

The MESSENGER

December 2022-January 2023



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Staff

the Rev. Jeffrey Lang

Amy

Director of Music and Organist

Kate

Choir Director/Vocalist

Paisley

Videographer

Maya

Vocalist

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Administrative Assistant

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Parish Associate

Logan

Vocalist

*Items for the February edition
of this newsletter are accepted
in the church office
through 9:00AM, Monday,
January 23, 2023.*



*Early submissions
are joyfully accepted.*

*Submitted information will be
edited for clarity, accuracy,
and length.*

As the season of Advent rapidly approaches it seems like the days move more quickly and the events on our calendars fill up more rapidly. In this spirit the worship committee wants to share the church's upcoming events sequentially so that you can be aware of them for your own planning purposes. We extend a warm invitation to all and hope to see you often during these colder months.



With the first Sunday of Advent barreling toward us on November 27, you may be pleasantly surprised that more Christmas music will be incorporated into our worship services. The first service in Advent will take place in the church house and will include Christmas themes in music, including an opportunity to request your favorite carol. With snacks afterward we will have an opportunity to visit, also in the church house.

On December 4, we will return to the sanctuary and will celebrate the Lord's Supper together.

The next week highlights our popular Lessons and Carols service on December 11. You can expect to hear choral and instrumental selections of the season, and perhaps some lovely solo work with guitar accompaniment. Familiar passage readings from both Old and New Testaments will renew our sense of awe in the story of Christ's birth.

Accordingly, the plans for music offerings and Reverend Lang's gospel readings and messages from the pulpit will reflect and enhance the wonder and the joy of the Advent season. Please note that there will be Worship services on *both* December 18 and December 25, Christmas Sunday, at 10:30AM in the sanctuary. Our traditional early Christmas Eve service especially for families

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A Message from our Minister



There is a story about a man who purchased a donkey from a preacher. *‘The preacher told the man that this donkey had been trained in a very unique way (being the donkey of a preacher). The only way to make the donkey go was to say, “Hallelujah!” The only way to make the donkey stop was to say, “Amen!”*

The man was pleased with his purchase and immediately got on the animal to try out the preacher’s instructions. “Hallelujah!” shouted the man. The donkey began to trot. “Amen!” shouted the man. The donkey stopped immediately. “This is great!” said the man. With a “Hallelujah,” he rode off, very proud of his new purchase.

The man traveled for a long time through some mountains. Soon he was heading toward a cliff. He could not remember the word to make the donkey stop. “Stop,” said the man. “Halt!” he cried. The donkey just kept going. “Oh, no ... Bible! ... Church! ... Please Stop!!” shouted the man. The donkey just began to trot faster. He was getting closer and closer to the cliff edge. Finally, in desperation, the man said a prayer. “Please, dear Lord. Please make this donkey stop before I go off the end of this mountain, In Jesus’ name, AMEN.” The donkey came to an abrupt stop just one step from the edge of the cliff.

“HALLELUJAH!” shouted the man.’¹

The scriptures tell us that Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem on Palm Sunday riding on a donkey. Pious legend relates that Mary, close to giving birth to Jesus, made her way to Bethlehem with her husband Joseph astride a donkey. Whether or not Mary was conveyed by donkey to Bethlehem to give birth to Jesus, his life from birth to death was typified by humility.

A key component of the Christmas Story is that of the Divine condescension. The Son of God, the eternal Word, arrives on the stage of human history not with pomp and circumstance, but in humility.

God in Christ enters our experience with the purpose of redeeming human beings and setting right what had gone wrong in Adam’s sin. He does so not as one born to wealth or political standing, but rather the son of peasant parents, his father a laborer, a simple artisan, a carpenter. The home in which he grew up was situated in a nation under occupation by the Roman Empire.

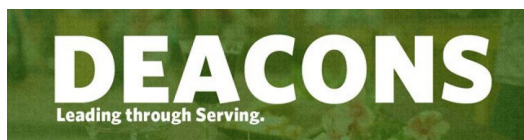
Luther describes the humble circumstances surrounding the birth of Jesus: “If Christ had entered in splendor like a king of earth, the appearance and the words would have been according to nature and reason and would have seemed to the eye according to the words, but then there would have been no room for faith. He who believes in Christ must find riches in poverty, honor in dishonor, joy in sorrow, life in death, and hold fast to them in that faith which clings to the Word and expects such things.”²

The Apostle Paul in Philippians 2:7 describes the life of Jesus by saying: ‘(He) emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.’

In 2 Corinthians 8:9 we read: ‘For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.’

Hebrews 4:15 describes the purpose of Christ’s humility: ‘For we do not have a high priest who

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The Deacons offer prayer, companionship, rides, or meals, but don't always know where care is needed. If you know of a need (your own or another's), call the church office or any of our Deacons: Susan A, Marianna B, Jane J, and Susy S (Moderator).



Diane and Mike B
William B
Beverley B
Levi C
Jacquie O
the Faulkner and Osborne families

A Message From the Minister continued from page 2

cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.'

The baby born to Mary in a Bethlehem manger is not a military conqueror or king. He is not born to wealth or power. Rather, the eternal Son of God enters human history and our experience to show us the heart of God, to illustrate God's love for us, and God's intention for human life. May we find cause to rejoice in

the Christmas story this Advent season and in the coming new year.

1. "A Donkey Joke for Christmas," *Welcome to N.E.D.D.I.*, November 24, 2008, www.neddi.org.
2. Martin Luther, *Sermons of Martin Luther, vol. 1, Sermons on Gospel Texts for Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany*, ed. John Nicholas Lenker (reprint: Baker, 1983), 19.



This January, we will spend three Sunday evenings discussing several selections from *The Screwtape Letters Study Guide: A Bible Study on the C.S. Lewis book The Screwtape Letters* by Alan Vermilye. The text contains both C.S. Lewis' book *The Screwtape Letters*, as well as commentary and questions provided by Vermilye.

The Screwtape Letters Study Guide is available through Amazon, Barnes and Noble, Christian



Book Distributors, and other booksellers.

The Bible study and book discussion will meet via Zoom on Sunday evenings at 6:00, January 8, 15, and 22.

From the Foreword to *The Screwtape Letters Study Guide*: In advising how to keep his *patient's* life with God ineffective and arbitrary, a senior devil admonishes a junior to, "Keep his mind on the inner life . . . For if he ever comes to make the distinction, if ever he consciously directs his prayers, 'Not to

continued on page 8

Spotlight on

Keeping You *in the Know*

The 25th Annual Golf Outing netted \$2,600.18 to be equally distributed between The Fischer VA Guest House, The William Breidenstein Fund, the Andy Caress Melanoma Foundation, and Valley Interfaith Community Resource Center.

Your Mission committee recently sent \$350.00 to Matthew 25 Ministries to aid victims of Hurricane Ian.

... to everyone who contributed to the month Food Offering in November. One hundred forty-six pounds of food and personal care items were delivered to Valley Interfaith Community Resource Center (VICRC)!



... to the folks who filled 19 Operation Christmas Child shoe boxes. They will be shared with children in need in the United States and abroad. Thank you for helping children around the world know they are not forgotten this Christmas.

... to the folks who filled 25 Thanksgiving Boxes for Glendale families in need. Your Mission committee added a Kroger gift card for a turkey and perishables. A special thank you to Chief Craig Walsh and to his fellow officers who delivered the boxes in time for Thanksgiving dinner.

... to everyone who made monetary donations to provide for their Holiday Baskets.



There are many opportunities to share with our neighbors during the holidays. We know that it may be difficult or impossible to contribute to all the needs in our community and in the world. Instead, we ask you to give as you are able to the opportunities that speak to your heart. Every gift—large or small—is used to create a better world for all of God's children.

Missions



As Covid continues to play a role in our lives, VICRC is again asking for \$25.00 Target gift cards instead of gifts for the children they serve.

These gifts will be accepted Sundays, November 27, and December 4.



Specially marked baskets are available near the Mitten Tree for your gift cards.



GLAD House is gratefully accepting donations of hats, gloves, mittens, and scarves for the children they serve. You can place these items on the tree in the Narthex.

They are also accepting gift cards of any value from Target or Wal-Mart so the staff may shop for the children.

These gifts will be accepted Sundays, November 27, and December 4 and 11.



When we give to the Christmas Joy Offering, we share our love with the leaders of our Church—past, present, and future.

50% of your gifts assist current and retired church workers and their families with critical financial needs.

50% of your gifts make it possible for students to learn and grow in faith at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

The Christmas Joy Offering will be collected on Sundays, December 11 and 18.
Special offering envelopes will be available in the Narthex each of those Sundays.

December

*Birthdays and
Anniversaries*



Leslie M.....	1
Tim V	5
Ken C	10
John C	13
Jane and Bob J.....	16
Susy S	19
Gary M	20
Susy and Richard S.....	27
Dawn and Tim V.....	28



Due to the Yoga instructors schedule, yoga will be sporadic, with dates and times available via email from Karen R.

If you would like to be on the email list, please contact Karen.



*Music Live at
Christ Church!*

Sunday, December 4
at 3:00PM in the Chapel of the Holy Spirit

The Canterbury Brass

A seasonal favorite, this Cincinnati professional brass quintet returns to Christ Church to play a concert of Christmas and holiday favorites. This is a popular event and arriving early is recommended!



The taste of Cincinnati!

All men are invited to gather for lunch at Gold Star Chili on Springfield Pike in Springdale, Wednesday, December 14.

*Fellowship begins when you arrive;
lunch begins at 12:30pm.*

A Festival of Lessons & Carols

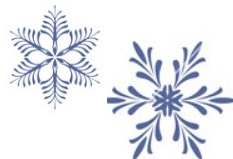
Sunday, December 18
at 5:00PM in the Historic Church

The choirs of Christ Church Glendale sing this annual service which centers around many of the formative and foundational scripture reading of Advent and Christmas. Each reading is followed by a related hymn or anthem. A festive reception will follow in All Saints' Hall.

January

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Robert K	7
Mary S.....	7
Gene M.....	12
Diane B.....	13
Mark B.....	16
Frank L	18
Leslie and Gary M.....	18
Anthony O.....	20
Diane S	30
Bill F	31



January 8, 15, and 22
6:00PM, ZOOM

The Screwtape Letters Study Guide: A Bible Study on the C.S. Lewis book The Screwtape Letters by Alan Vermilye.

You may sign-up to receive the ZOOM link for this Bible study by using the sheet on the Church House bulletin board or by calling the church office.



The taste of Cincinnati!

All men are invited to gather for lunch at Gold Star Chili on Springfield Pike in Springdale, as 12:30PM, Wednesday, January 11, 2023.

Good food and fellowship—yum!



Wednesday, January 11
10:00AM

Bring your favorite beverage and gather in the church library for discussion of *The Baker's Secret* by Stephen P. Kiernan. A shimmering tale of courage, determination, optimism, and the resilience of the human spirit.

On June 5, 1944, as dawn rises over a small town on France's Normandy coast, Emmanuelle is baking the bread that has sustained her fellow villagers in the dark days since the Germans invaded her country. Learn Emma's secret for making contraband bread to share with the hungry villagers and the clandestine network of barter and trade that she and the villagers use to thwart their occupiers.



Music Live at Christ Church!

Thursday, January 5, 2023
at 12:05PM in the Chapel of the Holy Spirit

Molly Sanford, piano

Molly is pursuing a DMA in piano at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. She is the co-founder of Ravendor Studios, where she works on production of film scores and instrumental works. She will play a concert on CCG's beautiful Yamaha C7 semi-concert grand piano in the live acoustic of the Chapel.

Advent continued from page 1

will take place at 5:00PM, on Saturday, December 24. You can look forward to a brief but moving service including carol singing and candle lighting.

Along with the new year on January 1 comes the church season of Epiphany. Holy Communion is planned for that Sunday. Please join us throughout January as we follow the story of Christ's baptism and his journey of faith. Wishing all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Worship Committee



Winter Bible Study continued from page 3

what I think thou art but to what thou knowest thyself to be,' our situation is . . . desperate." And so C.S. Lewis launches us into a collection of devilish letters from Uncle Screwtape to his 'nephew' Wormwood in his classic and widely popular, *The Screwtape Letters*.

Lewis wrote about the inspiration for the book in a letter to his brother who had recently been rescued from nazi-surrounded Dunkirk during WWII. Lewis explained that in church on July 21, 1940 - the morning after he had listened to a very persuasive radio speech by Hitler that made even Lewis waiver in his convictions - he had been "struck by an idea for a book which I think might be both useful and entertaining. It would be called *As One Devil to Another* . . . the idea would be to give all the psychology of temptation from the other point of view."

As much as *The Screwtape Letters* did indeed prove to be very 'useful' to thousands during the confusion of WWII, it is a book equally valuable for us in today's culture of rapid change and confusion. Recognizing an enemy of truth and the Christian faith in the complex world around us is challenging, yet recognizing

the subtle, shadowy whispers and twists of an enemy within is often even more difficult. But before there can be hope of progress in dealing with any enemy, the enemy must first be recognizable. Therefore any assistance and wisdom in this recognition is genuinely welcomed. And this is what Alan Vermilye has done with his study of Lewis's *The Screwtape Letters*.

Vermilye walks the reader through each Screwtape letter and wisely asks questions to bring out turns and twists in the thoughts and emotions we each experience and that Lewis wanted us to recognize. He helps us to see where crippling 'truths' are often nothing more than half-truths and lies that enslave us with pride and defensiveness or shame and reticence.

From his years of teaching Bible study classes, Vermilye also smartly adds Scripture to weigh in on the discussion. For anyone or group that wants to become more intimate with God by reassessing some of the enemy's strongholds within, I highly recommend Alan Vermilye's study.

Seven Ubran, PhD

All I Want for Christmas

by David S. Blanchard

This is a time of year when we ask—and are asked—what do you want? Shall it be another tie, a new pair of gloves, a book? We ask and we answer. We shop, we wrap, we ship. And the season usually comes and goes without us ever really answering the question: What do you want?

Some of the things we want we might be afraid to ask for because we can't be sure what we would do if we got them. Many things we want we don't know enough to ask for. Most things we can't ask for because we know no one can give them to us.

Most people ask the question without any interest in really knowing, yet it can be a

question for each of us to hold on to for a time in mind and heart. What do we want? Not what would we like, but what do we want to give us a deeper connection with life and to help us give expression to our love? Not a long list of things, but a sense of clarity that illuminates what it is we are doing and why. Not outward signs of generosity, but an internal sense of caring that guides us to give in any season. Not just the reflex of always giving, but also the courage to truly answer some of those people who ask us, 'What do you want'?

Taken from: Kathleen Montgomery, ed. *Day of Promise: Collected Meditations, Vol. 1*



"Our hearts grow tender with childhood memories and love of kindred, and we are better throughout the year for having, in spirit, become a child again at Christmastime." Laura Ingalls Wilder

"Christmas waves a magic wand over this world, and behold, everything is softer and more beautiful." Norman Vincent Peale

"Christmas is doing a little something extra for someone." Charles M. Schulz

"God is here. This truth should fill our lives, and every Christmas should be for us a new and special meeting with God, when we allow his light and grace to enter deep into our soul." Josemaria Escriva

"Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love." Hamilton Wright Mabie

Another year for God

Another year is dawning; dear Father, let it be,
in working or in waiting, another year with thee...

Another year of progress, another year of praise,
another year of proving thy presence all the days.

Another year of service, of witness for thy love;
another year of training for holier work above.

Another year is dawning! Dear Father, let it be,
on earth, or else in heave, another year for thee.

Frances Ridley Havergal





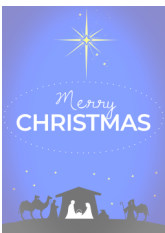
*"For last year's words belong to last year's
language
And next year's words await another voice.
And to make an end is to make a beginning."* T. S. Eliot

*"We spend January 1st walking through our
lives, room by room, drawing up a list of work
to be done, cracks to be patched. Maybe this
year, to balance the list, we ought to walk
through the rooms of our lives...not looking for
flaws, but for potential."*

Ellen Goodman



December

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>This calendar is a living document subject to frequent changes. Check the website (firstpresbyterianglendale.org) for the most accurate calendar. Please call the church office with calendar updates.</p>				1 6:30PM- Choir Rehearsal	2	3
4  10:30AM - Worship Sharing Tree Mitten Tree  Christmas Memorial Flowers	5 2:00PM- Squirrely Stitchers	6	7	8 6:30PM- Choir Rehearsal	9	10 10:00AM- Choir Rehearsal
11 <i>Lessons & Carols</i> 10:30AM - Worship Mitten Tree Christmas Joy Offering  Christmas Memorial Flowers	12 9:00AM- Session reports due	13	14 12:30PM- Men's Lunch at Gold Star 6:00pm- Session meeting	15	16	17
18 10:30AM - Worship Food Offering Christmas Joy Offering 	19 2:00PM- Squirrely Stitchers	20	21	22	23	24 5:00PM - Worship 
25 10:30AM - Worship 	26	27	28	29	30	31



January

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1  10:30AM- Worship 	2 2:00PM- Squirrely Stitchers	3	4	5 6:30PM- Choir Rehearsal	6	7 TBD- Officer Training (Zoom, for new and returning officers)
8 10:30AM- Worship 6:00PM- Winter Bible Study (Zoom)	9 9:00AM- Session reports due 3:00PM- Mission mtg.	10	11 10:00AM- Women's Book Club 12:30PM- Men's Lunch at Gold Star 6:00pm- Session mtg.	12 6:30PM- Choir Rehearsal	13	14
15 10:30AM - Worship Congregational mtg. Food Offering 6:00PM- Winter Bible Study (Zoom)	16 10:30AM- Deacon mtg. 2:00PM- Squirrely Stitchers	17	18	19 6:30PM- Choir Rehearsal	20	21
22 10:30AM - Worship Officer Ordination/ Installation 6:00PM- Winter Bible Study (Zoom)	23 9:00AM- February newsletter items due	24	25	26 6:30PM- Choir Rehearsal	27	28
29 10:30AM - Worship	30	31	This calendar is a living document subject to frequent changes. Check the website (firstpresbyterianglendale.org) for the most accurate calendar. Please call the church office with calendar updates.			



Shared with you in Christian love

First Presbyterian Church, Glendale

155 East Fountain Avenue
Glendale, OH 45246

513-771-6195
glenpres@fuse.net
firstpresbyterianglendale.org

the Reverend Jeffrey Lang

Worship begins at 10:30AM
Sunday, September 11, 2022 through
Sunday, June 45, 2023.

Church Office Hours

Monday, 9AM-3PM, Tuesday, 9AM-1PM
Wednesday, 9AM-1PM, Thursday, 9AM-3PM
The office is closed every Friday.



*Lessons
& Carols*

Sunday, December 11, 10:30AM



Christmas Day worship, 10:30AM