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# ~FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE~

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Volume 17 Issue 12

December 2024

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## The Pastor's Pen -

Dear Church Family,

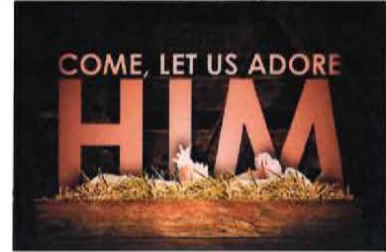
As we're just cleaning up the Thanksgiving gatherings, hopefully having had good company and fellowship, as well as special foods, we're now having to think about the next big day on our calendar, which of course is Christmas. That day when we celebrate the earthly human birth of God on earth; God come to us through Jesus of Nazareth. We'll again gather with our families and friends, perhaps a church service will be a part of the tradition, perhaps not, and then we'll start the New Year with perhaps another celebration. But I've often come to wonder, if even most of us who profess Christ, really have an understanding as to why Jesus of Nazareth was able to fit the description of what this Savior or Christ was for so many, but then not at all for whole other groups of humanity?

I'd like to invite us all to see the coming weeks before the actual celebration of Christmas, naturally these would be the weeks of Advent, as a time for us to really try to consider the meaning of what it is that we're celebrating on December 25<sup>th</sup>. Was it just through miracles that the apostles and then early Christians came to believe in Christ, or was there something more? How did he use the Scriptures in his own preaching and teaching? To friends and to the opposite? How did the more analytical minds who followed Christ come to their understandings? What about the Pharisees who were believing in Christ as the long awaited for messiah? We know full well that there were several who did, and some who held powerful positions, like Nicodemus. Very importantly, Nicodemus knew the Scriptures, was an expert in them, what did he see? In the years after the crucifixion and resurrection, the writers of the Gospels, not to mention Paul, as well as countless other writers who were writing, began to focus on those connections between what we've come to know as the Old and New Testaments of our faith.

Over the course of this Advent, we're going to be focusing on how the Prophets of the Old Testament became intertwined with the story of Christ, which was one of the big reasons so many did come to see Jesus of Nazareth as the logical answer to what everyone had been waiting for. They were able to make the connection of not only heart, but mind, to what Christ coming to humanity meant. **AND THAT'S REALLY WORTH CELEBRATING!!!**

To delve into this, the Sunday messages will be focused on this topic using the Prophets as our guide, but then I also encourage and moreover invite folks to come and take part in bible study, either virtually on Monday evenings, or in person on Wednesday mornings in West Milford. We may just come out with a broader understanding and greater appreciation of what the 'big picture' the message of Christmas is....

And lastly, I want to also encourage folks to take advantage of holiday things happening in and about the community. Strong communities promote a sense of ownership and care for the



community overall! And then, while you're there, mention the things happening here at WMPC, invite folks to come to church, whether to a worship service on Sunday or Christmas Eve, or to other things happening. And I will say that I do see several doing exactly that, but I also know that it's something we can always give more effort and focus to, even when we already can feel stretched so thin. Invite a friend or neighbor to church. That's what we're to do.

This Christmas Eve service on December 24<sup>th</sup> will be at 9 pm, as last year. Also, as last year, we'll be having the brass ensemble led by Keith Williams, and then also Jonathan is bringing in a very talented and accomplished harpist from NYC named Mia Theodoratus to take part. You can see her work online by Googling her name, it's going to be a beautiful service.

Good things have happened this year at WMPC, and I see good things coming in the New Year. Personally, you all as a community have sustained me through a rather challenging year on several fronts; with the passing of family members, health scares for my parents, chaos and excitement brought on by my sons, and all of that being coupled with the work of the church which goes far at keeping me out of trouble. You make me feel supported and valued, and honestly, most days that's all I need, and I thank you more than you can realize. I'm looking forward to what 2025 will bring us.

In Christ's Service,  
Pastor Chris



# Joys & Concerns



## Concerns:

- \* Barbara's sister died. Prayers for the family
- \* Kathy's migraines are better. Pray that they go away.
- \* Don Cox is in the hospital, prayers he will soon feel better.
- \* Prayers for all the firefighters working to contain the nearby fires and the families impacted by the blaze.
- \* Prayers for Sandy Zimmer on the loss of her Son Walter. Please keep them all in your prayers.
- \* Rich is recovering from prostate surgery.
- \* Our choir director Johnathan, is doing well after being in the hospital . Many thanks for all the prayers.
- \* Karen's daughter, Denise's car was sideswiped by a driver who left the scene. Her car rolled over but, thankfully, she is not seriously injured. Bruises, sore muscles.
- \* Kathy Holley: prayers that our country may come together in peace.
- \* Cyndy asking for prayers for her friend Steve who is now on hospice.
- \* Kathy's car hit a barrier on Thursday but she is fine.
- \* Prayers for Karen Sabayan and family after her mom died yesterday.
- \* Dawn's brother Patrick has leukemia. Prayers for him.
- \* Michaela's uncle Robert had gallbladder surgery this week. Prayers for a safe recovery.
- \* Claire Mandeville is suffering from severe depression. Not answering calls or emails. Prayers that everyone reaching out to help will be successful.
- \* Betsy Post's husband is suffering from Alzheimer's, prayers for both of them as they deal with this..
- \* Prayers for all the first responders who have been working so hard on the fires and for all the families worried about their homes.
- \* Cyndy is asking for prayers for a friend in Lancaster, PA. Who cracked her sacrum.
- \* Fran updated us on baby Ed who is now 8 years old. He does not talk but is a sweet child who unfortunately needs heart surgery again. His dad returns from Syria on 12/20 and the surgery is on 12/26.
- \* Kathy had a bad car accident when her neck was broken and she is praising God that she is still here. Her children are having auditions today for a play.
- \* Bonnie-Gail Bishop had surgery and is home and doing well.
- \* Linda-Asking for prayers for her niece, JoAnn who just had surgery for bladder cancer.

## Joys:

- \* Betsy: 70 graves have been uncovered and cleaned. Half way there. Thanks to Myrtle who spent a lot of time uncovering stones. Hattie Schofield, a child, now has her tiny stone uncovered.
- \* Ashley thanks to the congregation for prayers for her daughter, Brianna, who is recovering from a ruptured appendix.
- \* Roberta is happy to see Don and Betty Cox back with us in church.
- \* Caryl was on vacation and met Andrea Bocelli..
- \* Great joy for special birthdays this week. Jean is 93 today, Ruth is 93 on Friday and our very own Riley will be 13-gasp a teenager on Friday. Happy birthday to all three.
- \* Barbara is home from the hospital after her surgery with a good prognosis. Needs to take it easy.
- \* Sandy let us know that Erin is pregnant and due in May. Wonderful news.
- \* Joy for new faces in choir.
- \* Kathy Holley wants to know if anyone wants \$10.00 scrip to give to mailman, bus driver etc. She will have to order them if we want them.
- \* Marilyn is happy for her first great-grandchild. A girl was born Thursday.
- \* Happy birthday to Sophie who will be 16 on Wednesday.
- \* A joy for Russell Fleming receiving Eagle award.
- \* Chris and Hala are happy that Jordan is here for the week end.
- \* Riley made the Honor Roll at Macopin.
- \* Thanks to Fran for her beautiful music this morning.
- \* Barbara-Thanking God for a successful surgery. Thanks for the cards and prayers.





# SESSION'S REFLECTIONS

DECEMBER 2024

SUBMITTED BY BETSY ENGELHARDT, CLERK OF SESSION

Our church is buzzing with activity and November's Session meeting had us covering lots.

**PROPERTY & SCOUTS:** We hope to make our wish for installing a chair lift from Fellowship Hall to the side entrance of the sanctuary a reality in 2025. Rich Hepp is working on this. Our relationship with Scout Troop 244 is a cherished one. As usual, they completed the fall cleanup of leaves in November. On November 24<sup>th</sup> the scouts held an Eagle Court of Honor for Russ Fleming in attendance where members of WMPC. They will also be holding Courts of Honor for Eagle Scouts on Dec 28<sup>th</sup> for the first **GIRL** Eagle Scout and another on Jan 11<sup>th</sup> for a hard-working boy. They would love to see our congregation join them at these ceremonies.

**CLERK OF SESSION:** Generic 2025 Giving Envelope Packets should arrive in mid-December for those that request them for their weekly giving. They will be available in the vestibule of the sanctuary and through the church office.

**PASTOR REPORT:** We will be sharing a subscription with Oak Ridge Presbyterian that provides text messaging capabilities for those that register. Sandy sent out a registration link in November. This will enable us to quickly notify those registered of church closures and other pertinent details. The news blasts by email will continue to provide news on a regular basis. Pastor Chris was glad to announce our church collected 42 Christmas Shoeboxes and \$290 to cover shipping costs to be distributed by Samaritan's Purse to needy children throughout the world. We hope to have the church directory completed by year end.

**WORSHIP:** Christmas Eve service will be held at the same time as last year – 9 PM.

Plans are underway for a brass ensemble and a harpist for this worship service.

**CHRISTIAN ED:** Annual Chuck Ening Toy Drive will be distributing toys out of the scout house on Dec 14<sup>th</sup>. Kathi is looking for toy donations.

**OUTREACH:** Come join the WM Player's Holiday Sing-Along Dec 6 & 7 at 7:30 AND Dec 8 at 2PM in Fellowship Hall. We are reviewing changes we would like to see in our church website. Any suggestions should be forwarded to the office or Carol Stanhope.

**STEWARDSHIP:** Our 2025 pledge campaign never has a deadline. If you have not returned a pledge card yet, we welcome any and all! Reminder that all church members have a per capita commitment of \$48 to be paid by year end.

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL!!!

# Merry Christmas

## Deacons Doings December 2024

Another year has passed. Many of the Deacon activities occur behind the scene. The table is set each month for communion. Windows are decorated for each season. Certain special holidays are recognized on their Sunday.

The sanctuary is now set for the season of Advent. Deacons decorated with the boxes of bows and garlands that were brought down from the attic by the Senior Saints. Pastor Chris enjoyed climbing a ladder as he placed wreaths on the windows.

Deacons participated in the annual rummage sale by selling refreshments of hot dogs, hamburgers, and drinks.

Pop Corn and cotton candy were sold on Movie Night. Cotton Candy was sold at the Bubbling Springs Harvest Fest.

Deacons have a discretionary fund that is dispersed when needed. Please let me know if you or anyone has a special, immediate need and we will discretely take care of it.

At the Christmas Bazaar, we had the Deacons' Cafe. We set the stage for serving lunch and sold lunch to the dealers.

Deacons are active, but we don't work alone. Senior Saints help when needed. Other church members join us to help when needed, especially in the kitchen.

Certain Deacons have embraced certain jobs of their own, becoming a personal job of devotion and special care.

Audrey is in charge of flowers for the sanctuary. You may get in touch with her and sign up on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall. You may designate what they are for: birthday, remembrance, joy, etc. Two bouquets cost \$40.

You will find poinsettia forms in your Sunday Bulletin. Write a check and give to Pat or a Deacon.

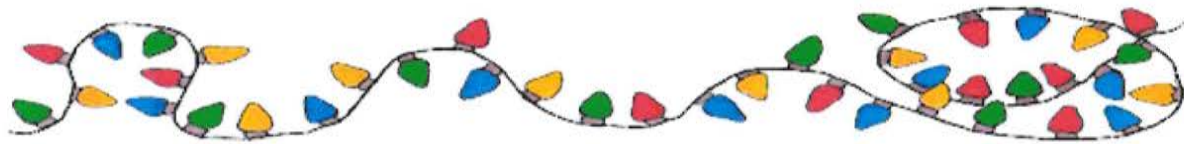
Deacons will again join with the Women's Association in contributing money toward gift cards for children in need as designated by a school counselor. There will be a jar at coffee hour if you wish to contribute.

Cards are sent to many of our congregation in recognition of birthdays, facing surgery and recovery, illness, need of a note of encouragement. Recognizing the needs of our congregation is a special part of being a Deacon. We know many people but, certainly, we have missed someone. If anyone knows of a person who would need a card or a phone call or a visit, please let a Deacon be aware of this.

Deacons are here to serve others. We have space for you if you care to join us. As I sat in the sanctuary on the first Sunday of Advent, and viewed the altar, I had a special feeling of peace. We worked together, joined with the congregation, and another year has passed. Merry Christmas | Joy to all |

Marty Tappan, - Moderator





## WA December newsletter

And now it is Advent, the season of waiting.

The church has been decorated in anticipation of Christmas. Again our Senior Saints were a great help getting our decorations out of the attic and hanging all the high items, this year we enlisted Pastor Chris to do some ladder work.

We also have a special thank you to Pat and Don for decorating the windows in Fellowship Hall and the ceiling in Aunt Jenny's Attic. So many things get done behind the scenes.

The past month has been a busy one for the Women's Association working on the bazaar and getting everything out of Aunt Jenny's in preparation for the bazaar.

It was a truly lovely day. We had quite a few people attending. We could not have done it without the help of our Senior Saints who put up the outdoor decorations, set up chairs and tables for the vendors and the cafe.

Also a big shout out to our wonderful secretary Sandy for always helping us by printing out our signs, menus, etc. Sending our reminders. She is always there for us. Thank you Sandy.

We really have to thank everyone who baked goodies for the Sweet Stop, the ladies who decorated the room and sold the goods. The Sweet Stop made \$1969.50-amazing right?!

The total profit for the bazaar was \$3613.15.

A lot of work goes into this event and a sincere thank you to everyone who helped.

We want to wish everyone a most wonderful Christmas.

Blessings, Linda and Pam

MERRY  
CHRISTMAS



## SUNDAY SCHOOL DOINGS

The activities in Sunday School sure has kept us busy! During November our children helped to spread God's love by suppling items for Christmas Operation Shoebox and packing the boxes but not before testing out many items!

We also heard of the power of pray as we discovered Daniel and the Lion. We then decorated lion cookies-yummy! One can not hide from God and the sins of one will affect many were themes we discussed as we heard of Jonah and the whale. Some of us were brave enough to put our hand in the belly of the whale to rescue Jonah. Did you try during coffee hour?

We will begin December with an advent lesson presented on November 24, as December 1 is a Family Service. The next two Sunday's we will be exploring the Bible stories of Zechariah and Elizabeth and the birth of baby Jesus.

We will also be preparing for the pageant which will be presented on December 22 during the church Service.

### UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES:

December 1, Family Service

December 21, Pageant rehearsal at 9:00- only those in the pageant will be allowed in the sanctuary. All parents are invited to wait in Fellowship Hall; coffee/tea and treats will be served.

December 22, Pageant-All must be in the classroom at 8:30

December 29, 10:00 Family Service at Oak Ridge

Miss Dale and Miss Kathi thank you for your continuing support.

"May the light of Christ shine brightly in your heart and home this Christmas"

Submitted by; Kathi Enering

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kathi Enering". The signature is stylized and cursive.



## December in the Pantry

Before we get into December, we want to thank all that helped us provide Thanksgiving dinners for the families that use our pantry. Between your donations and the donations of other folks in our community along with help of Shoprite, Stew Leonard's, Beltone, organizations in and beyond our town like WM Rotary and the Pompton Lakes Elks, collections in neighborhoods, and places like Bald Eagle, 60 families had a healthy Thanksgiving meal.

In December the pantry will once again need your help for Christmas dinners. There will be a list posted in Fellowship Hall of items needed. Just drop them off in the pantry or in the bin outside the kitchen doors if you're just passing through town. Consider putting the dinner items into bags on December 15th at 1:00. It usually only takes an hour or so. Then in the week of December 16th, distributing the bags to the families, time and date to follow.

With our whole hearts we wish you all a Christmas season of great joy and love and a New Year of health and happiness. The pantry team

merry  
christmas



**“SAVE THE DATE”**

## **WMPC COMMUNITY ONLINE AUCTION**



**Friday, February 21 & Saturday,  
February 22, 2025**

**Two Preview Days on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>**

For the FIFTH consecutive year, the Auction Committee of WMPC is excited to announce the upcoming **Community Online Auction**, with bidding to take place on

**Friday, February 21 and Saturday, February 22, 2025,  
plus, two preview days on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>.**

This auction serves as a crucial fundraising event, vital in sustaining our historic West Milford landmark and supporting our ongoing outreach programs and community services.

You can help us to make this auction a success by becoming a **SPONSOR** or donating an **AUCTION ITEM** - we are searching for a wide range of offerings, including adventures, tickets, experiences (such as guided hikes or tours, lessons, tastings, and more), products, gift baskets, handcrafted items, meals, and any other creative contributions you may have in mind.

**Please mark the date on your 2025 Calendar and encourage your friends and relatives to take part.**

**More details will be coming soon.**

**All donations will be greatly appreciated.**

**PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUPPORT THE 2025 AUCTION**

## **WMPC 2025 Community Online Auction Sponsor / Donor Agreement Form**

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_\_\_

We are proud to be a **sponsor** at the \_\_\_\_\_ level. Enclosed is a check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**PREMIER - \$500 / PLATINUM - \$350 / GOLD - \$250 / SILVER - \$150**

The business name listed will be used on promotional materials and social media as written; please list your name as you would like it to appear. Please email your logo in jpeg or pdf format to [wmpchurch@gmail.com](mailto:wmpchurch@gmail.com)

I do not wish to be a sponsor but would like to **make a financial donation** of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ towards the event.

I would like to donate the following **auction item**:

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

***Please mail this form to WMPC Community Virtual Auction, 1452 Union Valley Road, West Milford, NJ 07480***

***or email to [wmpchurch@gmail.com](mailto:wmpchurch@gmail.com)***

**West Milford Presbyterian Church is a tax-exempt organization as defined by IRS section 501c3  
to which gifts and donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.**

**ID: 23-6393377**

West Milford Presbyterian Church



2024 POINSETTIA ORDERS

<u>Plant Size</u>	<u>Price Each</u>	<u>Total</u>
1- 8 inch Pot	\$15.00	_____



Total Price: \_\_\_\_\_  
Make Checks Payable To  
Board Of Deacons

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone# \_\_\_\_\_

Message: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Poinsettias will be Red. Please wait till after the Christmas Eve Service to take your flowers home. All orders must be in by December 22nd. and may be given to a Deacon or put in the Church Office. Thank You.



*in Concert*



Saturday, December 14th  
7:00 PM

Oak Ridge Presbyterian Church  
342 Oak Ridge Road, Oak Ridge, NJ

*Funding has been made available in part by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, through the State/County Partnership Block Grant Program, as administered through the Sussex County Arts and Heritage Council.*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9am - Worship Service 5pm - WM Players Tech 6pm - Scouts	2 5pm - WM Players Tech 7:30pm - Zoom Bible Study	3 9am - Community Food Pantry 5pm - WM Players Tech	4 11am - Bible Study @ WMPC 5pm - WM Players Tech	5 9am - Community Food Pantry 9am - Sr. Saints 5pm - WM Players Tech	6 5pm - WM Players Show	7 11am - Aunt Jenny's Attic 5pm - WM Players Show
8 9am - Worship Service 12pm - WM Players Show 6pm - Scouts	9 7:30pm - Zoom Bible Study	10 9am - Community Food Pantry 7pm - Session	11 11am - Bible Study @ WMPC 1pm - Aunt Jenny's Attic	12 9am - Community Food Pantry 9am - Sr. Saints	13 11am - Aunt Jenny's Attic	14 9am - Community Food Pantry 9am - Winter Farmers Market 11am - Aunt Jenny's Attic
15 <b>NEWSLETTER DEADLINE</b> 9am - Worship Service 1pm - Food Packing 6pm - Scouts	16 7:30pm - Zoom Bible Study	17 9am - Community Food Pantry	18 9am - Christmas Food Bags 11am - Bible Study @ WMPC 1pm - Aunt Jenny's Attic	19 9am - Christmas Food Bags 9am - Community Food Pantry 9am - Sr. Saints	20 11am - Aunt Jenny's Attic	21 11am - Aunt Jenny's Attic
22 9am - Worship Service 6pm - Scouts	23 7:30pm - Zoom Bible Study	24 <b>Christmas Eve</b> 9am - Community Food Pantry 9pm - Christmas Eve Service	25 <b>Christmas Day</b>	26 9am - Community Food Pantry 9am - Sr. Saints	27 11am - Aunt Jenny's Attic	28 9am - Community Food Pantry 11am - Aunt Jenny's Attic
29 10am - Joint Worship Service @ 6pm - Scouts	30 7:30pm - Zoom Bible Study	31 <b>New Year's Eve</b> 9am - Community Food Pantry				

