



the Voice parish newsletter



On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; they knelt down and paid him homage. –Matthew 2:11

Occasionally, I drive by a Mount Lebanon home where a man once lived with whom I'd done business years ago. The house is one of the sizable, elaborate homes in our community. Following this man's death, the home was sold. New owners have put their stamp on it through remodeling. It was a fine home when they bought it; perhaps finer now. They've made it their own.

When I drive by the house, I think of the man who once lived there. There are few original owners of Mount Lebanon homes. We come and go. The school district is our main draw. People come to Mount Lebanon for its world class education to launch their children into life.

In a few days, our church youth will go shopping with grant money to purchase Christmas gifts for needy children. The busy schedules of our youth will mean not everyone will participate. There appears no limit to activities youth can enjoy in the South Hills. We're blessed with options. We pick and choose.

In seminary, I studied a perspective begun among the poor in South America known as *liberation theology*. Due to its association with communism, it's been largely discredited among mainstream theologians. Nevertheless, we can't ignore one of its central tenets, rooted in the Bible, which is *God's preferential option for the poor*. Think about it...during holidays, when we assist the needy, we express God's preference for the vulnerable. When Wise Men came to visit Jesus, they brought gifts. Jesus entered the world a needy child, born of peasant parents.

Don't wait for an invitation to bless the needy. Let's make it a regular part of our schedules. Let's cut from our schedules some of the self-serving activities, making more room for Jesus and the needy.

God bless our youth in their shopping. God bless everyone this Advent season. We're lighting candles to prepare for Jesus. Let us be found having open hearts and new schedules that express *God's option for the poor among us*.

A blessed Advent and Merry Christmas to all,

Pastor Doug Heagy



December, 2022



Mt. Lebanon United Lutheran Church
975 Washington Road Mt. Lebanon, Pennsylvania 15228



FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Have yourself a Holy little Christmas

The “Christmas season” seems to begin earlier every year. Some stores had Christmas stuff on the shelves weeks before Halloween. What madness! We go dashing through the stores to the beat of *Jingle Bells*; and we go “Rockin’ Around the Christmas Tree” until we crash from exhaustion.

Revelry and gift-giving are fine and fun, but if we’re not careful they can snowball out of control. Stewarding a **Holy and meaningful Christmas** means balancing the commercial with the spiritual. Here are some tips:

Observe Advent: The four weeks *before* Christmas Day comprise the Advent Season, a time to *prepare* for Christmas through prayer, song, worship, and spiritual disciplines. Lean into the spirit of Advent. Advent devotionals can help.

Observe the Christmas season: The church calendar lists the *season* of Christmas from Dec. 24 to the feast of Epiphany on Jan. 6. Until the 20th century, these 12 Days of Christmas were the time for celebration and partying. Make them special in your life and family.

Cut the consumerism: Limit your shopping and spending by setting a strict budget or gifting the people in your life with homemade presents, favors, or ways to spend time together.

Party hardly: For some, Christmas is an excuse to overeat and drink to excess. Moderate your consumption.

Most importantly, pray: Ask God to help you and your family craft a meaningful and joyful Advent and Christmas. Ask God to send you wisdom, resources, and people who can journey through the spiritual season with you.

By carefully stewarding your faith life, Advent and Christmas can be a time for real spiritual growth.

--Rob Blezard

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DECEMBER BIBLE STUDIES

Monday Night & Thursday Morning

Advent & Christmas Traditions and their Roots in Scripture

MONDAY NIGHT

7:00 PM-8:00 PM

December 5
December 12
December 19

THURSDAY MORNING

10:00 AM-11:15 AM

December 8
December 15
December 22



The angel Gabriel visits Mary

Luke 1:26-38

Musical Musings

December, 2022



One anthem of note this December is Elizabeth Poston's *Jesus Christ the Apple Tree*. There is nothing that particularly links this text to the Advent season, but it has been a mainstay of many lessons and carols since its composition. It speaks of the barrenness of life without Christ, something to me that is reminiscent of the barrenness of winter. I encourage you to read the text below and reflect. You will hear the anthem on both December 4th and December 11th.

The tree of life my soul hath seen,
Laden with fruit and always green:
The trees of nature fruitless be
Compared with Christ the apple tree.

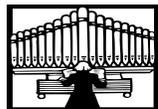
His beauty doth all things excel:
By faith I know, but ne'er can tell
The glory which I now can see
In Jesus Christ the apple tree.

For happiness I long have sought,
And pleasure dearly I have bought:
I missed of all; but now I see,
'Tis found in Christ the apple tree.

I'm weary with my former toil,
Here I will sit and rest awhile:
Under the shadow I will be
Of Jesus Christ the apple tree.

This fruit doth make my soul to thrive,
It keeps my dying faith alive;
Which makes my soul in haste to be
With Jesus Christ the apple tree.

The organ prelude for December 4th is Olivier Messiaen's *The Angels*, from the larger work *The Birth of The Savior*. One of his most loved organ works, this piece brilliantly depicts the fluttering of angel wings.



Merry Christmas and God Bless,
Chris Keenan



The worship links to Facebook & YouTube can be found on our website:

www.mtlebanonlutheran.org



Sunday's 8:30 AM & 10:00 AM

Virtual Worship 8:30 AM Facebook LIVE

Posted later on our YouTube channel

THE WORD of the LORD

December 4	Isaiah 11:1-10 Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19 Romans 15:4-13 Matthew 3:1-12	Advent II
December 11	Isaiah 35:1-10 Psalm 146:5-10 James 5:7-10 Matthew 11:2-11	Advent III
December 18	Isaiah 7:10-16 Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 Romans 1:1-7 Matthew 1:18-25	Advent IV
December 24	Isaiah 9:2-7 Psalm 96 Titus 2:11-14 Saint Luke 2:1-20	Christmas Eve
December 25	Isaiah 62:6-12 Psalm 97 Titus 3:4-7 Saint Luke 2:1-20	Christmas

Advent Mid-Week Devotions
In-person & Virtual
December 1, 8, 15 & 22
Wednesdays at 7:30 - 7:45 pm



DECEMBER WORSHIP NEWS

Prepare for Christmas by joining in the Virtual Advent Mid-Week Devotions on the following Wednesdays at 7:30-7:45 PM. Virtual ONLY on Facebook

Wednesday, December 1 / 7:30 PM

Wednesday, December 8 / 7:30 PM

Wednesday, December 15 / 7:30 PM

Wednesday, December 22 / 7:30 PM



2022 Advent Wreath Candle Lighters

Thanks to the following members who will light the candles of the sanctuary Advent Wreath at worship during the four week Advent season.

Sunday, November 27

8:30 AM Keplar Family

10:00 AM Darcy Family

Sunday, December 4

8:30 AM Ultsch Family

10:00 AM Harlacher & Nichols Families

Sunday, December 11

8:30 AM Mayer Family

10:00 AM Wetzel Family

Sunday, December 18

8:30 AM Morrison Family

10:00 AM Lutz Family

The Advent wreath is a way the Church counts time until Christmas and the Second Advent of Jesus Christ on the Last Day.



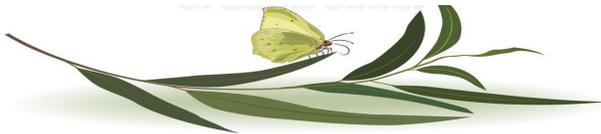
WE REMEMBER
in our prayers:

Great God, our healer, by your power, the Lord Jesus healed the sick and gave hope to the hopeless. As we pray, look upon us with mercy and bless us with your healing Spirit. Bring comfort in the midst of pain, strength to transform weakness, and light to illuminate darkness. We pray for our family members and friends, asking in the name of the crucified Lord Jesus that restoration and wholeness may come to:

Bishop George Bashore; Craig Elias; Deb Cecotti; Scott Halapin; Patty Pavlak; Kalie Radigan; Amy Budner; Cheryl Poenisch; Rian Dankert; the family of Annabelle Santos; Aurora Schultz; Janice Seigle; Elena Getz; Nancy Ingles; Paul Young;

NOTE: Please contact the church office if there are any changes for the prayer list. Names will remain on the prayer list for one month. If a person is to remain on the prayer list or to be added, just call the church office and let us know.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES for the January issue of the Voice are to be submitted by Sunday, December 11th. Articles may be left in the church office or email: mtleboluth@aol.com.



Patricia Mikita

July 22, 1925

November 18, 2022

It has pleased Almighty God to call unto himself, his faithful servant, Patricia Mikita, at the age of 97. She was preceded in death by her husband, Edward J. Mikita. She is survived by her 2 children and 3 grandchildren. A memorial was held for her on November 21.

Our congregational family continues to remember James' family in prayer.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:

We are pleased to welcome Jennifer, Crawford & Lillian Harlacher, Thomas & Rebecca Hough, David Laboda, and Julie & Madelyn Nichols to our congregational family. Please introduce yourself and greet them at the worship services.



2023 Flower Chart & Worship Bulletins

Sign ups are located in the Narthex. Prices are as follows:

Flowers: \$ 30 per vase
Worship Bulletin: \$ 25



THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

- 1 You shall have no other gods.
- 2 You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God.
- 3 Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy.
- 4 Honor your father and your mother.
- 5 You shall not murder.
- 6 You shall not commit adultery.
- 7 You shall not steal..
- 8 You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
- 9 You shall not covet your neighbor's house.
- 10 You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.



Angel Tree for Glade Run Foundation



Each year, Glade Run Lutheran Services (Glade Run) provides life-changing services to over 4,000 individuals throughout Western PA. Children, adults and families being served by Glade Run often have many challenges in addition to mental and behavioral health issues and autism. During this special time of year, Glade Run is grateful that we can help secure not only gifts for the youth but also the basic necessities and tools that make a difference in the lives of those in their care. Our gifts will support the children and families who would otherwise do without. More than just a present under the tree, donated items received through the annual drive provide joy, relief and comfort all throughout the year — well beyond Christmastime. Some gift requests may seem strange but all are incredibly needed and will mean so much to the youth and their families.

We will once again be participating in the Angel Tree project supporting our friends at Glade Run Foundation in Zelienople, PA. Please look for the tree in the Narthex starting Sunday, November 27. We will have 75 tags to choose from plus there will also be the on-line version available again this year. As always, the need is great and all our support is truly appreciated.

*All gifts will need to be returned **UNWRAPPED** under the tree in the narthex by **Sunday, December 11** as they will be delivered to Glade Run the next day.*

****If you prefer to shop on-line and send the gifts directly to Glade Run, follow the links below. This is a type of registry program where you pick the gift from their list, purchase it and it will ship directly to Glade Run. This was very successful last year so Glade Run is repeating it again this year.*

Continued...

Purchase gift on line: Shop our Wish List on Amazon or Walmart & Ship Directly to Glade Run

Amazon — Visit www.smile.amazon.com Sign into your account. Under Accounts & Lists, scroll down to AmazonSmile Charity Lists, in the Search Bar, type in “Glade Run Lutheran Services” and then choose “Glade Run Holiday Drive” and start shopping!

Walmart — Visit <https://rb.gy/kbqevk> Sign into your account and shop. *Also, if you would rather, they are always in need of gift cards and those could be brought to the church and I will deliver them with the gifts.*

Suggested gift cards: Walmart, Target, Giant Eagle, Aldi, Amazon, Dollar Tree, Dollar General, The Home Depot, Lowes, Sheetz, Walgreens, Dick’s Sporting Goods

Any questions, contact Sara Dougherty 412-523-1499 or tjdsjd@verizon.net

Thank you for participating in this wonderful mission!!

The History of The Salvation Army Angel Tree



Along with the familiar Red Kettles, the Angel Tree program is one of The Salvation Army's highest profile Christmas efforts. Angel Tree was created by The Salvation Army in 1979 by Majors Charles and Shirley White when they worked with a Lynchburg, Virginia shopping mall to provide clothing and toys for children at Christmas time.

The program got its name because the Whites identified the wishes of local children by writing their gift needs on Hallmark greeting cards featuring pictures of angels and placing them on a Christmas Tree at the mall. Thanks to the Whites, who were assigned by The Army to the Lynchburg area at the time, more than 700 children had a brighter Christmas that first year.

Three years later, when the Whites were transferred to Nashville, Tennessee, Angel Tree was launched in Music City during the 1982 Christmas season. WSM radio, which airs the Grand Ole Opry, came on board that year as the first Angel Tree co-sponsor in the U.S.

Because of the on-air promotion on WSM in Nashville, as well as national publicity on CNN and the Larry King Show, news of Angel Tree spread across the country like wild fire. Since that time, the program has grown to include Angel Trees throughout the Carolinas.

Youth Service Project



Attention all youth grades 7-12!!! Let's join together to buy Christmas presents for the kids at Glade Run!! The church was awarded a Thrivent grant to sponsor a youth outing to buy Christmas gifts for those in need. We have been awarded \$250 to purchase additional much-needed gifts (in addition to the Angel tree tags) for the kids. And who is better at finding cool gifts for the kids than the youth themselves!! Please see below for details. Any questions, and if you would like to volunteer to drive/chaperone, please contact Sara Dougherty at 412-523-1499 or tjdsjd@verizon.net.

CHRISTMAS SERVICE PROJECT

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2022 4:00 PM

Church Social Hall and Bridgeville Walmart

Attention all youth!!!

Come join your friends for refreshments and some good social ministry! We will meet in the church social hall for some snacks, then hop in the car to do some Christmas shopping! We will travel as a group to Walmart to purchase Christmas gifts for children in need at Glade Run Foundation for the Angel Tree.

We will pair up in groups with the task to buy gifts with an allocated amount of money/group. Our goal will be to buy the best gifts within our \$250 budget.

No one can do a better job choosing gifts for kids than you guys yourselves!!

Everyone will be dropped off at church when done.



SERVER SCHEDULE —December, 2022



If you cannot serve as scheduled, please switch with another server.
If you cannot get a substitute please call the church office or Pastor Doug.

	8:30	10:00
December 4 Crucifer	Easton Darcy	Dylan Snyder
December 11 Crucifer	Cameron Mayer	Addy Wetzel
December 18 Crucifer	Addison Mayer	Carter Lutz
December 24 Crucifer	<u>5:00</u> TBD	<u>7:30</u> TBD
		<u>11:00</u> TBD



ONLINE GIVING

Is now available in association with



www.mtlebanonlutheran.org

WHAT IS myEoffering?

myEoffering is a service we've teamed up with to give you the ability to send your offerings online in the same way that many of you already pay bills and purchase products. We chose to use myEoffering because they are part of a trusted, Christian family-owned company, who have been serving the needs of churches for nearly 100 years. Their product is solid, secure, easy, and convenient.

WHY SHOULD I USE myEoffering?

Many of you already pay for most of your purchases electronically, whether online or with a credit or debit card. So we have decided to offer this service as a convenience to you - you can stop writing checks or having to remember to bring cash every Sunday. Simply log in to our service and set up your offering. You can set the donations to match your pay periods, and even send your one-time donations to the special offerings we may have from time-to-time. This new service allows you to give any amount, at any time, from home or on the road, with your computer or even your mobile device. Now you can control how and when you give your tithes.

HOW DOES IT HELP?

Online giving is the future. In the lifetime of our young people, we will see electronic payments overshadow traditional methods of paper payments. In order to position ourselves to continue doing the work of God in the future and to make it as convenient as possible to be a cheerful giver to God's work, we have decided to offer online giving to you. In addition to easier access to giving and more engagement with young stewards, online offering has many benefits for the church. It allows us to more easily track contributions for budgeting. It saves us from manually tracking those contributions every week. It saves us from large fees on check processing and allows us to more accurately forecast expenditures and needs.

HOW DO I SIGN UP?

Signing up is as simple as going to our church website listed above and look for the green computer mouse icon. That button will take you to the myEoffering page for our church. Simply sign up and begin giving online today! Or scan the code to the right with your mobile device to get started now.



SCAN THIS
CODE WITH
YOUR MOBILE
DEVICE NOW



Advent Pageant



“Just a Little Christmas”

© 2009 by Sharon Kay Chatwell

To be presented Lunch-Theater Style
On Stage in the Social Hall

Sunday, December 11th

~Pageant **performance at 11:10 am**

~Followed by **Luncheon & Dessert 11:30**

Rehearsals:

Saturdays, Dec 3rd & 10th ~ 9:30-11:00 am

Sundays, Dec 4th & 11th ~ 9:45-11:00

(During Sunday School)

For more information, please contact Eric
Keplar at e_keplar@yahoo.com

You are cordially invited to
Mt. Lebanon Lutheran Church

Advent Pageant & Congregational Luncheon

On Sunday, December 11, 2022

At 11:10 am in the Social Hall

Please RSVP by December 4

Baked Ham Sandwiches, Scalloped Potatoes &
Beverages will be served.

Please bring a traditional dessert or cookies that
represent your family heritage.

Name _____

Number Attending _____ adults _____ children

Please return or email Church office. Please con-
tact Jeff McGraw at tjeffmcgraw@gmail.com if
you are able to assist with the meal.

Advent Devotionals for all Ages

Advent Devotions are available in the Narthex.

Adults have 2 choices: ***Our Greatest Gift: a Wonderful Life in Christ*** is based on the movie “It’s a Wonderful Life” and includes scriptures and prayers that focus on our faith in Christ. ***Be Born in us Today*** is a more traditional devotional that reminds us that Christ enters into us daily to strengthen and support us.

For families with children, we distributed in Sunday School ***Light Shines in Darkness***, a devotional that includes a star-coloring chart, prayers and activities to remind us that God’s light shines all around us, even in times of darkness.

For Youth, ***It’s About Time*** booklets will be distributed in Catechetics and also available for college-age youth. These devotionals provide a time and place each day to reflect on God’s current blessings and encourage youth to make “now” the time for Christ-like action in the world.



Take a “Time Out”. Spend a few
quiet moments with a book from the
Church Library’s display located by
the church office. Each book comes
with a mini Advent Quiz.

Get yourself peacefully
prepared for Christmas!



You're Invited...To the Sunday Morning Fellowship

Each Sunday worshippers have the opportunity to greet one another and welcome visitors at our: **Sunday Morning Fellowship** in the Narthex. Join us in between the early and late Liturgies to share greetings and conversations with friends and visitors. Refreshments are available for all.

The Sunday Morning Fellowship also provides opportunities to volunteer:

*Sponsor the Coffee Project of Lutheran World Relief, helping small growers, their families and communities through the fair trade of coffee.

*Volunteer to set up and clean the Fellowship refreshments table. It's easy to do and a member of the Hospitality Committee will show you how. Also, written instructions are available.

*Provide sweet (or healthy) treats for all to enjoy. (Gluten free and nut free treats are also welcomed)

If you'd like to help you can sign up on the bulletin board in the main hallway, or contact the church office.



Offering Envelopes and Stewardship.....

The 2023 Offering Envelopes are now available. They are available in the Narthex. Or call the office to schedule a pick up time. **Time and Talent Sheets** and **giving cards** can be mailed to the church office. All financial information provided to the financial secretary will be kept confidential. The third quarter giving statements have been mailed. If you notice any discrepancies, please contact Allan Copenheaver, Financial Secretary - allancope@yahoo.com.

Our new Columbarium is located on the South Chancel Wall. Interment in the columbarium is currently opened to church members and their extended families. If interested, please email the church office and we will forward to you the paperwork needed. The cost of each niche is \$1,000 for interment of a single individual and \$1,500 for the interment of two.

GLOBAL LINKS *Sharing Surplus. Saving Lives.*

Volunteering at Global Links has resumed!! Our first session was October 19 and was great fun! Thank you to Diane and Larry Datillo, Andrea Croom, Pastor Heagy and Sara Dougherty for volunteering. We have 6 sessions scheduled for 2023. Sign-up sheets will be placed in the narthex or if you are interested in volunteering for any of the dates, please contact Sara Dougherty at 412-523-1499 or tjdsjd@verizon.net

2023

Saturday, February 11- 1-3 pm
Wednesday, April 12 - 10 am to Noon
Saturday, June 10 - 1-3 pm
Wednesday, August 16- 10 am to Noon
Saturday, October 14 - 1-3 pm
Wednesday, December 6- 1-3 pm



A Note from the Treasurer:

For many members, the e-offering platform has been a useful tool and we thank you for using it. This is a reminder that if you use your bank account directly, the fee is 30 cents. If you use a credit card, the fee is 3.25%. Please use the bank account direct debit if at all possible.

23rd Annual Thanksgiving Outreach Project



Many thanks to everyone for their generous contributions to this year's Thanksgiving Basket Project! With your help, our Congregation provided Thanksgiving meals to 24 households served by St. Michael Food Pantry. This was our 23rd year helping families celebrate Thanksgiving.



Special thanks to the Sunday School children who crafted small bags of tea, cookies, and chocolates, and for coloring the prayers and table graces. Those who receive always appreciate your beautiful creations and kind thoughts. They will enjoy the special treats inside the crafted bags (tea, cookies, and chocolates).



Sincere appreciation to those who attended the assembly event on Sunday, November 13th. Thank you for sharing your time and talents to prepare the Thanksgiving "baskets". Thanks to Debbie & Dave Hazlett; and MB Trivilino.



The Jesse Tree of Advent

Just as the Christmas Season has its own special tree, so Advent has its special tree: the Jesse Tree. It is in a prominent place in our Narthex so it can be seen up close.

It is a bare, and not particularly attractive tree, because in Advent, we are reminded of the incompleteness of the fulfillment of God's promises in the Old Testament.

In Advent, we wait for their fulfillment. Many of our Advent hymns, include the favorite "Oh, Come, Oh Come, Emmanuel," speak of the "strong branch of Jesse."

But who is this Jesse of whom Jesus is called the "Branch" and whose name is given to the Advent tree?

Jesse was the father of King David. The Gospel of Saint Matthew begins with the words "The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David." The Gospel of Saint Luke is also careful to establish that Joseph was of the "house and lineage of David" and it was for that reason that he went to Bethlehem, the city of David, for the census. It was there, of course, that Jesus was born.

Since Jesse was David's father, Jesus was also a descendent of Jesse. He was the "Branch" or "Rod" which grew from the stump of Jesse. So the Jesse Tree is a kind of family tree of Jesus, which gives all of our congregational family an opportunity to appreciate the mighty acts of God in preparation for the fulfillment of the prophetic promise in the birth of Jesus.

The decorations on the Jesse Tree, which have been made by the children of our Sunday School, symbolize the important people, and events of the Old Testament leading toward the birth of Jesus. They include a globe symbolizing creation, the serpent and an apple from the Garden of Eden, the ark which Noah built and the rainbow sent by God, the flaming torch and burning firepot, the lamb and the blade from the near-sacrifice of Isaac, Jacob's ladder, Joseph's coat of many colors, the burning bush through which God spoke to Moses, and the lamp of Samuel.

Please take time this Advent to look closely at the Jesse Tree in the Narthex and remember our loving God's work to redeem His creation.



Christmas Poinsettias, Wreaths and Trees

The beautiful poinsettias, wreaths, and trees to adorn our Sanctuary for the celebration of the Holy Nativity of our Lord [Christmas] and the Epiphany of our Lord [the arrival of the Magi at the birthplace of Jesus] as well as contributions to the Fine Arts Fund, are the memorial and honor gifts of our congregational family.

You are invited to participate by contributing a poinsettia[s], wreath[s] or the Fine Arts Fund by placing the form below in the offering plate, or by mailing to the Church Office *to arrive no later than Sunday, December 4th.*

Poinsettia Plants

Wreaths to be hung on the doors and glass
Narthex/Nave divider [*one size only*]

Fine Arts Fund

Acknowledgements will be made as desired in an insert to the worship bulletins for Christmas Eve/Day and on the Festival of the Epiphany of our Lord.



**PLEASE JOIN US ON DECEMBER 17
AT 10:00 AM
TO HELP DECORATE THE SANCTUARY
FOR CHRISTMAS.
INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES AND CHILDREN
ARE WELCOME!**



ALTAR FLOWER CHARTS



Altar Flower and Bulletin Reservation Charts for the Year 2023

are available in the Narthex. *If you have a particular Sunday or Festival Day* on which you wish to reserve Altar Flowers or bulletins, please *reserve early* to avoid disappointment. You can also call the church office to be placed on the chart.

The cost of donating is \$30.00 per vase of Altar Flowers, or \$25.00 per Sunday or Festival Day for worship bulletins.

- *No reminder notices are sent* and so you must be responsible for paying for the items you reserve.
- If both vases are already taken for the Sunday you would have preferred, please find another date. [Do not simply add your name to a name already there.]
- Call the Church Office by Tuesday with the exact wording you prefer for the acknowledgment.

I/We wish to donate:

_____ Poinsettia[s] at \$9.00 each

_____ Wreath[s] at \$20.00 each

_____ *Fine Arts* Fund for Christmas Music

Donor: _____

Acknowledgement: _____

Christmas



Due by December 4th



I would like you to consider participating in our online giving designed to simplify weekly giving in our congregation.

Electronic giving will enable every household or individual to make their church offering using electronic funds transfer or credit card. You may already be using online bill pay for your mortgage, car payment, or insurance premium through an automatic withdrawal from your checking or savings account. Many of you also have used your credit cards to purchase goods online through Amazon, eBay, or a number of other sites.

We have teamed up with myEoffering to enable you to use the same process to give your offering electronically from your bank account, credit or debit cards.

There is no cost to you for this new giving option. If you are currently giving on a weekly basis, you will no longer need to write out 52 checks a year or prepare 52 envelopes. And when travel, illness or other circumstances prevent you from attending services, this program will allow your weekly offerings to continue uninterrupted.

You can participate in the electronic giving program immediately. Just visit our church website and look for the "Donate Now" button.

Thank you for considering this new giving opportunity.

Merry Christmas
& A Very Blessed
New Year!

from the Staff at
Mt. Lebanon United
Lutheran Church



Blessed Christmas

A Table Liturgy for the Feast of the Holy Nativity of Our Lord



Speaker 1: Blessed are You, Lord our God, who has gathered us together at this our Christmas feasting table.

Speaker 2: As we light our candles on the feast of light, may the eternal light of God that shines with splendor in the stars shine upon our table and fill our home.

All: May the Spirit of God that shone in the star of Bethlehem surround our table and fill our food and our hearts with its holy light.

[The candles are lit.]

Speaker 1: Let us each, on this great and holy feast of the birth of our Savior, pause now and in silence, lift up our hearts to God in gratitude.

[Pause for silent prayer.]

Speaker 2: Lord of all gifts, our home is filled with joy and great beauty on this feast of Christmas.

Speaker 1: We each come to this our Christmas feast with eagerness and a happy heart. As a family, we thank you for the gifts of food upon this table, mindful that You, our God, make every day of the year a Christmas wherein we are gifted by You. We thank you that we are together to share in the happiness of this holy day.

[We thank you for the presence of our guests who by their being present in our home have added to the brightness of our celebration.]

Lord of all gifts, Holy Father of our Savior Jesus, with fullness of heart we now ask your holy blessing upon our food, and upon our family and guests.

May your blessing be upon us all, in the name of the Father, and of the Son [+] and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

All: Merry Christmas!

December 2022



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
4 Advent 2 8:30 & 10:00 Worship 8:30 Live Virtual Worship 9:45 Pageant Rehearsal Pageant Lunch RSVP DUE FLOWER ORDERS DUE	5 7:00 Advent Bible Study	6 4:00 Catechetics 2	7 7:00 Choir 7:30 Midweek Devotions VIRTUAL ONLY	1 10:00 Advent Bible Study 4:00 Catechetics 1	2	3 9:30 Advent Pageant Rehearsal- Social Hall
11 Advent 3 8:30 & 10:00 Worship 8:30 Live Virtual Worship 9:45 Pageant Rehearsal 11:10 Advent Pageant Luncheon ANGEL TREE GIFTS DUE	12 7:00 Advent Bible Study	13 4:00 Catechetics 2	14 7:00 Choir 7:30 Midweek Devotions VIRTUAL ONLY	15 10:00 Advent Bible Study 4:00 Catechetics 1	16	17 10:00 Sanctuary Tree Decorating
18 Advent 4 8:30 & 10:00 Worship 8:30 Live Virtual Worship 10:00 Sunday School 11:15 Council Meeting	19 7:00 Advent Bible Study	20 4:00 Catechetics 2	21 7:00 Choir 7:30 Midweek Devotions VIRTUAL ONLY	22 10:00 Advent Bible Study 4:00 Catechetics 1	23	24 Christmas Eve 5:00 Worship 7:30 Worship 11:00 Worship 
25 Christmas 10:30 Worship 10:30 Live Virtual Worship 	26	27	28	29	30	31





1 World AIDS Day Today we join our neighbors, siblings in Christ and companion churches around the world in remembering all who have been and continue to be affected by HIV and AIDS. Give thanks for the progress we have made in effective prevention, treatment and care and in discouraging discrimination against those who are HIV-positive; pray that we will not grow complacent but continue to make progress; and give thanks for the ongoing work of the ELCA's HIV and AIDS ministry.

2 Give thanks for our faith, which embodies hope and anticipation as well as confidence and joy in God's promises and grace, which were fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

3 International Day of Persons with Disabilities Pray for our neighbors here and around the world who live with disabilities, that they might be welcomed, respected, valued and fully included in every aspect of the church and society. Give thanks for the wide-ranging work of ELCA Disability Ministry, Lutheran Services in America–Disability Network and other ministry partners.

4 Pray that, like John the Baptist, we will share the good news of Jesus and the love of God with boldness and humility and will invite all people to believe and be baptized into a new life in Christ, free from the confines of sin, despair and death.

5 Give thanks for the ELCA's Good Gifts catalog, which lifts up the diverse needs of our neighbors and offers opportunities to respond with gifts that grow the church, fight hunger and transform lives around the world — from honeybees and irrigation systems to trauma counseling and vocational training for entrepreneurs.

6 "Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God" (Romans 15:7). Pray that the Spirit will help us live in unity and celebrate the faith that binds us together as siblings in God's family; pray that we will invite and welcome people into our communities of faith so that they too might experience the gifts of joy, grace and mutual care as siblings in Christ.

7 Give thanks and pray for the work and enthusiasm of those applying for ELCA World Hunger Education and Networking Grants, which help congregations and synods build partnerships, provide training and education, plan service learning and host events with people passionate about ending hunger.

8 Pray for ELCA missionaries serving with our global companions in Africa: the Rev. Elisabeth Johnson and Anne and Willie Langdji (Cameroon); the Rev. Alex LaChapelle (Kenya); the Rev. Janelle Neubauer (Rwanda); and the Rev. Brian Palmer and Rev. Linda Johnson Seyenkulo (Liberia).

9 Pray that God will work through us to help goodness, honesty, justice, peace, generosity and compassion flourish in the world.

10 Give thanks for scientists, researchers and teachers of science and math; they help us acquire skills for daily life, explore and better understand creation, expand our appreciation of God's handiwork, and develop new technologies for the health and well-being of humanity and our environment.

11 People of faith are not immune to questions or doubts. Give thanks for God's patience with us and for the Spirit's work of strengthening our faith, revealing the mysteries and wonder of God's boundless love for humanity, and helping us understand Scripture and faith in the context of life today.

12 Pray for farmers and ranchers as they prepare their fields, animals and equipment for winter, and for those planting and harvesting during winter. Give thanks for their vocation of feeding the world, their care for the environment and their wisdom about seasons and cycles of life.

13 Pray that, with the use of Advent candles and wreaths, we will embrace faith traditions and practices that center us on God's grace and forgiveness, received through the gift of Jesus Christ.

14 "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant" (Luke 1:46-48). Join in the song of Mary and give praise and thanksgiving for God's love, mercy and attentiveness — blessings experienced from generation to generation.

15 Ask the Spirit to help us invite and welcome with enthusiasm our neighbors and surrounding community to join in our congregational activities, celebrations and worship during Advent and Christmas, and throughout the year.

16 Las Posadas This tradition, popular in Mexico and observed by some ELCA congregations, uses lighted paths and processions from house to house to follow Mary and Joseph's journey through Bethlehem in search of lodging. Pray that our recollection of Mary and Joseph's experience will prompt us to welcome strangers, immigrants, refugees and neighbors in need.

17 Pray for those who suffer depression, loneliness and anxiety, especially during the holidays. Ask God to help us be attentive to people around us who are struggling, that they might find understanding, hope, support, inclusion and caring companions in our communities of faith.

18 International Migrants Day Pray that we will support and accompany migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers in their difficult pursuit of safety, justice, self-sufficiency and family stability.

19 Remember in prayer ELCA Global Mission personnel and missionaries who are celebrating Advent and the birth of Christ in the communities and congregations of our global companions around the world.

20 Remember those who are alone during this time of community celebrations, meals and worship, including refugees, immigrants, and those who are imprisoned, confined to home or an institution, without family, or separated from family and community by work or deployment.

21 Winter solstice Reflect on the intricacies of the universe that govern the movement of our solar system, the changing seasons and how people experience seasons in different hemispheres of the world. Praise God for a life-sustaining creation that inspires awe, curiosity and humility!

22 "Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved" (Psalm 80:3). Give thanks for God's mercy and favor, which grant us new life and hope — not because we deserve it or have lived good lives but because God is gracious and generous beyond human comprehension.

23 Remember those who serve and work in our communities during the holidays. May we assure them of our love, concern and gratitude, and create opportunities to include them in our celebrations and worship, especially when they are unable to be physically present.

24 Christmas Eve Offer prayers of thanksgiving and joy for the gift of Jesus, our Savior, life and hope, who brings light to the darkness, "for he came down from heaven above to help a world in need" (ELW 271).

25 Christmas Day All glory and praise to God — everything we have seen, heard and been taught about Jesus Christ, our hope and salvation, is true. Give thanks that God's love and mercy, present in the birth of Christ, have shaken the world and awakened our hope.

26 Kwanzaa Today begins Kwanzaa, a weeklong celebration of African culture and traditions that emphasizes family, community and shared principles. Give thanks for the rich and enduring traditions, celebrations and practices of our African American siblings and the global African community.

27 John, apostle and evangelist Give thanks for John and the other disciples, who trusted in and responded to Jesus' call, leaving behind their previous lives to experience God's presence and love through Jesus Christ and to do God's work in the world. Ask the Spirit to guide, inspire and equip us for sharing the gospel and serving our neighbor in a world of constant change and new challenges.

28 Hope, joy, love and faith are infectious. Pray that the hope and joy stirred by our faith in God's love and presence in the world will spill over into our personal and professional relationships and our interaction with strangers.

29 Pray that we will be ever mindful of our baptism, which brings us identity and purpose "through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5). Give thanks that we are equipped, encouraged and sustained by our siblings in Christ throughout our lifelong journey of faith.

30 The birth of Christ, manifesting God's love for humanity, changed everything, forever. We celebrate the joy and significance of Christmas and pledge our lives in constant witness to God, who embraces and loves us with all our flaws, complexities and questions.

31 New Year's Eve What do you hope for in the coming year? What are your aspirations? Give thanks for the assurance we receive through our baptism, that we might live in God's mercy and grace through the ups and downs of life, and pray that we will be supported during our journey by a vast and caring community of siblings in Christ.

December 25

Happy Birthday Jesus

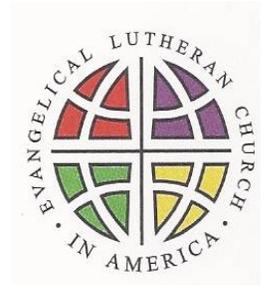
*To you is born this day in the city of David
a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.*

Luke 2:11



Mt. Lebanon United Lutheran Church

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The Reverend Elizabeth A. Eaton

Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The Reverend Kurt Kusserow

Bishop
Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod

The Reverend Douglas M. Heagy

Senior Pastor

Dr. Christopher Keenan, DMA

Director of Music and Organist

Mr. Larry Allen

Director of Music and Organist Emeritus

Mrs. Kris Malia

Parish Secretary

Mr. Azmuddin Baraki

Sexton



Festive Worship Celebration of The Nativity of our Lord Candlelight Worship Liturgies Christmas Eve 5:00 PM, 7:30 PM and 11:00 PM

Festive Worship for Christmas Day — 10:30 AM

Festive Worship for the Epiphany of our Lord

Sunday, January 1 at 8:30 and 10:00 AM

*The "twelfth day" of Christmas, commemorating the arrival
of the Magi at the birthplace of Jesus.*

