

Dear Holy People of God,

As the days grow shorter and colder, the bleakness of winter approaches and we feel like hibernating. Nature tells us it is time to slow down but we like the hustle and bustle of preparing for Christmas. Despite the conflicts in our bodies and minds, we plow forward adding lights to mask the darkness, singing songs of joy to mask our longings and sadness.

Why don't we sing Christmas carols during Advent? Because the church season of Advent comes before the season of Christmas. Advent is the season to sing "O Come, O Come Emmanuel." We desire for God to be with us, but often get caught up in things that don't matter and don't take time to see how God is with us. Advent, the four Sundays before December 25 affords us the opportunity to reflect on our need for God to be with us. We hear readings of prophecy and promise. We look for signs for the sun and the Son of God to return. We long for God to be with us, to heal our brokenness, to offer a glimpse of the Light that darkness cannot overcome.

We wait and pray and prepare for the return of Jesus and to celebrate the birth of the Christ child. A child is hope and we are people of hope who long to have God with us. Hope brings anticipation, anticipation brings expectations and along comes a baby born in a barn to a homeless couple. What is God telling us? Yes Jesus is a baby needing care and love, requiring patience for the parents, sometimes sleeplessness, constantly needing our attention. Our faith also needs constant attention and patience. We are a world of instant gratification, yet faith requires us to feed our souls with the Word of God, the Bread of Life, and the fellowship of believers. We anticipate seeing you at worship during the Sundays of Advent and Christmas.

Christina Rossetti wrote a Christmas carol that reflects both our longing and our awe at the birth of Jesus.

*In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow.
Heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain
Heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign:
...In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ...
What can I give him—give my heart.*

Blue is the color of Advent season and the color of hope. Advent is the season of hope and longing and waiting for the return of Jesus Christ. Advent is the season that we prepare for the Lord to enter our hearts again, bringing us hope and peace, comfort and joy.

May Christ the Son of Righteousness, shine upon you
And scatter the darkness from before your path
And prepare your heart to receive the Christ child. Amen

Shalom, Pastor Bev

Dear members of St. Paul's congregation,



December is here! Please try to make time to help us decorate our church. I've talked to Jeff Miller and he is planning to set up the trees for us to start decorating Saturday morning, December 2. Therefore, we will not need to meet Friday evening. Saturday morning we will have breakfast at 8:00 at the Spring Street Café and then head to the church to start decorating at 9:00. We have such a great time. This is for people of all ages.

We will also be ringing the bell for the Salvation Army on Saturday, December 3rd, from 10 till 6 PM. We will be ringing at Walgreens again this year. This has been a great year for volunteers. We have volunteers for all the times!!! Thank you to everyone who signed up for this wonderful community activity.

As a part of Confirmation, Pastor asked the students to become more involved with the church. Sydney McMurray decided to join the Finance Committee. We had a budget meeting and she attended. She decided that she would like to restart the Cookie Walk to raise money for the church.

The Cookie Walk was held on November 18 and was a huge success. I would like to give a special THANK YOU to Sydney for all the work she did arranging and making the cookie walk a success. We made approximately \$600. Thanks also to all who supported her by donating supplies, baking cookies, and most of all for buying them. Your kindness was greatly appreciated by Sydney.

We have adopted Creek Meadows Care Center on the Ellwood City Road again this year to bring the residents presents.



We have names and lists of what they might like. If you want a name to purchase a gift, just see

Elizabeth Muthler. Please bring gifts to the church by December 10th and the Sunday School students will deliver them. Gifts are to be wrapped with the name of the person on the box or bag. We adopted them because Ethel Hannah and Lois Peeples are residents there.

We have elected three members to Council. John Alexander, Thom Cipro and Nancy Williamson will be serving a three year term on council. Your council members for 2018 will be: John Alexander, Tim Brosenitsch, Thom Cipro, Linda Flora, Cindy Loveridge, Jeff Miller, Becky Tomei, Mary Albert Tomei and Nancy Williamson. Please give the newly elected members and the Council your support.

Have a very Blessed Christmas,
Marty

REMEMBER OUR SHUT INS

Jake Dietrich, 1335 Route 588, Fombell, PA 16123
Ethel Hannah, Creek Meadows, 1630 Ellwood City Road, Zelenople
Lois Peeples, Creek Meadows, 1630 Ellwood City Road
William and Marliss Loveridge, 220 Walnut Street, Zelenople



All orders must be into the office no later than December 4. Order forms are in the bulletins, or call the office. Cost for a 6 ½" poinsettia is \$8.00. Help us fill the Altar area with a beautiful poinsettia for our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service. Flowers may be taken home after the service.

SOUTHWEST BUTLER COUNTY FOOD CUPBOARD

Phyllis Metz also has a wish list of 15 tags from the Food Cupboard. If you would like to provide a gift for a needy child, please see Phyllis. All gifts are to be at the church by December 10.

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION – 9:00 AM
SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE**



Elizabeth Muthler is our Sunday School superintendent and continues to do a wonderful job with instructing and creating fun activities to help the children learn about the Bible and grow in their faith. The Christian Ed program is important to the life of the church and we welcome any ideas or thoughts you may have on ways to grow our program. Your support and attendance is a blessing. By encouraging your family to attend you will increase our numbers, and more importantly, enrich everyone's experience.

YOUTH SUNDAY

The Sunday school children will lead us in worship on Sunday, December 24. They did a wonderful job on October 29.

The adult Sunday School continues to study the book of James. Please join us on Sunday mornings at 9:00 AM in Strobel Hall for Christian learning and fellowship. New faces are always welcome!

Daily Bible readings for Advent and Christmas

Week 1

Sunday, December 3: Isaiah 64:1-9
Monday, December 4: Psalm 80:1-7
Tuesday, December 5: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Wednesday, December 6: Mark 13:24-37
Thursday, December 7: Psalm 85:8-13
Friday, December 8: Jeremiah 1:4-10
Saturday, December 9: Ezekiel 36:24-28

Week 2

Sunday, December 10: Mark 1:1-8
Monday, December 11: Isaiah 40:1-11
Tuesday, December 12: Psalm 27
Wednesday, December 13: Luke 1:5-17
Thursday, December 14: Habakkuk 2:1-4
Friday, December 15: Philippians 3:12-16
Saturday, December 16: John 1:6-8, 19-28

Week 3

Sunday, December 17: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Monday, December 18: Psalm 126
Tuesday, December 19: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
Wednesday, December 20: Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26
Thursday, December 21: Luke 1:26-38
Friday, December 22: Luke 1:39-45
Saturday, December 23: Luke 1:46-55

Week 4

Sunday, December 24: Luke 2:1-20
Monday, December 25: John 1:1-14
Tuesday, December 26: Psalm 148
Wednesday, December 27: 1 John 1:1-9
Thursday, December 28: Jeremiah 31:15-17
Friday, December 29: Isaiah 49:5-15
Saturday, December 30: Psalm 148

Week 5

Sunday, December 31: Isaiah 61:10-62:3
Monday, January 1: Galatians 4:4-7
Tuesday, January 2: Luke 2:22-40
Wednesday, January 3: Psalm 110
Thursday, January 4: Isaiah 60:1-6
Friday, January 5: Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14
Saturday, January 6: Matthew 2:1-12

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

December 2 – 8:00 Meet at Spring Street Café for breakfast, 9:00 Decorate church.

10:00 to 6:00 ring bell for Salvation Army at Walgreens

December 24 – The youth will lead us in worship.

Join us at 7:00 PM for our Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship service with Holy Communion.

December 31 our Service of Lessons and Carols during our 10:15 Worship service.





Only new prayer requests will be in the weekly bulletins.

CONTINUED PRAYER REQUESTS: Tom Baker, Brad Bartley, Ann Boben, Landon Brewer, Carol Bulger, Nancy Bulger, Samantha Bulger, Nellie Chmara, Kim Christy, Barb Cvetich, Jake Dietrich, Rick Dickerson, Candice Dishman, Don, David English, Mark Fox, Bernie Fedorka, Barbara Frantz, Brett Greenhill, Andrienne Haegg, Cindi Hunter, William Loveridge, Anita Lynch, Bobbie Marchlenski, Nolan Nachriener, Darlene Neibar, Terry Oakes, Verna Patscko, Lois Peeples, Mark Pollack, Jim Rape, Erin Roman, Dawn Swidorsky, Louise Spithaler, George Stout, Dr. Mark Tarter, Bud Weber, David Williamson, Nancy Wilson, Lilly Wolfe, Ruth Wolfe and Ron Zinkham.

Please keep the church updated on your prayer request. All updates and request may be emailed to splcofzelie@gmail.com Also if you would like to be notified of any needed prayers, please email the church office, with your email address.

POP-UP CARD

Share the good news of Jesus' birth with this creative Christmas card.

What you need:

- Construction paper (two pieces, including one white)
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Pens
- Glue stick



What you do:

1. Nearly fold the white paper in half, short side to short side.
2. Draw two parallel lines (at least 2 inches apart) from the fold to about halfway to the edge. Cut along the lines.
3. Fold the cut section back and forth so it pops up.
4. Push the section up so it pops up inside the folded paper. Draw a nativity scene on the pop-up box.
5. Fold the colored paper in half, short side to short side. Place the white paper inside it and glue the white paper down, being careful not to glue the pop-up box.
6. Write a Christmas message and give or send the card to someone.

A holiness invasion



“Advent” means “coming,” of course, and the promise of Advent is that what is coming is an unimaginable invasion. The mythology of our age has to do with flying saucers and invasions from outer space, and that is unimaginable enough. But what is upon us now is even more so – a close encounter not of the third kind but of a different kind altogether. An invasion of holiness. That is what Advent is about.

– Frederick Buechner, *The Clown in the Belfry*

2017

DECEMBER



ASSISTING MINISTER: Bruce Brackbill
LECTOR: John Bulger
USHER: Phyllis Metz
GREETERS: John and Barbara Bulger
BELL RINGER: John Bulger
Office hours: Mon., Wed. Fr. 9:00-12:00 spicofelle@gmail.com www.spice.com 714-451-8832

SUNDAY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9:00 Sunday School 10:15 Worship with Holy Communion							8:00 Meet at Spring Street Cafe for breakfast 9:00 Decorate church 10-6 Ring bell for Salvation Army at Walgreens
9:00 Sunday School 10:15 Worship with Holy Communion	6:00 Council Dinner and Meeting at The Harmony Inn						
9:00 Sunday School 10:15 Worship							
9:00 Sunday School 10:15 Worship with Holy Communion YOUTH SUNDAY 7:00 Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Service							
NO SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:15 Service of Lessons and Carols							



Join us in Worship at our 10:15 Sunday Worship Service.
7:00 for our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
10:15 Service of Lesson and Carols on December 31.