



Leacock Communicator

Leacock Presbyterian Church

www.leacockpres.org

717-687-6619

Volume 67, Number 7 December 2025/January 2026

A WORD FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Followers of the Way and Friends,

Thanks to an abundant show of volunteers, the sanctuary is now beautifully decorated for the Advent and Christmas Seasons. The recent Community Meals and supporting the bereaved have brought abundant blessings. Bon bon making and participating in The Factory Ministries Open House and Community Christmas Tree Lighting have gone well.

Advent began early this year on November 30th. The four Sundays before Christmas conclude December 24th.

To-do-lists and shopping aside, the lighting of the Advent Candles each week in worship mark our journey through a season of preparation and reflection.

Advent is all about anticipation.



The dominant color purple is a symbol of penance. It highlights the humble waiting we do as Christmas approaches. It's a time our scriptures and hymns focus on both the first coming and the anticipated second coming of the Christ.

In some church traditions bright blue is the color of choice, emphasizing with awe and wonder the royalty of the coming Christ Child. Rather than the traditional colors of red and green in the wider culture, gold and white also best signify the divinity and royalty of the holy birth.

It is a miraculous, mysterious, unpretentious birth which created both wonder and worry to the early observers. For some, it creates adoration and rejoicing for the fulfillment of long-awaited promises. For others, creating threat and worry, resulting in the horrific loss of young life and travail in the land.

It's a birth which transformed and continues to transform history, the world, and all that is known and unknown.

In the depth of humble and utter poverty arrived the wealth of God's grace, mercy and love bringing hope, peace, and joy.

Donna Schaper, interim Pastor of the United Church of Christ, Gainesville, Florida writes in the "Daily Devotional," Advent is a paradigm shift. It is the child threatening to become God. It is a breakthrough. It is a rupture of the amniotic sac to stimulate birth. It is a mess. When things are this hard, as they usually are and as they were long before us, something is trying to get born. These are labor pains.

You might even call Advent a "Mess Age."

Imagine a bottle of red wine that breaks on white carpet. We may clean up the mess, but there may still be stains. I once saw this happen at a pastors' holiday gathering in a home where a glass of red wine spilled on the top of a white couch. The host quickly grabbed paper towels and with a glass of white wine poured on top of the red. The red stained disappeared immediately. Imagine the same with the Christ, symbolized by white poured on the red stains of the mess of our lives and world. It's all taken away.

Likewise, the bread breaks. We relate completely with the broken, for we, too, are broken. Broken open, so that Godliness and the Christ can be brought in, restoring even us to the holiness and reverence with which we were created.

When it comes to the mess, it is a MESS-age.

P.S. Dianne and I subscribe to this devotional...it's free. Here's the link:

<https://www.ucc.org/daily-devotional/>

Christmas then arrives as a season of twelve days as the popular Christmas song declares.



It might seem unbelievable given that the "Christmas creep" now begins before Halloween, or earlier, as I pointed out in a previous sermon seeing Christmas decorations displayed at JC Pennies in September right after Labor Day.

But the true Christmas season actually starts Christmas Day, with December 25 marking the official start of the 12 Days of Christmas concluding January 5. For many, the days following Christmas are business-as-usual, returning of unwanted gifts, more shopping madness, and taking down the Christmas decorations. Maybe also eating and drinking too much as New Years Eve and Day approach. As Christian believers, the 12 days of Christmas mark the span between the birth of Christ and the coming of the Magi, the three Wise Men, when Jesus was a child (not as a baby in a manger).



This year the Season of Epiphany begins Tuesday, January 6th during which we celebrate the "making known" of Jesus's divinity to the world, beyond the Magi's visit, highlighting Jesus's baptism, visit to the Temple at the age of twelve and the Transfiguration, marking Jesus as God's Son for all people, moving from the white/gold of revelation to green of spiritual growth in ordinary time, and emphasizing the mission to share God's light.

So, have a Blest Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany keeping faith and witness alive for those things that truly matter.

In peace and joy,
Jim

Our Mission Statement

**“Building on our heritage, led by the Spirit, committed to Christ,
we welcome our neighbors to share in this family of God.”**



December Lectionary



<p>December 7 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 14 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>Sunday, December 21 Fourth Sunday of Advent Isaiah 7:10–16 Psalm 80:1–7, 17–19 Romans 1:1–7 Matthew 1:18–25</p>
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<p>Wednesday, 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>Thursday, December 25 Christmas Day Isaiah 52:7–10 Psalm 98 Hebrews 1:1–4 [5–12] John 1:1–14</p>	<p>December 28 First Sunday of Christmas Isaiah 63:7–9 Psalm 148 Hebrews 2:10–18 Matthew 2:13–23</p>
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January 2026 Lectionary

<p>January 4 Second Sunday after Christmas Jeremiah 31:7–14 or Sirach 24:1–12 Psalm 147:12–20 or Wisdom of Solomon 10:15–21 Ephesians 1:3–14 John 1:(1–9), 10–18</p>	<p>January 11 Baptism of the Lord Isaiah 42:1–9 Psalm 29 Acts 10:34–43 Matthew 3:13–17</p>	<p>January 18 Second Sunday after the Epiphany Isaiah 49:1–7 Psalm 40:1–11 1 Corinthians 1:1–9 John 1:29–42</p>
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January 25
Third Sunday after the Epiphany
 Isaiah 9:1–4
 Psalm 27:1, 4–9
 1 Corinthians 1:10–18
 Matthew 4:12–23



December Prayer Families

December 7
Michael, Kelly, Owen
& Nora Hartmann

December 14
Bob & Margy Hershey

December 21
Geraldine Hess

December 28
Gwen Hess

January Prayer Families

January 4
Mary Alice High

January 11
David & Karen Homsher

January 18
Milton Hostetter

January 26
Janet Huffman



To the Leacock Presbyterian
Congregation,

I wish to extend my gratitude
for all the thoughtful cards,
messages, and the shawl from
the Deacons in the passing of
Kirk.

It is heartwarming to feel the
love over the miles.

In God's love,
Deb Beane

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We would like to thank
everyone for their thoughts and
prayers. Special Thank You to
the Deacons and Prayer Shawl
Ministry fo the beautiful prayer
shawl. It's so very comforting!

George & Karen

Worship Committee

With the Winter Solstice come
shorter days, longer nights, and
the possibility of adverse
weather conditions. We always
want you to be safe and
strongly urge no travel on icy,
snowy Sunday mornings.

The following Session policy
was adopted several years ago:

When unsafe conditions exist,
Sunday morning worship will be
cancelled. The decision to
close will be made by the
available members from the
following: Pastor, Clerk of
Session, Trustee President.
The decision will be
communicated by 7:00 a.m. to
mass media, the church
website, and the church
answering machine.

Additionally, the pastor will
send a group email if services
are canceled.

Annual Meeting

Looking ahead to February, the
Session calls for the Annual
Meeting of the Congregation
Sunday February 15 following
worship for the purpose of
receiving Annual Reports,
electing two members-at-large
to the 2026 Nominating
Committee, and conducting any
other pertinent business.



Advent and Christmas at Leacock

December 7

8:30 am - Potluck Breakfast

9:30 am - Worship and Carol Sing

December 14

9:30 am Worship with Bell Choir

December 21

Christmas Sunday

9:30 Worship

Sacrament of Holy Communion

December 24

**7:00 pm - Christmas Eve
Family Service in Paradise
Candlelighting**

11:00 pm

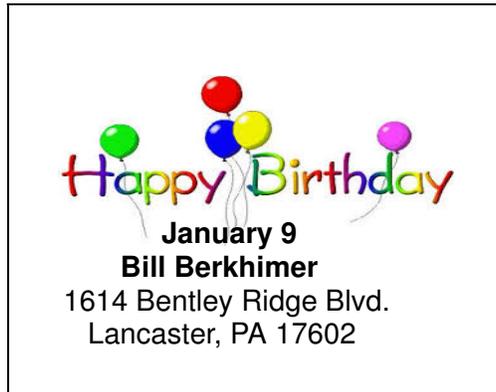
Old Leacock

**Lessons and Carols
Candlelighting**

December 28

Worship 9:30 am

Deacons



Remember our At-home members this Christmas. There are updated lists are at the back of the sanctuary.

The Deacons are grateful to all those who so generously purchased altar flowers throughout this past year. The flowers continue to bless those who receive them, and it allows more of our Deacon budget to be available for other causes. The Deacons would also like to thank all those who have gone above and beyond to help us serve memorial luncheons throughout this last year. Your support has been so helpful.

Poinsettias: If you ordered poinsettias you may take them after worship on Sunday, December 21. If possible, please leave them until after the Christmas Eve service.

<p><u>Prayer Shawl Meeting dates :</u> December 15th, January 5th and 19th.</p>	The logo for Prayer Shawl Ministry features a red shawl draped over a white cross, with a ball of red yarn below it. The text "Prayer Shawl Ministry" is written to the right of the cross.
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The Deacons will meet after worship on January 18th.

If interested in joining a variety game time, call Elaine Gouba, 717-445-5802 and leave a message.

Mission Committee

Our next free **Community Meal** is scheduled for the second Thursday of December which is **December 11, 2025**. The time has not changed. It is still 5:30-6:30 PM in our handicapped accessible Smith Fellowship Hall. The meal will be our Christmas Dinner consisting of Baked Ham, Scalloped Potatoes, Green Beans, Applesauce, Dinner Rolls and homemade desserts. Everyone is welcome to join us. The sign up sheets are in the Narthex for food donations, volunteers to help set up, cook, serve, and clean up. What a wonderful way to start the Christmas Season!



December is also the month of our **Christmas Joy Offering** which we will be collecting anytime all month long. 50% of our gifts help current and retired church workers and their families in their time of need. The other 50% goes to prepare students to learn and grow in faith at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. There are envelopes marked "Christmas Joy Offering" in the pews. Just fill the envelope as you feel you can and return it to the office or offering plate by December 31st.

Our January **Community Meal** will be held on **Thursday, January 22, 2026** (back to the 4th Thursday) from 5:30-6:30 PM in our handicapped accessible Smith Fellowship Hall. The menu to be announced later.

January is the month for our **Blanket Offering**. This will be collected from January 11-January 25th. Envelopes will be in the pews at that time for your use. Church World Service sponsors this offering. It helps to provide warmth, comfort, and hope to neighbors near and far. It is a tangible reminder to migrant families that they are not alone as they seek safety. It wraps refugees in warmth as they arrive here in the United States to try to build a new future. And it provides comfort to our neighbors who have lost homes or are struggling in the face of extreme challenges.

Also keep in mind that our "Souper Bowl Sunday" will be February 8th. So remember to bring extra money and nonperishable food to contribute. (more about that later)

Thank you for all your help,
The Mission Committee

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Permit #951
Lancaster, PA



December 2025/January 2026 Newsletter

Articles for the February Newsletter
Will be due Friday January 23, 2026
The Leacock Communicator

THE LEACOCK COMMUNICATOR
Sandy Schoettle, Editor