STONE CHURCH NEWS

DECEMBER 2018

From the Pastor's Desk

HAPPY NEW YEAR! Now, I know what you're thinking: "Poor, Pastor Ben... He's so sleep deprived raising those boys that he doesn't even know what month it is." And while that is always a very real possibility in the Lattimer household, this time - I think - I know what I'm talking about. We follow lots of calendars. The school year for many, the fiscal year for those in finance, and of course the calendar year. We celebrate the beginning of a new year of life each year on our birthdays.

In the church we have our own calendar. We build it into our rhythms of life and worship together. It's the way we live out the story of the Gospel throughout the year. And the church calendar begins here. With Advent. This season of waiting expectantly - with hope - for the Christ child. The year will continue on after "the 12 days of Christmas" into the season of Epiphany when we remember the stories revealing who God is to the world. Then Lent begins with Ash Wednesday - when we look at ourselves and our own mortality, and at the grace and mercy of God as we journey alongside Jesus to the cross. At the end of Lent there is Holy Week - Palm Sunday, Love Feast on Maundy Thursday, and the celebration of the empty tomb on Easter. After that is the Easter season of resurrection stories, followed by the summer of "ordinary time." The year builds to Christ the King Sunday - the New Year's Eve of the church calendar, when the story of Jesus has come full circle and we look to the return of the Shepherd King.

We live out the story together over the course of the year. But it all *begins* right here with Advent. I love this time of year. When we light candles each week - lights shining in the darkness. Candles for *Hope*, *Peace*, *Joy*, and *Love*. This year, different groups from within the church will light each of the advent candles, talking about what that piece of the Advent season looks like to them. The Youth Group will light the candle of *Hope*, sharing what hope looks like to them in this world. The Witness Team will light the candle of *Peace*. The children will teach us about *Joy*. And the Deacons will share about *Love*.

Our theme for this year's Advent Season is *All Creation Waits*. We'll look at the ways that all creation - from Bible characters, to woodland creatures, to we ourselves - have waited and continue to wait expectantly in this season for the work God is doing.

The season is full. There is the Annual Christmas Gifts Bazaar on December 1st. Gifts for the children on Sunday, the 2nd. Our annual pageant and Christmas cookies on the 9th. Dave Witkovsky preaches on December 16th before moving out of the area. The *Longest Night Service*, on Friday the 21st. Cookies and Carols on December 23rd. And, of course, our Christmas Eve Candle-lighting service on December 24th. The season is full. You can find details on all these events in the pages that follow. We hope that you will live this season of expectant waiting alongside us - as we begin a New Year together - celebrating "the good news of great joy for all people, the birth of a savior, Christ, the Lord."

Friday, the 21st — Longest Night Service



The Holiday Season is certainly one of hope and joy - but for many it can also be a time of sadness, pain, and loneliness. Many of us miss loved ones, have worries about the future, experience painful conflict in our families, or simply develop the winter blues. Sometimes we are left searching for healing

Service is a time of worship aimed at creating that space to acknowledge that there is often darkness and hurt at this time of year, mixed in with the hope and joy. It is a time where we recognize that we need God to come among us - we need God to be Emmanuel, God with us - in our fear, loneliness and pain, as well as in our celebration. On **Friday, December 21st** - the longest night of the year - at **7pm** we will gather in the Sanctuary as a community of faith for a *Longest Night Service*. All are welcome. The service will be simple in format, allowing for prayer, reflection, and singing. We will gather in the evening darkness, trusting that with the advent of Emmanuel, light can truly shine into all of our lives.

Sunday, the 23rd — Christmas Caroling and Cookie Baking



Do you like cookies? (Be honest. The answer is yes.) Do you like Christmas carols? (Again, yes.) Then have I got a pair of opportunities for you! During the Sunday School hour on **December 23rd** (from 9:30 - 10:30am) join us downstairs in the Fellowship Hall. Together - kids and adults

of all ages - will bake and decorate Christmas cookies! Then after church we spread the Christmas cheer, bringing Christmas carols - and Christmas cookies - to members of our church community.

Tuesday, the 24th — Christmas Eve, at 7pm



It was 200 years ago this Christmas Eve that Joseph Mohr, pastor of a church in an Austrian village, walked to the house of his friend Franz Gruber bearing a poem he had written. The church organ was out and he desperately wanted some music for the evening's service that could be accompanied by guitar.

That afternoon, Gruber composed the melody to what has become one of our most beloved songs of the Christmas season, *Stille Nacht... Silent Night.* On this 200th anniversary we invite you to join us as we celebrate together - with story, song, and candlelight - the birth of that "holy infant... sleeping in heavenly peace."

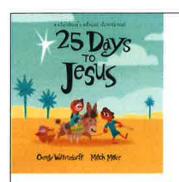


Time Sensitive Budget Update!

So far we have received 69 pledges for the 2019 year totaling \$229,148. This represents a significant shortfall as compared to last year, when we had 71

pledges totaling \$251,211. Our budget for the 2019 year will use projected revenue from pledges to determine the resources available for our shared mission and vision. If you have not pledged yet and feel called to do so, pledge cards are available at the church office and in the back of the sanctuary. You can also pledge online at the following link:

http://www.huntingdonstonechurch.org/pledge.html



25 Days to Jesus

During worship on **Sunday, December 2nd,** we will be giving a gift to families with young children during the children's time, on behalf of the Christian Ed team. It's a book to help us engage the story of Christmas more fully during Advent called *25 Days to Jesus*. We know that schedules vary, but we hope that we can give the book to your children in person. If not, we'll want you to

have it as quickly as possible afterward so you don't have to catch up on too many of the 25 day countdown! The illustrations are wonderful and the text is very kid-friendly, yet meaningful and thoughtful. A new tradition for us as we wait expectantly together for Emmanuel.





Join us in worship on **December 9**th as we tell the story of the first Christmas, based on the book "Mary's First Christmas" by Walter Wangerin, Jr. There will be songs, both familiar and new, and people of

all ages will help us relive that long ago night. And.... There will be a special visit from the Holy Family!



Then, join us following the service come downstairs to Fellowship Hall to enjoy some Christmas cookies and wish the best to our Juniata students as they begin finals week.

BE THE RAINBOW you wish to see in the world!



It's all about optimism. Whether our concerns regard war, environmental destruction or poverty, every solution requires OPTIMISM.

And nowhere do we find greater optimism than with our YOUTH.
Their enthusiasm is SO STRONG and their hopes are SO GREAT that
our Stone Church Llamacats have chosen to

FILL THE ARK with *Heifer International* this year.

Yup! You read right! We're going to try to fill an ark with cows, sheep, oxen, water buffalo, pigs, beehives, goats, ducks, rabbits, guinea pigs, geese, chicks, llamas, fish and a Community Animal Vet Kit, and we'll need \$5000 to do it.

In December we'll launch our campaign to Fill the Ark, and we'll be looking for "Ark Angels" to help us. As you prayerfully consider your Christmas giving, perhaps you'll include a contribution to our Ark of Hope, and **Be the Rainbow** you wish to see in the world.

Heifer International has provided more than 32 million families the tools and training to lift themselves from poverty. They work with communities to strengthen local economies. Their values-based, holistic and community development approach focuses on increase in income & assets; food, security & nutrition; and environment.

Fill the Ark is a missions giving program that offers real-life solutions to world hunger and poverty and illustrates how one person, one family and one congregation can make a difference in today's world.

ell the last

"With us in spirit..



This is a list of those members of our church family who, though they are not often physically able to join us in worship, remain with us in spirit. Remember them in your prayers. Cards and visits are always appreciated. Contact the church office (814-643-3390 or stonechurch@verizon.net) to add others you know.

DeLois Fluke

11325 Raystown Rd.

Huntingdon, PA 16652

Bill and Sue Martin

Westminster Woods

Floyd McDowell

Olney Assisted Living

16940 Georgia Ave.

Olney, MD 20832

Jean Prendergrast Yvonne McKensie 930 Mifflin St. Denny Rock Huntingdon, PA 16652

<u>Arista Care</u> (814-643-4210)

Thelma Wallace
5754 Wallace Dr.
Huntingdon, PA 16652
Huntingdon, PA 16652

Thelma Wallace
1229 Warm Springs Ave, Huntingdon 16652
Howard Crouch – Room 265
Orpha Hearn – Room 251



Enjoy fun and fellowship while serving our neighbors!

Every Thursday folks in Huntingdon are invited to come together for a community meal at the Huntingdon Presbyterian Church at 6:00 p.m. The meal is delicious, and the spirit in the dining room is jovial. Church groups and community organizations volunteer for the preparations and clean up and often find themselves connecting with folks from many walks of life.

On Thursday, October 25, 2018 twenty-seven volunteers—members and friends of Stone Church—prepared a meal for about 100 guests. The preparations began with announcements, phone calls, emails and shopping during the two weeks before the meal. The day before the meal volunteers met at the Huntingdon Presbyterian Church kitchen for several hours to engage in the first shift of cooking. On Thursday volunteers arrived at the same kitchen at noon, ready for preparing barbequed chicken, homemade coleslaw, roasted cabbage, potatoes, carrots and ham, homemade sweet rolls and homemade applesauce. When all of that was ready, the homemade desserts began to arrive. At 6:00 p.m. all guests and volunteers joined together in prayer and\ gratitude. The dining room at the Presbyterian church was full of chatter while volunteers took time to enjoy the meal as well and get ready for the two hours of clean up before everyone returns to their homes for the evening.

"Many thanks" go to the 27 volunteers who cheerfully contributed to preparing, serving and cleaning up after our meal at the Community Soup Kitchen on Thursday, October 25, 2018 -- Shelby Anders, Brandon Beck, Katherine Beck, Doris Comerford, Daisy Decker, Jeff Decker, Lorrie Devor, Mike Dick, Sue Docherty, Eric Fisher, Marissa Foster, Mary Garvey, Pam Grugan, Maxine Hammer, Erica Johns, Kristin Joivell, Harriet Kaylor, Joe Krabill, Terri Krabill, Myrna Landrum, Bob Laney, Sue Laney, Barb Purdy, Rose Rahman, Brett Sims, Louise Smith, Sharon Yohn

Quilters & Needlepointers



Are there any quilters or needlepointers out there? Camp Blue Diamond needs you!! Every five years, a District quilt is auctioned off at Heritage Fair, and the goal is to include a patch from each of the 55 congregations in the Middle PA District. Are you willing to create a 9" X 9" design on a provided 10" X 10" square that represents Stone Church?!! If so, please

contact Brooke Meadows soon at 814-215-5513 or <u>mama.meadows@gmail.com</u>). The deadline to complete our patch is March 1st, 2019.



"A SERMON TO LOVE"



"Tonight I want to tell you the story of an empty stocking.

Once upon a midnight clear, there was a child's cry, a blazing star hung over a stable, and wise men came with birthday gifts. We haven't forgotten that night down the centuries. We celebrate it with stars on Christmas trees, with the sound of bells, and with gifts.

Especially with gifts! You give me a book, I give you a tie. Aunt Martha has always wanted an orange squeezer and Uncle Henry can do with a new pipe. For we forget nobody, adult or child. All the stockings are filled, all that is, except one. And we have even forgotten to hang it up. The stocking for the child born in a manger. It's his birthday we're celebrating. Don't let us ever forget that!

Let us ask ourselves what He would wish for most. And then, let each put in his share - loving kindness, warm hearts, and a stretched out hand of tolerance. All the shining gifts that create peace on earth.

This sermon, written by famed playwright Robert E. Sherwood for the 1947 film "The Bishop's Wife," would preach very well today, a hostile world in need of a simple message on the birth of Jesus.

--- Eugene R. Goshorn ---

This Christmas we want to give you a gift!

The Leadership Team has approved a recommendation by the Witness Team to provide a subscription to Messenger to active friends of the congregation. Keep your eyes peeled for an e-mail from the church inviting you to sign up for a subscription to *Messenger* for 2019 at no cost to you!



Miguel Angel Asturias Academy | A Fair Start

November 24, 2018

As we near the twentieth anniversary in January of our partnership with the Asturias Academy, I am writing to say *un millón de gracias* for your support of the school and to ask that you make as generous a financial contribution as you can so our Guatemalan partners can continue to offer the gift of an empowering education to some very deserving children. Despite the ongoing challenges they face, 2018 was another very successful year. Listed below are some of the highlights:

- 220 students attended this year, with an even gender split of 110 males and females
- All but one student of the 220 successfully completed their grade
- With the support of Librarians Without Borders, the school continues to expand its library collection and services, and this school year students read an average of more than 25 books
- The school now has small medical and dental clinics, staffed by daughters Laura and Paty Chojolán, that provide free exams and this year treated an average of three students a day in the case of the medical clinic and two patients per week in the dental clinic
- The school's new technical institute in San Juan la Laguna had its first cohort of 22 participants (14 women and 8 men) complete its six-month Leadership Training certificate program in July, and the second group of 25 (15 women and 10 men) will finish its program in December
- This summer's educational and medical delegations included a total of 32 participants. The medical delegation saw more than 750 patients during the 4 days of health clinics, 2.5 at the school and 1.5 in the community library of San Juan la Laguna. Educational delegation members taught classes in English, science, music, pre-school stories on the month's topic of health, designed, built and installed an aquaponics system, and repainted the mural in the patio.

The Global Education Fund has committed \$15,000 per year for the first three years of the new technical school in San Juan. Jorge Chojolán is in the process of applying for approval from the Ministry of Health to create a Rural Health Promoters program, which will open in February of 2019 if approved. The staff is also currently conducting interviews to hire four new teachers for the coming school year: two new elementary teachers, and two secondary teachers. The loss of one of the teachers, Profe Dany, is very bittersweet. He has been a model teacher at the school for nearly fifteen years, but after years of bureaucratic hurdles, he has completed his law degree and we wish him the best and thank him for his distinguished service as he starts his career as a lawyer.

Nearly 90% of our partner school's students come from low-income families, and without scholarship assistance, they would be unable to experience the transformative education offered at the school. Tuition payments cover less than half of the \$120,000 annual operating budget, which is to say, all the operating expenses of a pre-K through grade 11 education for over 200 students. That is only about \$50 a month to pay all the educational expenses for each student at the school!

In order to continue empowering Guatemalan youth to break the cycle of poverty and to build a more just and inclusive society, the Asturias Academy needs our support. As you consider year-end charitable contributions, remember that your gift will bear extraordinary fruits. How many organizations can say that virtually 100% of donations go directly to program expenses? For only \$50 per month, under \$2 a day, you can provide a deserving child a full scholarship that covers tuition, all necessary school supplies, and a school uniform. A half scholarship costs less than \$1 per day, but any amount you can contribute will go a long way to help our partners accomplish their worthy mission.

The Guatemala Circle will once again participate in Stone Church's Alternative Christmas Gifts Bazaar on Saturday, December 1st. We will have a table there for alternative gift shoppers who wish to purchase scholarship gift cards to give a loved one for Christmas or to provide financial support for other needs at the school.



Miguel Angel Asturias Academy | A Fair Start

Included below is the necessary information if you would prefer to mail your contribution, or Huntingdon residents can drop off the completed form with your check at the Stone Church office or bring it to the Alternative Christmas Gifts Bazaar. The school's priorities for the coming year continue to be student scholarships, funds to build an endowment and improve teachers' salaries, undesignated funds to meet general operating expenses and occasional unexpected, urgent needs, as well as the resources to support the new technical school.

On behalf of our friends at the Asturias Academy, *muchisimas gracias* for any support you can offer to make possible the transformative and empowering gift of education for Guatemalan children and youth.

Best wishes for a joyous holiday season,

Henry Thurston-Griswold

Coordinator, Ston	ne Church of the Brethren Guatemala Circle
P.S. Remember t	hat 100 % of your <u>tax-deductible</u> contribution goes directly to the Asturias Academy.
Donor's Name:	
Address:	
Telephone:	Email:
	Full Academy Scholarship (\$600)
	Half Academy Scholarship (\$300)
	*_ ·
	Teachers' Compensation (\$ /mth)
	General Operating Budget (\$ /mth)
-	New Technical Institute Startup Expenses
=====	Other (please indicate the purpose for which you wish to designate your gift:
+	Other (please marcate the purpose for which you wish to designate your gift.
Payment Plan: _	monthly quarterly semi-annuallyannually

**Please mail completed form to Stone Church of the Brethren, 1623 Moore St. Huntingdon, PA 16652
Checks should be made payable to Stone Church of the Brethren,
with Guatemala Partnership on the memo line.
For additional information, contact Henry Thurston-Griswold (thurston@juniata.edu).



Summer Camp 2019

It's never too early to start dreaming about summer camp! The schedule (including a new Cooking Camp for 5th and 6th graders) was published in last month's newsletter, on the Church bulletin board, and online at www.campbluediamond.org. In case you're looking to make vacation plans

or decide in advance which camp will fit into your schedule best, take a look. Online registration begins January 7, brochures will be mailed by January 10, and Early Bird Discounts are available until February 28.

Hiring Summer Staff--Apply Now!

Applications for 2019 positions are now available at www.campbluediamond.org. Interviews and hiring will begin in January, with preference given to those who apply by February 15. For those who love CBD and enjoy working with kids, nothing is better than working at Camp (and getting paid to do it)! Counselors, tower director, maintenance, lifeguards, naturalist and crafts' director are needed. Applicants must be at least 18 (maintenance 16), committed Christians, enjoy kids, and be able to live in harmony with others. Staff members grow in faith as well as leadership and communication skills. For those interested in teaching, ministry, social work or just being a parent someday, it's terrific on the job training! Pay is \$185 - \$235/week, depending on the job and experience. Room & board provided. Summer camp runs June 6 – July 27.

Youth Retreat – One, Though Many: Being the Body of Christ Despite Differences

All youth in grades 9-12 are invited to kick off the year right by coming to the Youth Retreat on January 11-13, 2019! Join Camp Blue Diamond and the Middle PA District as we welcome Tyler Goss. Tyler has been a part of National Youth Conference and the Youth Peace Travel Team. Together, we will explore how we are the body of Christ and what that means for how we interact with one another and the world around us. Come for this awesome weekend full of games, singing, crafts, karaoke, friends, sledding/tubing and much more! Cost is \$70 if you register by December 31, or \$80 after that. *More info on the church bulletin board and at www.campbluediamond.org.*

Jr. High Retreat – February 8-10, 2019

Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth graders are invited to Camp Blue Diamond's Jr. High Winter Retreat in February. Our guest speaker will be summer counselor David Fehr, who is a seminary student at Lancaster Theological Seminary. Flyers will be mailed in mid-December. In addition to David, Brian and Amanda will be there, plus your favorite summer camp counselors. There will be lots of music, great food, games, crafts and winter fun like sledding and tubing! Be sure to save the date!

Upcoming Events

Opcoming Events	
Youth Retreat for grades 9-12	January 11-13
Jr. High Retreat for grades 6-8	February 8-10
Jr. Retreat	March 1-2
Annual Dinners	March 22-23
Father/Son Retreat	April 12-13
Quilt & Craft Camp	April 26-28
National Young Adult Conf. at CBD	May 24-26
Senior Adult Day	May 31
Hoss's Fundraiser	June 9
Heritage Fair	September 21



Have questions?

Contact your Camp Representative, David Meadows, at 814-599-6017 or meadowd@juniata.edu.

December Birthdays

5—Mario Grugan 15—Terry Murray 20—Meredith Widman 17—Jerriann Heiser Wenger 21-Aislin Wright 6-Bill Martin 17—Geoff Clarke 22—Terri Krabill 7—Kendan Beck 24—Brenda Quarry 17—Jeff Closz 8—Virginia Biber 24—Sally Stewart 18—Emily Elder 9—Zilla Wagner 26-Nora Roth 9—Dennis Plane 18—Joanna White 9—Shepherd Miller 18-Max Hosler 28—Olivia Grugan 30-Cora Dickey 11—Alex Gibboney 19—Martin Berger

December Anniversaries

3—Barb & Max Moyer 6—Betty & David Quarry

14-Rick Laabs

31—Tinka & Henrik Berger



Food Pantry for December

We will ask the children to collect your items as they come forward for our young peoples time on Sunday, December 16th. The December item for the Huntingdon Food Pantry is **SOUP**, but any items may be brought for the cause of helping alleviate hunger in our community. Donations at other

times may be placed in the wagon outside the sanctuary doors by the organ. **IN NOVEMBER**, the item was Hand Soap and 84 bars and 10 bottles of soap, along with 6 jars peanut butter, 6 cans soup, 5 sauces, 1 large applesauce, 3 bags peas, 1 coffee, 1 tea, 1 jar jelly, 4 boxes mac-n-cheese, 2 cereal, a few miscellaneous items, and \$187 in cash were donated to this local ministry during the third Sunday monthly offering!!



Grocery Gift Cards— Every card helps our church!

Is a grocery gift card a possible gift idea for someone on your list? Purchase a Stone Church Grocery Gift Card on Sundays at the back of the sanctuary or in the church office. Coordinated by Barb Purdy and Cheryl Ritchey.

Use them for your holiday grocery shopping!!

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Stone Church of the Brethren

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Huntingdon, PA 16652
www.huntingdonstonechurch.org
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STONE CHURCH NEWS

December 2018



Dec 1st 9am-2pm —Alternative Christmas Gift Bazaar

- Gifts with a local and global impact
- Tea, coffee and cocoa all day, free and fair trade!
- Homemade soup and bread

Dec. 2nd — Advent begins!

• Event details inside!



Budget update – page 3

