



Leacock Communicator
Leacock Presbyterian Church
687-6619 www.leacockpres.org
Volume 56, Number 10 December 2016–January 2017

Notes from the Manse

“For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from him.”—Psalm 62:5

There are two seasons of the year in which we are called to prepare. In Lent, much of that preparation involves difficult, humbling soul searching, as we examine our need of the grace that came through a cross and out of an empty tomb. But now, we are entering Advent, and there is a different kind of preparation to do. Most every year as we light the Advent candles, we say that Advent means coming. And it does. It refers to the coming 2,000 years ago of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the Word of God made flesh. It refers also to another coming, when Christ will return to finish the work of the healing of the world. We are to prepare for that coming, not with fear, but rather with expectation. This is a season of anticipation, of hope. Many people—and I have been one of them—bemoan the commercialization of Christmas. I mean, come on, Christmas stuff seems to go on sale before Halloween these days. And yet, I don’t know. Recently, when I was traveling back from Ghost Ranch, I met a young woman who told me she got her Christmas decorations out the day after Halloween. When I asked her why, she said she needed something to brighten her days, something to look forward to, and that kind of made sense. All the lights on stores, on homes, the music playing, people seemingly a bit friendlier, a bit kinder, children so eager for that magical morning with all the presents under the tree—it is all about anticipation, about dreams, about hope.


So, let me suggest a few ways to prepare during this season. First, ask yourself for what do you hope? What do you hope for this coming year? And break it down. What do you hope for yourself? Take some time with this. If you knew you couldn’t get everything you might like, what would you hope for the most? Then, go further. What do you hope for your family, for your church, for your community, for the nation, for the world? Again, try to sort out what is in all these areas that you hope for most. Then write your answers down, put them away some place where you can find them, and look at them throughout the year to remind you of your hopes.

But go further. In *Joel*, the prophet says that there will come a time when people will dream dreams. Dreams are more than hopes—they’re bigger. So dare a bit. What do you dream of for all those I listed before? Write your dreams down too. And when you do, remember that dreams need not be empty. Throughout Scripture, God speaks to people, often ordinary people like you and me, through dreams. In our faith, we believe that God is doing a new thing, God is creating new heavens and a new earth, God is renewing creation to be what it was created to be. All this began with the coming of Christ. And all this will be completed when he comes again.

This Advent, then, let us prepare for the Lord who has come and will come again. Let our soul wait for him in silence, listening for the signs even now of his coming. And let us hope, let us dream, for with God all things are possible. As you do, may the words of Paul in *Romans* be true for all of us—“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

Rev. Robert W. Birch

LECTIONARIES TEXTS

<p><u>DECEMBER</u></p> <p>December 4 Second Sunday of Advent Isaiah 11:1–10 Psalm 72:1–7, 18–19 Romans 15:4–13 Matthew 3:1–12</p>	<p>December 11 Third Sunday of Advent Isaiah 35:1–10 Psalm 146:5–10 or Luke 1:46–55 James 5:7–10 Matthew 11:2–11</p>	<p>December 18 Fourth Sunday of Advent Isaiah 7:10–16 Psalm 80:1–7, 17–19 Romans 1:1–7 Matthew 1:18–25</p>
<p>December 24 Nativity of the Lord / Christmas Eve Isaiah 9:2–7 Psalm 96 Titus 2:11–14 Luke 2:1–14 [15–20]</p>	<p>December 25 Christmas Dawn Nativity of the Lord / Christmas Day Isaiah 62:6–12 Psalm 97 Titus 3:4–7 Luke 2:[1–7] 8–20</p> <p>Christmas Day Isaiah 52:7–10 Psalm 98 Hebrews 1:1–4 [5–12] John 1:1–14</p>	
<p><u>JANUARY</u></p> <p>January 1, 2017 1st Sunday after Christmas Day Isaiah 63:7–9 Psalm 148 Hebrews 2:10–18 Matthew 2:13–23</p>	<p>January 6 Epiphany of the Lord Isaiah 60:1–6 Psalm 72:1–7, 10–14 Ephesians 3:1–12 Matthew 2:1–12</p>	<p>January 8 Baptism of the Lord Isaiah 42:1–9 Psalm 29 Acts 10:34–43 Matthew 3:13–17</p>
<p>January 15 2nd Sunday after the Epiphany Isaiah 49:1–7 Psalm 40:1–11 1 Corinthians 1:1–9 John 1:29–42</p>	<p>January 22 3rd Sunday after the Epiphany Isaiah 9:1–4 Psalm 27:1, 4–9 1 Corinthians 1:10–18 Matthew 4:12–23</p>	<p>January 29 4th Sunday after the Epiphany Micah 6:1–8 Psalm 15 1 Corinthians 1:18–31 Matthew 5:1–12</p>



Prayer Families

December 4
Ruth B. Bair

December 11
Ellen E. Barnes

December 18
Kirk & Deborah Barnes

January 1
David & Carol Berkhimer

January 8
William E. Berkhimer

January 15
Shirley Bernard

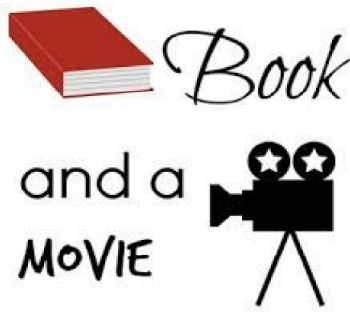
January 22
David & Janet Birch

January 29
Robert & Emily Birch

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Where there is great love there
is always miracles.

Willa Cather



Leacock Book and Movie Group

The Leacock book and movie group met to discuss *The Tent* by Gary Paulsen, which we discovered to be a “highly-discussable” book. Even if you missed the discussion, I encourage everyone to read it — it’s short! You can read it in one sitting — and to think about what faith is and how God works in even the most unsuspecting people’s lives. On Friday Dec. 9, we will gather at 5:30 for a potluck and to watch the movie *Leap of Faith*. If you enjoy good food and Steve Martin, you won’t want to miss it. On Friday, January 13, we will meet to discuss the book *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows. Please don’t be turned off by the horrible title. This is a provocative and well-conceived novel set just after WWII, about the way a group of people on an isolated island protected themselves from the Nazis, and will make for a very good discussion. The book and movie group meets every second Friday at 5:30 p.m., alternating each month between book discussion and pizza and movie potluck. All are welcome to join (reading the book is not a requirement).

Emily Birch, Book and Movie Group
Coordinator

Flowers for the Church



You may purchase flowers for the sanctuary on Sunday December 11 or Sunday January 15 in honor of or in memory of someone or a special occasion. Call the church office at 687-6619.



Leacock Youth Group

The Leacock youth group has been taking a break this fall to accomodate youth schedules. We hope to begin meeting again this winter and will keep you posted.

Emily Birch and Charlene Boas, Youth Group Leaders


Mission Committee

This month's free community meal, as was last month's, will be held on the second Thursday, December 8th, instead of the usual last Thursday. The times are the same as always, from 5:30-6:30 in our Smith Fellowship Hall. Please make a note that our January meal will return to the fourth Thursday as usual, January 26th. Same time and same place. The sign up sheets will be in the Narthex 2 weeks prior to the dated meal, sheets for food donations and sheets to sign up to help prepare, cook, and clean up. Your help and generosity is always greatly appreciated.

December is the month we take our Christmas Joy Offering. This is another chance to celebrate what Christ has given us - both in Himself and in our leaders. Advent season is a time of preparation for and celebration of the wondrous gift of Jesus Christ. Given as our Savior, Christ, also served as an example of how to lead faithful, gracious, and generous lives, an example that plays out every day through our church workers who give their lives to serve the church, an example that students in our Presbyterian-related schools and colleges strive to live into as they chart the course of their futures. 50% of this offering provides financial assistance to individuals and families who have given their lives serving the church: grants to help retired church workers with financial and housing needs; aid to church workers with urgent financial and medical needs. The other 50% goes to help create opportunities for education and leadership growth at Presbyterian schools and colleges: providing assistance for students and future church leaders; equipping leaders for ministry in the Church; supporting important ministries in Presbyterian-related schools and colleges. Special giving envelopes will be placed in the pews for your convenience starting December 4th till January 1st, 2017. As we prepare to celebrate this Advent and Christmas season, let us also celebrate the gift and the example Christ has given us in our church leaders-past, present, and future.

As we look forward to the month of January, please remember that this is the month that we collect the Blanket offering. Many people around the world do not have the privilege of owning a blanket, something most of us take for granted. A single blanket can be used for many things; a pack in which to carry their belongings, shelter, for warmth, and much more. Through Church World Service we are able to help these people obtain their own blanket. The special envelopes will be in the pew on three Sundays in January, January 8th, January 15th, and January 22nd. Please help us make this the biggest blanket drive ever.

Please save the date - February 5th is Super Bowl Sunday! It is also our "Souper Bowl" Sunday. Our youth collect any change (or bills or checks-we're not picky!) that you happen to have as you leave church. This money usually goes to help supplement the Paradise Area Food Bank.

	<p>“Who is Jesus?”</p> <p>Presbyterian Women’s Bible Study group will meet at Arlene Brackbill’s home at 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Thursday, December 8 Lesson - The Book of John</p> <p>Thursday, January 12 Lesson - The Book of Paul</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Please join us.</p>
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Worship Committee Notes

We hope that by the time you read this you have already begun celebrating the Advent/Christmas season by joining your Leacock Family at our new Advent Family Breakfast/Service.

Another new opportunity this year is to gather in the sanctuary at 9:15 for a Christmas Carol Hymn Sing on December 4th and 11th. Requests may be submitted ahead of time by filling out a hymn request slip found on the back shelf at the rear of the sanctuary and placing it in the offering.

We will continue our tradition of the weekly Advent Wreath Litany and our Christmas Eve candle-lighting services. The 7:00 pm Family Service at Paradise will feature the Bell Choir and Nativity Pageant. The 11:00 pm service at Old Leacock will be the Celebration of Lessons and Carols.

As we approach 2017 the Worship Committee is seeking new members to serve along with those already seeking to provide meaningful worship for our congregation. We especially need those who might be willing to help serve on the Decorating Committee. Please contact Karen Homsher or Skip Brackbill if you are interested.

Leacock Thanks You

It is with regret, but much appreciation for their many years of service, that we announce the “retirement” of our Decorating Task Force, Karen Shue and Lois Snader, at the end of this year. Their enhancement of our Narthex, halls, and the Sanctuaries at both Paradise and Old Leacock have added much to our church environment and worship atmosphere. We encourage you to express your personal thanks to them in the coming weeks.



Gratitude Corner (Those Who Go Above and Beyond to Care for their Minister and His Wife)

It's the little things in life, isn't it? We often think those little things go unnoticed, but they rarely do. The Christmas season is upon us, and we'll all soon be making and receiving cookies, but I've discovered that making cookies isn't something I've had to do much since moving to Lancaster County and becoming a member of Leacock. You see, somehow, you Leacockians have figured out that we both have somewhat sweet teeth, and we seem to get cookies quite often, not only at Christmas time, but all year round. This year, we've received our fair share of cookies from one person in particular. It seems all one need do is say to her, "I like cookies," and poof! they magically appear. And are they ever delicious!

So, thank you, thank you, **Barbara Johann** for all the sweet goodies you've provided us this year. We have certainly enjoyed them!

Emily Birch



Stewardship words from Marie Brackbill

According to the October financial reports, with 80% of the year behind us, we have spent 67% of our budgeted amounts. We have received 63% of what we anticipated. The closer we come to meeting our planned budget the more money is placed in the benevolence account. That money that we place there supports local national and international missions to which we've pledged in our budget.

Psalm 24: The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof. The past week, the second week of November, has been full of the Lord's fullness. While it was a week when the media was full of presidential election news, life at Leacock was full of generosity, love, belonging and openness. Reaching out with generosity and openness on the second Thursday evening of the month, some of us came together to serve our community meal while some of us were preparing a meal at The Factory for local youth and their leaders. Together we served a dinner to more than 130 people of all ages. Three days later on Sunday our own members supported one another in our ministry by celebrating our fifty year members, and enjoying learning some little known facts about each other. None of these things would happen without your generous sharing of your monetary resources and your precious amounts of time, to say nothing of what each of you gives of yourself. Thank you all for the generous parts you play in ministry at Leacock. Your presence and your outreach sharing God's love motivates my giving.

The fullness of the Lord surrounds us all the time, may we each be blessed with moments when we experience this fullness and respond in joy, loving generously.

What motivates your giving? If you are willing to tell your story I'd love to listen. And I won't share it without your permission.

Trustee News

The weather has gone south to get the Manse painted this year. We discussed this with the painter and will hold the monies collected until the spring. The cabinets in the kitchen are being worked on slowly. All old latches have been removed and new ones will be put in place. The kitchen is a busy place right now, so we have to try to work between projects. Of course, lights need to be replaced and repaired among other Trustee jobs. The Trustees always seem to be on the job. We do want to wish all a Happy Holiday season and a Merry Christmas. Happy 2017 to all!

David Berkhimer

**Leacock's Christmas Bazaar Saturday,
December 3
8 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

Make plans to eat Breakfast and/or Lunch at Leacock's Cafe while you shop for Christmas treasures, special gifts, craft articles, jewelry, and goodies (including our famous Leacock Peanut Butter Bonbons)!



**CAROLING TIME
Sunday, December 18, 2016**

After church service, we will meet in the fellowship hall. A light lunch will be served and then we will car pool to visit our at home members, spreading Christmas cheer by singing carols and delivering some Christmas cookies. Please plan to join us. Christmas carols sound so much better with more voices. Thank you from CCL Committee, Merry Christmas!

BLOOD DRIVE SCHEDULE DECEMBER 2016

Lancaster General Hospital has scheduled community blood drives throughout the year at the following locations. Won't you consider giving blood - every pint is very important!

Date

Tuesday, December 6
Tuesday, December 20
Thursday, December 22
Thursday, December 29

Place and Time

Downtown Outpatient Pavilion - 2:00pm
Intercourse Fire Company - 2:00pm
Lancaster General Hospital - 2:00pm
Kinzer Fire Company - 2:00pm

The Lancaster General Suburban Outpatient Pavilion (Health Campus) Blood Drive is located in Building 2104, Suite 202. The hours on Monday are 10 am -7:30 pm, Tuesday and Thursday 8am to 4pm, Wednesday and Friday 8:00 am to 6 pm,. For more information call 544-0170. For January's schedule please call or visit lancastergeneralhealth.org/LGH/Our-Services.

**2016 Nominating Committee
Presents Slate of Officers to Begin Serving in 2017**

<p>Trustees Class of 2019</p> <p>Charles Ankney (Chuck) Keo Phongxaysanith Michael Ruhl</p>	<p>Currently serving: Class of 2017</p> <p>David Berkhimer Craig Keenan Danielle Short</p>	<p>Class of 2018</p> <p>David Homsher Eric Hughes Michael Ruhl</p>
<p>Deacons Class of 2019</p> <p>Carol Berkhimer Katherine Boas Gwen Hess Dorothy Hall</p>	<p>Currently serving: Class of 2017</p> <p>Maureen Carney Tracy Dippner Johanna Gingher Barbara Hostetter</p>	<p>Class of 2018</p> <p>Esta Fisher Jennifer McElhany Edwin Margerum Sharon Williams</p>
<p>Elders Class of 2018</p> <p>Charlene Boas Marie Brackbill Linda Erikson Lois Eshleman Margaret Hershey Alba Ruhl</p>	<p>Currently Serving: Class of 2017</p> <p>Christian Brackbill Mary Alice High Edward Johann Tom Burkins Karen Homsher Bonnie Rice</p>	

Committee: Mary Alice High, Kathy Ankney, Carol Berkhimer, Emily Birch, Danielle Short

USHERS

Ed Margerum Head Usher

December 4	Keo Phongxaysanith & Jennifer McElhaney
December 11	Keo Phongxaysanith & Jennifer McElhaney
December 18	Art Meyers & David Homsher
December 25	Art Meyers & David Homsher
January 1	Craig Keenan & Ed Johann
January 8	Craig Keenan & Ed Johann
January 15	Shirley Smith & Lori Smith
January 22	Shirley Smith & Lori Smith
January 29	Shirley Smith & Lori Smith

NURSERY

December 4	Mary Alice High & Craig Keenan
December 11	Michele & Sara Lichty
December 18	Steve & Charlene Boas
December 25	Christmas Service: No Nursery
January 1	Lori & Shirley Smith
January 8	Bob & Margy Hershey
January 15	Marie Brackbill & David Homsher
January 22	Debbie & Dick Sindall
January 29	Katherine Boas & Valerie Ruhl

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER & HELPER

December 4	Carol Shearer & Marie Brackbill
December 11	Kathy & Chuck Ankney
December 18	Maureen & Sean Carney
December 25	No Sunday School - Christmas Break
January 1	No Sunday School - Christmas Break
January 8	Kathy & Chuck Ankney
January 15	Johanna Gingher & Alba Ruhl
January 22	Johanna Gingher & Alba Ruhl
January 29	Jennifer McElhaney & Shirley Smith

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DECEMBER - JANUARY

Articles for the February
Newsletter will be due
Sunday, January 22

THE LEACOCK COMMUNICATOR
Sandy Schoettle, Editor