,

Pastor Gretchen on behalf of Christian Education





Smart Cookies 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 Joseph and significant times in his life. For our Thanksgiving Bible lesson, we learned about the 10 Lepers and their healing. 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 and parents did a great job working with them on crafts, playing a game, or telling a story. We all enjoyed a pizza party at lunchtime.

On November 17th, we headed over to Brookview Senior Center to spend the morning with the seniors there. The children and a senior made turkey headbands and then loved to see each other wearing them. They all had fun together and many laughs were shared. Our students made extra headbands and had the opportunity to give some to other seniors. The kids loved being led to different rooms to pass out the headbands and sing Happy Birthday to a few of the residents that have a November birthday. We also joined in for the birthday party of one of the residents. Everyone had a fantastic time.

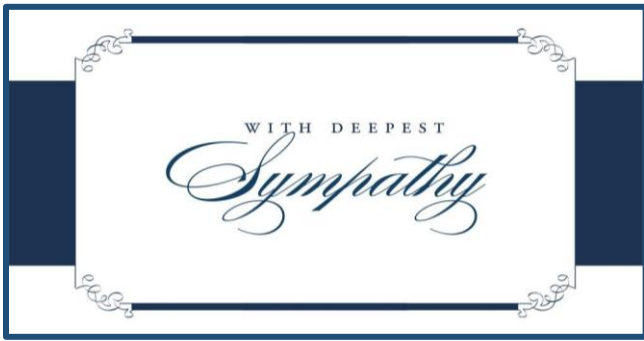
The students are now preparing for their Christmas Program. They are very excited for the Thanksgiving and Christmas season. We are looking forward to having a great December and a fantastic New Year.

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 Special Events

- December 1st - Wear Your Mittens to school
- December 8th- Visiting Brookview Senior Health Center (Menno Haven)
- December 14th- Christmas Program
- December 15th- Polar Express/Pajama Day
- December 18th - Christmas Party
- December 20th - Early Dismissal
- December 22nd-January 1, 2024- Christmas Break
- January 2, 2024- School Reopens



Our Sympathy to:

The Family of Willis P. (Junie) Hawbaker, Jr. following his passing on Wednesday, October 25, 2023.

The Family of Lois M. Black following her passing on Friday, October 27, 2023.



Congratulations to:

Alan and Rachel (Miller) Lehman who were united in marriage on October 21, 2023 by Pastor Joel Nogle.

Alan is the son of Donald and Annette Lehman of Shady Grove and Rachel is the daughter of David and Adrienne Miller of Lancaster, PA.

They have moved and their new address is 175 Wildhurst Lane, Statesville, NC 28625



**VOLUNTEER
BELL RINGERS
NEEDED!**

Ring a bell...help change a life

Salvation Army Red Kettle Project

Missions and Service Commission is sponsoring an opportunity to serve and share with the Salvation Army.

Our congregation will ring the bell for the Red Kettle Project at The Butcher Shoppe on Friday, December 8, 2023, from 8 a.m. until 7 p.m.

Look for the sign-up sheet in the Narthex and sign-up for an hour or two.

Thanks for your help!



Newsletter Deadline

**Deadline for
January/February
Pastor's Pen**

Sunday, January 7, 2024

Please submit all information
to the church office.



Library News for December

This month you will find books about Christmas laid out. Some are fiction, some non-fiction, some new, some not. Enjoy!



FOR THE KIDS NEWS

The fundraiser at Panera was unsuccessful in that we only raised \$42.61.

We are now doing a fundraiser at Ledo Pizza. This will be on December 8 & 9. 20% of the sales will go to *For The Kids of Chambersburg*, which supports 16 agencies that are supporting children in Chambersburg.

You may bring a flyer or just say *For the Kids* when you order. (There will be flyers near the Bulletins each Sunday).



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

WHEN: Wednesday, December 6th
Wednesday, January 3rd
5:30 p.m. - 6:15 p.m.

WHERE: Chambersburg COB

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

*260 South Fourth Street
Chambersburg, PA 17201
717-264-6957*

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



**Save the dates.....
Church Yard Sale**

The Church Yard Sale will be held on

Thursday, March 14, 2024
1:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Friday, March 15, 2024
8:00 am. – 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, March 16, 2024
8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOR



Day 1	Romans 13:8	Day 17	James 1:27
Day 2	Matthew 5:43-48	Day 18	Luke 6:27-28
Day 3	John 13:34-35	Day 19	Galatians 5:14
Day 4	1 Peter 4:8	Day 20	John 15:9
Day 5	Romans 12:10	Day 21	Matthew 22:37-40
Day 6	Leviticus 19:18	Day 22	Ephesians 5:2
Day 7	Proverbs 17:17	Day 23	Galatians 6:2
Day 8	1 Corinthians 16:14	Day 24	Luke 3:11
Day 9	1 John 4:18-19	Day 25	John 15:13
Day 10	Luke 6:25	Day 26	Hebrews 13:1-2
Day 11	Proverbs 10:12	Day 27	Deuteronomy 15:11
Day 12	Ephesians 4:32	Day 28	Ruth 1:16-17
Day 13	1 John 4:11	Day 29	Romas 12:9-16
Day 14	Colossians 3:14	Day 30	1 John 4:7-8
Day 15	Mark 12:31	Day 31	Luke 6:32
Day 16	1 Thessalonians 4:9		

Camp Eder Christmas Tree Festival

Celebrate the birth of Jesus at Camp Eder's Christmas Tree Festival on December 8 & 9 from 5-9 pm. See information on the festival activities in the Brethren Life Center Lobby. Volunteers are needed to help in the kitchen, at the Welcome Table or at the S'mores Station. We also need baked goods (breads, cookies, pies, etc.) for the bake sale. See sign-up sheets also in the Brethren Life Center Lobby.

**CHRISTMAS TREE
FESTIVAL
CAMP
Eder**

DECEMBER 8TH & 9TH 5-9PM

- CHRISTMAS LIGHTS & MUSIC
- HAY RIDES FRIDAY AND SATURDAY NIGHT 5-9PM
- TREE DECORATING CONTEST
- 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 & S'MORES
- LIVE MUSIC

"AND THIS IS THE TESTIMONY: GOD HAS GIVEN US ETERNAL LIFE, AND THIS LIFE IS IN HIS SON." – JOHN 1:5-11

COME JOIN US FOR AN EVENING OF FAMILY FESTIVE FUN! THE WOODS WILL BE ILLUMINATED WITH LOTS AND LOTS OF CHRISTMAS LIGHTS, WARM FIRES, HOT COCOA AND CHILDREN ACTIVITIES WILL BE HAPPENING EACH NIGHT. THIS IS A BEAUTIFUL FESTIVAL YOU MOST CERTAINLY WILL NOT WANT TO MISS!

**WWW.CAMPEDER.ORG 717-642-8256
914 MT HOPE RD. FAIRFIELD, PA 17320**

13th Annual Camp Eder Christmas Tree Festival

A Celebration of the Birth of Jesus

Friday, Saturday
December 8th and 9th
Daily 5pm—9pm

Sponsorship Form

_____ Gold Sponsor: \$200.00

Provides funds to purchase items that highlight the birth of Christ and the journey to Bethlehem.

_____ Frankincense Sponsor: \$100.00

Goes towards the cost of purchasing food and food supplies. Many food items will be available, including: cookies, hot soup, cocoa, sandwiches, turkey dinners, and more—all will be available to guests for a donation.

_____ Myrrh Sponsor: \$ 50.00

Will provide 2 trees to be used for our decorating contest. Churches, organizations, and Camp Eder supporters, are given the opportunity to decorate a tree with their choice of theme. Trees are on display for the duration of the Festival and are entered into our lighthearted contest. After the Festival, the trees are made available to local families in need. You do not have to decorate a tree, however you are welcome to do so by checking the "Tree Sponsor" section below.

_____ Luminary Sponsor: \$5.00 per luminary

A luminary will be lit and displayed in honor or memory of _____
(use the back of this form if needed)

_____ Friend of Camp Eder \$ _____

_____ Tree Sponsor: No donation is necessary to take on the exciting task of decorating a tree for your organization or family. A 5-6 foot live-cut tree will be provided for you to decorate

(Name) _____ (Phone Number) _____

(Address) _____

(Email) _____

Note: _____

Thank you for your tax deductible donation!

717-642-8256, or campeder@campeder.org

914 Mt. Hope Rd., Fairfield, PA 17320

