

Baby Steps and Big Steps

As infants become toddlers and start learning to walk for the first time, it is such a joy to watch them take on the challenge. There is something so natural about those tiny little steps that they take, but also something foreign as well. They can look so surprised when they step out too far in front and fall down. The joy of it is that they get right back up and keep trying, until it becomes easier and easier.

Shenango Church and Clen-Moore Church have taken some baby steps moving towards what we believe is our future that God is calling us to and becoming one congregation. We have shared co-pastors, we have joined for worship together and service projects, we have had education and fundraiser events, and we have shared meals together.

Also, we have taken some big steps. On Sunday, November 24, Shenango voted to sell their manse, which is a big step in the process as we move towards our goal of uniting permanently as one congregation. There are a number of small steps that we continue to take as we share in worship together on multiple occasions this Advent and Christmas season. Please be sure and take a small step and reach out to someone that you may not recognize in worship this December. Introduce yourself, and see if the person you are meeting is from Shenango. Whether they are or not, welcome them and let new friendships form.

The Gospel works in small and big steps as well. Often times it finds its way into our lives in small ways, a little at a time, slowly transforming us. Then, there are occasions in our lives when the Gospel breaks through in a big and powerful way, making a huge transformation in us.

Both of these things were happening on that first Christmas Day, as God was at work in the lives of His covenant people Israel, breaking in a little at a time and taking baby steps. Then, there was that big step, as the Christ-child, the Incarnate Son of God was born into our world and it changed everything! It soon opened up the way to salvation, bringing joy to the world.

In the middle of the 5th Century, St. Leo the Great shared these encouraging words in his Christmas sermon;

"Our Savior, dearly-beloved, was born today: let us be glad. For there is no proper place for sadness, when we keep the birth day of the Life, which destroys the fear of mortality and brings to us the joy of promised eternity. No one is kept from sharing in this happiness. There is for all one common measure of joy, because as our Lord the destroyer of sin and death finds none free from charge, so is He come to free us all. Let the Christian believer exult in that he draws near to victory. Let the sinner be glad in that he is invited to pardon. Let the gentile take courage in that he is called to life."

As we draw near to Jesus Christ this advent season and celebrate the coming together of the human and divine in the same one person, let us approach the manger with joy and excitement. Whether we approach Christmas with baby steps or with one big step, the point is that we approach, and draw near to Him who calls us out of darkness and into the Light. Amen.



Dates to Remember:

December 8, 2019 Blue Christmas Service—6:00pm at New Wilmington Presbyterian Church



"What we need is to love without getting tired. How does a lamp burn? Through the continuous input of small drops of oil. What are these drops of oil in our lamps? They are the small things of daily life: faithfulness, small words of kindness, a thought for others, our way of being silent, of looking, of speaking, of acting. Do not look for Jesus away from yourselves. He is not out there; He is in YOU. Keep your lamp burning, and you will recognize Him. ~Mother Theresa, from her book, No Greater Love."

"Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lamp stand, and it gives light to all who are in the house." Matthew 5:15.
 ~Best wishes for a healthy and blessed Christmas and New Year.

C.2G.S. - We will continue our study on Bible characters and learn from their experiences and interactions with God and his people.

K.F.C./FlipSide - Since we have the Christmas musical and extended practices the first three weeks of the month, we will not meet until Sunday, Dec. 22nd for a Christmas lunch, and maybe some caroling. Plans are still in progress so we will share more info as soon as we can. Also, look for an activity (probably nerf war) over break.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH CHRISTMAS MUSICAL IS SUNDAY, DEC. 15th. Clen-Moore's younger people will be sharing their gifts of song and stage to bring us the Good News of Christmas once again. Invite your family and friend to come and experience "Come In From The Cold" and let your hearts be warmed as we turn them to Jesus Christ this advent season.

SUNDAY SCHOOL RENOVATION PROJECT UPDATE

Steady progress is being made towards the renovation of the Nursery and the youth Sunday school classrooms. Volunteers have removed wallpaper, spackled holes, sanded and painted walls, sealed off an extra doorway, removed wooden crib enclosures, relocated coat racks, replaced a door, and ordered furniture. Window valances are being sewn and window blinds will be installed. A wall mural will soon be painted in the nursery. Stop in to check out the progress!

HOT OFF THE PRESS!!

The 2020 Photo Calendars featuring the men of Clen-Moore Church will be available for sale **December 1** and throughout the holiday season! These keepsake calendars will make wonderful Christmas gifts for family and friends to enjoy all year long. All proceeds from the sales will go to replenish the Capital Reserve Fund. "Cost per calendar will be \$20 each."



DAILY BIBLE READINGS



December, 2019

Advent

- 1 Luke 1.57-80
- 2 Zechariah 9.1-17
- 3 Zechariah 10.1-12
- 4 Zechariah 11.1-17
- 5 Zechariah 12.1-14
- 6 Zechariah 13.1-9
- 7 Zechariah 14.1-21
- 8 Psalm 101
- 9 Colossians 1.1-29
- 10 Colossians 2.1-23
- 11 Colossians 3.1-25
- 12 Colossians 4.1-18
- 13 John 5.1-29
- 14 John 5.30-47
- 15 Psalm 102
- 16 Isaiah 48.1-22
- 17 Isaiah 49.1-26
- 18 Isaiah 50.1-12
- 19 Isaiah 51.1-23
- 20 Isaiah 52.1-15
- 21 Isaiah 53.1-12
- 22 Psalm 103
- 23 John 6.1-21
- 24 John 6.22-71
- Christmas
- 25 Luke 2.1-20
- 26 Luke 2.21-38
- 27 Luke 2.39-52
- 28 Luke 3.1-38
- 29 Psalm 121
- 30 John 10.1-21
- 31 John 10.22-42

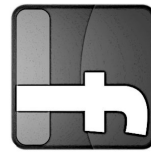


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SAVE THE DATE

- December 1st**
Communion
- December 4th**
Bible Study
- December 15th**
Combined Service
Christmas Musical
- December 22nd**
Cookie Walk
- December 24th**
Combined Candlelight Service
- December 29th**
Combined Service
Lou's Breakfast

December Deacons of the month:

Elaine Meyers & Sarah Plyler



December Sunday Driver:

Amy Ball 724.652.2940

If you are in need of transportation to worship, please call the church office at 724.654.6657. If you are interested in driving, please contact Amy Ball at 724.652.2940.



OUR CHILDREN NEED YOU

"Train a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not turn from it" (Proverbs 22:6)

The Christian Education Committee needs volunteers for Junior Church. You will be provided with the lesson ahead of time. Children's Worship meets mainly from January through June with no Junior Church scheduled on Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday, Mother's Day, Memorial Day weekend, Pentecost Sunday and Father's Day.

More volunteers means less weeks that each volunteer would have to serve. Consider team teaching with your spouse or friend. Please pray and ask God if it is one of your talents. If you have any questions, please contact Jim Reese or Pastor Aaron.

I would like to volunteer to teach Junior Church:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

