



Leacock Communicator

Leacock Presbyterian Church

717-687-6619

www.leacockpres.org

Volume 65, Number 9 December 2024/January 2025



ADVENT means “coming.”

It's both the anticipation of who's coming and what's to come. Within the Christian faith, the season focuses especially on the second coming of Christ, even as we affirm there can only be a second coming because there was a first one.

We wonder, too, what is coming next for our communities, our nation, the nations of the world, and our planet. In the complexity of it all, there is plenty to dishearten us. If we look carefully with open eyes and hearts, there are encouraging signs as well.

With Jesus, we can reflect on what was accomplished the first go round, what remained incomplete, and what has been evolving throughout the centuries since.

We can also reflect on the unimaginable, the unexpected, the future that only God is dreaming. We can reflect on the dreamers within our midst—the planners and innovators in ministry, those with an appreciation of the past and those with a vision for the future.

As we look around the world today, we see a church in need of vibrant, innovative leadership. Previously established patterns of spiritual life continue to evolve and Christian leaders must be prepared to meet the changing needs of the faith communities they serve.

Likewise, members and leaders who sit in the pews, walk the hallways, support and lead the ministry, mission, and program life of the church are called to be vigilant and adaptive.

That's the spirit called for in this season. To be watchful and hopeful; to be persistent and faithful all at the same time. To confess our discouragements and name the darkness around us, but all at the same time looking for the light.

It is perhaps when things seem the darkest, the most discouraging and hopeless, that the brightest of light can be clearly seen beyond that backdrop.



The challenge ahead of us is immense. Many of our congregations struggle to hang on financially. Churches in both urban and rural areas are struggling to find pastors and leaders who can guide them in new and effective ways. Current and future leaders face overwhelming student debt, making it difficult for them to serve where they are most needed. Our Board of Pensions struggles to offer the kind of care that is affordable at a time when costs are skyrocketing. All alternatives come with a huge price.

We understand that the world is rapidly changing, and the church must adapt to thrive. What is expected of us is expected of everyone. No one is exempt.

This season proclaims that the One who came and the One who is to come is the Light of the World. We, likewise, are challenged to be and remain a light.

The Gospel of Matthew lays out the challenge: "No one after lighting a lamp puts it under a bushel basket, but on a lamp stand so that it gives light to all in the house. Therefore, we are to let our light shine before others, so that they see our good works and give glory to God who is in heaven." Matthew 5:15-16

And remember, this is the God who remains not in heaven, but came to earth and walks with us until all things are fulfilled.



Blessings and Peace in the Advent Season and throughout Christmastide.

**Sincerely,
Jim**

DECEMBER LECTIONARY

<p>December 1 First Sunday of Advent</p> <p>Jeremiah 33:14–16 Psalm 25:1–10 1 Thessalonians 3:9–13 Luke 21:25–36</p>	<p>December 8 Second Sunday of Advent</p> <p>Malachi 3:1–4 Luke 1:68–79 Philippians 1:3–11 Luke 3:1–6</p>	<p>December 15 Third Sunday of Advent</p> <p>Zephaniah 3:14–20 Isaiah 12:2–6 Philippians 4:4–7 Luke 3:7–18</p>
---	--	---



<p>December 22 Fourth Sunday of Advent</p> <p>Micah 5:2–5a Luke 1:46–55 or Psalm 80:1–7 Hebrews 10:5–10 Luke 1:39–45 (46–55)</p>	<p>December 24 Nativity of the Lord (Christmas Eve)</p> <p>Isaiah 9:2–7 Psalm 96:1–13 Titus 2:11–14 Luke 2:1–14 (15–20)</p>	<p>December 25 Nativity of the Lord (Christmas Day)</p> <p>Isaiah 52:7–10 Psalm 98:1–9 Hebrews 1:1–4 (5–12) John 1:1–14</p>
---	--	--



<p>December 29 First Sunday of Christmas</p> <p>1 Samuel 2:18–20, 26 Psalm 148 Colossians 3:12–17 Luke 2:41–52</p>

JANUARY 2025 LECTIONARY

<p>January 1 Holy Name of Jesus</p> <p>Numbers 6:22-27 Psalm 8 Galatians 4:4-7 or Philippians 2:5-11 Luke 2:15-21</p>	<p>January 5 Second Sunday after Christmas</p> <p>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 6 Epiphany of the Lord</p> <p>Isaiah 60:1-6 Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14 Ephesians 3:1-12 Matthew 2:1-12</p>
--	--	---

<p>January 12 Baptism of the Lord</p> <p>Isaiah 43:1-7 Psalm 29 Acts 8:14-17 Luke 3:15-17, 21-22</p>	<p>January 19 Second Sunday after the Epiphany</p> <p>Isaiah 62:1-5 Psalm 36:5-10 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 John 2:1-11</p>	<p>January 26 Third Sunday after the Epiphany</p> <p>Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10 Psalm 19 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a Luke 4:14-21</p>
---	--	---

December Prayer Families	January Prayer Families
<p>December 1 Taryn Shenk</p>	<p>January 5 Lori A. Smith</p>
<p>December 8 John Jr. & Kristine Shirk</p>	<p>January 12 Betty Sowers</p>
<p>December 15 Danielle Short</p>	<p>January 19 Matthew Sowers</p>
<p>December 22 George & Karen Shue</p>	<p>January 26 June Stannard</p>
<p>December 29 Dick & Debbie Sindall</p>	

Deacons



December 7 Earl Miller 11 Pequea Drive Paradise, PA 17562	January 9 Bill Berkhimer 1614 Bentley Ridge Blvd. Lancaster, PA 17602
--	--

The Prayer Shawl Knitters will take a break in December, but will resume meeting on January 6th and 20th.

The Deacons have purchased a new **Memorial Book** for recording gifts to the **Leacock Memorial Fund**. Please consider this fund when making gifts in memory of loved ones. It is used to purchase lasting objects that enhance our worship and church life.



Flower Deliveries

December – Charlene Boas
January – Karen Homsher

We welcome Debbie Sindall back to the Board for the new term and thank those who have agreed to serve another term—Mary Alice High and Karen Homsher. Our first meeting in 2025 will be on Sunday, January 19th, immediately following worship.

The Deacons donated \$200 to The Factory Ministries for the purchase of children's Christmas gifts.

Please consider sending holiday greetings to our At-home members. The list is included in this newsletter.

Poinsettias ordered by the congregation will be in the sanctuary for the worship service on December 22. You may take them after the service, but if you can leave them for the Christmas Eve service it would be much appreciated.

Mission Committee



Our December **Community Meal** will follow the same pattern as the November meal. We will have it on the 2nd Thursday, which is **December 12th**, because of the approaching Christmas holiday. The time will remain the same-5:30 to 6:30 in our handicapped assessible Smith Fellowship Hall. The menu will be Baked Ham, Scalloped Potatoes, Green Beans, Cranberry Sauce, Dinner Rolls, Applesauce, and Desserts from Weis Markets. I will also tell you that in January we will return to our normal schedule of having our meal on the 4th Thursday of the month. So our

January meal will be held on January 23rd. As of this time the menu for this meal has not been planned. So come and be surprised!

December is the month that we collect the **Christmas Joy Offering**. 50% of this offering makes it possible for students to learn and grow in faith at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. The other 50% provides assistance for current and retired church workers and their families with critical financial need. Through this offering, we celebrate God's gift to us, with generous support of leaders among us-past, present, and future-who point us to God. God has given us the perfect gift in Jesus, who is destined to lead us and bring joy, peace, and salvation. The special envelopes will be in the pews from Sunday, December 1st, thru Sunday, December 29th or you can put your offering in a plain white envelope and mark the outside "Christmas Joy Offering" and place it in the offering plate.

As we look forward to the new year, please keep in mind that for two Sundays in January we will collect the **Blanket Offering**. This will be on January 12th and 19th. Again special envelopes will be in the pews for you to use or just use a plain white envelope. Just be sure to mark it for "Blanket Offering" so it will go to the correct place.

Looking ahead to February, don't forget that on "Super Bowl" Sunday, which I think is Feb. 9th, we have our "Souper Bowl" offering. On that Sunday we ask that you bring canned goods or a donation and place them in the kettles in either the east or west narthex. This all goes to help the Factory so ALL of this offering stays in Paradise. If I am wrong about the Super Bowl date, this offering will be taken whenever the Super Bowl is held!

The Mission Committee would also like to say a big Thank You to this congregation for all the help you have given to us. Without all of you helping, being willing to donate items needed, being willing to wash dishes, and just generally doing whatever we need, the Community Meal would not happen. It is not just a mission project...it is an entire Church Project. We may be small in number but we are mighty in Spirit.

Thank you,
Lois, Bonnie, and Alba

Advent and Christmas at Leacock

December 7

Christmas Bazaar

8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

December 8

Worship

December 15

Worship and Bell Choir

December 22

Worship and Chancel Choir

December 24

7:00 p.m.

*Family Christmas Eve in the Paradise Sanctuary
(with candle lighting)*

11:00 p.m.

*Lessons and Carols at Old Leacock
(with candle lighting)*

December 29

Worship

The First Sunday of Christmastide





Worship Committee Notes

The sanctuary tree with its white, gold, and silver, lights our worship during Advent and Christmastide as the Advent banners, window candles and greenery welcome us to the season of waiting, preparation, and joy.

Many, many thanks to all who came out to help 'Deck the Halls' on a chilly Sunday afternoon (remember that Sunday the heat failed?) Hands may have been cold, but hearts were warm as we worked together, sometimes checking pictures from last year and other times forging ahead with new ideas.

Our afternoon together showed again how we are truly a church family, united by love and service.

Stop in the Narthex and gaze into the Memorial Garden to see the carolers waiting there. Thanks to Bonnie Rice and Jim Mark.

As January approaches, we remind you of our **Unsafe Conditions Policy**. 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, if possible, the church answering machine.



Ushers

December - Mike and Alba Ruhl
January - Bob and Mary Hershey
February - Mary Alice High and John Shenk
March - Chuck and Kathy Ankney

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.”**

Leacock Presbyterian Church
3181 Lincoln Hwy. East
Paradise, PA 17562
Phone 717 687-6619

Non-profit
US Postage Paid
Permit #951
Lancaster, PA



2024

Articles for the February Newsletter
Will be due Friday, January 24, 2025
The Leacock Communicator



2025

THE LEACOCK COMMUNICATOR
Sandy Schoettle, Editor