

# EASTON CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

DECEMBER, 2020

PEACHBLOSSOM PRESS NEWSLETTER

## Mission Statement

*“Sharing the love and blessing of God with all.”*



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For all the beauty and heart-warming images of the “traditional” Christmas story told in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke—the stable, the manger, the angels, the wise men—there’s something about the poetic and mysterious language in the opening chapter of the Gospel of John that speaks to this season in a way that nothing else can.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. . . . The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world” (John 1:1, 4-5, 9, NIV).

First-century Palestine was a rather bleak place in many ways. The land was occupied by the Roman army, with strict rules, heavy taxation, and other limits on daily life. It was a stratified society of have’s and have-not’s, one in which large swaths of people had few if any rights, one where lepers were ostracized and those with disabilities had to beg near the temple.

For many people, it was a rather hopeless time. And it was into that world that the light burst in: an announcement by John the Baptist, a vision to Mary and Joseph, a blaze of glory to shepherds in a field, and eventually a new dawn for an entire world. The heavy challenges of the time did not instantly disappear, but things certainly looked different for those who saw.

We hear the passionate words of the elderly saint at the temple, Simeon, as he finally laid eyes on the baby Jesus—this child for whom he had waited so long: “For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel” (Luke 2:30-32, NIV).

Two millennia later, as this rather bleak year of 2020 with its own long litany of difficult events comes to a close, what do we see?

Some of you may have found my Facebook post a few weeks back, describing a night when I ventured out into the yard to scan the night sky for the Leonid meteor shower, which had promised a good show. After 15 or 20 chilly minutes of fruitless searching I had decided to go back inside. And then, just as I scanned the eastern sky for one more look, a brilliant “shooting star” curved its way across my field of vision, leaving me with a “Wow” on my lips. I said that it was a reminder for me that hope often appears just when we’re ready to turn away.

How will the light burst into our midst this Advent and Christmas season? Perhaps this year we will more fully appreciate what it means to encounter Christmas as they did in that little town of Bethlehem so many years ago:

*“Yet in thy dark streets shineth, the everlasting Light.*

*The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.”*

**Pastor Walt**

- 1 Gene Hagenberger
- 2 Tony Fluharty
- 4 Rica Denlinger
- 8 Karter May Mullikin
- 12 Ashley Ward
- 14 Jennifer Carrion
- 15 Camryn Phillips,  
Ed Wildasin, Jimmy Fike, Genna Ulrich
- 16 Margie Ridenour
- 17 Sue Ann Brockson, Todd Lyons
- 18 Bradley Hughes
- 19 Christa Crannell, Ruth Ann Smith
- 20 Rick Marshall, Karen Tarr, Ronnie Miller,  
John Banghart
- 21 Billy Schnaitman, Jr.
- 22 Kenny Ball, Michael Schwaninger, Nora Quidas,  
Luke Carrion
- 23 Charles Wooters
- 24 Mabel Kinsey, Mark Miller, Justine Foxwell,  
Carolyn Lane
- 25 Baby Jesus
- 26 Betty Schwaninger
- 27 John Stichberry III
- 28 Taylor Ann Jacobs
- 29 Wendy Faulkner
- 30 Megan Timms
- 31 Robert McGee



- 2 Gene & Diane Walbridge
- 4 Larry & Kathy Fike
- 23 Mike & Nina Jacobs
- 28 Mark & Tracy Lednum
- 31 John & Mischelle Nalley

### Thank you, Pastor Walt

Congratulations and "Thank you" many times over are extended to Pastor Walt Wiltschek. On November 27, Walt will celebrate having served, perhaps at times having seemed more like survived, 3 years as our Pastor. He has blessed us with grace, wit and enthusiasm in challenging times, often putting others needs before his own. His sermons are at once delightful and challenging, reminding us with careful study of scripture, laced with humor and mischief, of both the seriousness and joy of our calling as followers of Jesus. The personal visitations he makes and the many warm notes of thank you and encouragement he sends portray the level of his caring love for all. Well done Pastor Walt. What a friend!



We're hoping that the current health restrictions will allow us to have our traditional Christmas Eve service later this month. To better allow for safe distancing in our space, we're going to plan to offer two services this year, at 6 p.m. and 8:30 p.m., with a maximum of 50 people at each service. We'll ask you to sign up in advance for one of these times. If other arrangements become necessary closer to the time, we'll let you know. Thank you for your flexibility in this strange year!



Next Leadership Team meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 8, at 1:00 p.m. in the fellowship hall. Please wear your mask and maintain social distancing.

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### Minutes from the November Meeting

- Judy's report agrees with Dale's.
- New tenants have paid their security deposit.
- Pastor Walt reported that Camp Mardela has a new administrator beginning January, 2021.
- We are still following CDC guidelines.
- Repairs on rental are making progress.
- There will be 2 Christmas Eve's services, 6p and 8:30p. 50 person capacity and you must sign-up for one or the other.
- Ministry Team gave brief reports.

## PUTTING CHRISTMAS ON THE MAP

Can you unscramble the names of the following famous (real and fictional) Christmas-season locations?

HELMHBEET  
TRAZEHAN  
LOVEWHIL  
FODDREB SLAFL  
HORNT LOPE  
FLORKECREEL ZAPAL  
HET DALN FO STEWSE  
SNAILD FO FIMITS YOTS



**Answers:** 1. Bethlehem; 2. Nazareth; 3. Whoville; 4. Bedford Falls; 5. North Pole; 6. Rockefeller Plaza; 7. The Land of Sweets; 8. Island of Misfit Toys.

### Why Advent?

Waiting can be hard, and not just for children. But I do love Advent: this four-week time when the Christian church prepares for Christmas.

Maybe I like Advent so much because it involves active waiting, not thumb-twiddling. It is a gift the church offers the world, to be active (which isn't the same as busy) in ways that open our hearts — and the hearts we touch — to the true meaning of Christmas.

Mother Teresa said, "At this Christmas when Christ comes, will he find a warm heart? Mark the season of Advent by loving and serving others with God's own love and concern."

When I take time during Advent to remember in prayer and with gifts of money and time those who have less food than I do, those who are lonely, those without a home; when I pause to share love with a child or an elder, or gratitude for a healthcare worker, pastor or teacher; when I wait for justice to replace oppression but, while I wait, find ways to work for that result ... the Spirit's warmth fills my waiting heart. I am ready to welcome Jesus.

—Heidi Mann

### BIBLE QUIZ

Which of the four Gospels name(s) Bethlehem as the place of Jesus' birth?

- A. Only Luke
- B. Matthew and Luke
- C. Mark and John
- D. All four



Answer: B (See Matthew 2:1; Luke 2:1-7.)

## 2021 Church Directory

Please begin submitting any corrections and/or additions for the 2021 Church Directory. Send to Lee Ann anytime at [eastonchurchofthebrethren@gmail.com](mailto:eastonchurchofthebrethren@gmail.com). Thank you!

## SERMON & SCRIPTURES DECEMBER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

### Dec. 6

"A Special Season: Bah, Humbug!"  
Second Sunday of Advent  
Ps. 13:1-6, Isa. 40:1-11, Mark 1:1-8,  
1 Thess. 5:16-27

### Dec. 13

"A Special Season: Even a Miracle Needs a Hand"  
Third Sunday of Advent  
Isa. 61:1-4, 8-11; Luke 1:46b-55

### Dec. 20

"A Special Season: Misfits"  
Fourth Sunday of Advent  
Matthew 1:18-25; Rom. 16:25-27; 1 Cor. 1:18-25

### Dec. 24

"A Special Season: What Christmas Is All About"  
Christmas Eve  
Isa. 9:2-7, Luke 2:1-16

### Dec. 27

Christmas Sunday  
Guest speaker

### Jan. 3, 2021

"A Special Season: It's a Wonderful Light"  
Epiphany Sunday  
Gen. 1:1-15, John 1: 1-9, Isa. 60: 1-6

## MUSIC FOR DECEMBER

December 6, Ellen Wile  
December 13, Ellen Wile  
December 20, Peach Blossom Bells  
December 27,

**Pastor Walt will be on vacation  
Dec. 25-Jan. 1. If you need care  
during this time or have an emer-  
gency need, please contact your  
deacon.**

## Our Prayer List

**Please pray especially for the following individuals and their families:** for those who have contracted COVID-19, for health care workers, and for government and civic leaders who are seeking the best way forward, for our District Executive, Gene Hagenberger, for all those who have been affected economically, for Camp Mardela and interim camp manager Curtis Hartman, the family of Ginger Brady, Gene & Jan Hagenberger, Dale Fike, Verna Calloway, Josh Greenwood, Pat Covey, Terry Mullikin, Steven Trax, John Trax,



Mary Kelly, Amelia Gunn and Chad Whitzel (BVS), Doris Schwaninger, Gloria Buzi and family, Brenna (a college senior at Bridgewater with cancer), Geoff Fox's friend Andre (battling cancer), Barrett Schartner, John Evans, Isabelle Halliday, Wyatt Ewing, Jack Wheatley, Jim & Loretta Lohr, Kathy Spurry, Lillian Sefcik, Beth Lockwood, Judy Haddaway, Jean & Don Saballus, Richard Scott, Billy Harding, Chuck Davis, Annabel Young, Larry Fike, Childlene Brooks, Alan Segar, Bruce Butler, Pat Lewis, Ellen Walbridge, Lee Roesti, Norman Harding, Gene & Betty Lednum, GraceWay CoB, Nancy Scheffler, Roger Plagge, JK Rider, John Nalley, Bobby Hopkins, Kurt Kline, Dee Candel, Mary Ann Kiser, Lois Schall, Natalie Jones, Jeff Wright, continuous prayers for our church family in Nigeria, continued prayers for Comfort Amos, Barbara Taylor, Leo Truban, Emerson Fike, Katelyn Howard, Christine & Kenny Fike. Pray for leaders & people that are working towards peace. Please phone the church to add or remove persons on our prayer list.



Worship will remain at 10 a.m. through December, with no Christian Education classes, as we continue to follow the protocols of the current health situation. We're monitoring the situation from week to week. The Christian Education team is preparing study resources each week, available in your bulletin.





## THE CAMP MARDELA SILENT AUCTION

It's almost time for Camp Mardela's silent auction! **The auction will officially "go live" Monday morning (Nov. 30) at 8 a.m., and bidding will close at 6 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 6.** You can find the auction at [32auctions.com/CampMardela2020](https://32auctions.com/CampMardela2020).

Anyone can browse, but to bid you will need to create an account (similar to eBay and other online purchasing sites). You can find that link at the top right of the site. If you win any items, you'll be able to make payment by credit card online or by sending check or cash to Camp Mardela within a week of the auction's conclusion. Free delivery will be available within 20 miles of camp or to any Eastern Shore Church of the Brethren congregation. Otherwise, winning bidders can arrange for shipping at additional cost or pick up their item(s) at the camp.

We expect about three dozen items to be up for bid, including an Ocean City condo stay, firewood, handmade crafts, theme baskets, collectible coins, special camp items, and much more. You might find the perfect Christmas gift! (Note: Many items will have minimum bids; if those minimums aren't met, then the items will be held for the 2021 auction, which hopefully will be held in person.) We encourage congregations to do a "preview" of the auction this Sunday by displaying the auction site in your online worship or on a screen if you are meeting in person.

This is an important fundraiser for the camp and its ministries, so we thank you in advance for your support. Happy Thanksgiving, and blessings to each of you as we enter the Advent season!



Feel free to enjoy a day at Camp walking the trails. Hiking is done by appointment only (in order to maintain social distancing). Please call for your appointment at 410-479-2861. Facilities and building will not be available.

Camp Mardela continues with their fundraiser of Scrip: What is Scrip? Buy gift cards online (all year long) at [www.shopwithscrip.com](http://www.shopwithscrip.com), pay online and a rebate will be earned between 2% and 16% that will immediately go towards Camp

Mardela. When your gift card arrives, use them for your everyday shopping...that simple. If you would like a copy of the instructions, contact Lee Ann and she can mail you a copy.

## **Camp Mardela Announces a new Camp Administrator**

The Camp Mardela board of directors is pleased to announced Jennifer Lynn Summy as the next administrator of Camp Mardela, located on 125 acres adjacent to Martinak State Park in Denton, Md. Summy will begin the position on Jan. 4, 2021.

A graduate of Lebanon Valley College (Annville, Pa.) with a B.A. in Music Business, Summy is currently working on completing a master's degree in Business Administration and Ministry from Mount Vernon (Ohio) Nazarene University. She has previously worked as a bank teller near her home in Duncannon, Pa., and as a counselor at Camp Swatara (Bethel, Pa.).

In addition to her business and camping background, she brings to the position extensive experience in music and theater, as well as advanced Spanish-speaking abilities and a deep faith life. She recently spent a year as a worship coordinator for The World Race, with time in a variety of contexts on four continents.

"A week at camp is a powerful catalyst in the faith of children and youth, and I am passionate about making the most of that experience for all parties involved," Summy said. "Every step of my spiritual journey has come from the growth and relationships at camp, and I believe that God works in mighty ways when we meet Him in the heart of His creation."

Summy's call to the position comes after a wide-ranging, months-long search process. She succeeds Gieta Gresh, who has served the camp as administrator since spring 2005.

Affiliated with the Mid-Atlantic District of the Church of the Brethren, Camp Mardela was established in 1948 and has been serving children and youth summer campers and year-round rental groups ever since. Summy's work will include leading the camp through its strategic plan centered around its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary: "Celebrating 75 Years, Serving the Future." Major annual events include the camp auction each spring and a camp supper in the fall.

For more information about Camp Mardela, contact [campmardela@gmail.com](mailto:campmardela@gmail.com) or call 410-479-2861.

# Attendance & Offering for November

	Attendance	33	45	41	30		149
	11/1/20	11/8/20	11/15/20	11/22/20	11/29/20		Totals
<b><u>Distributions</u></b>							
<b>General (06)</b>							
Envelopes	2,565.00	1,912.00	1,501.00	1,014.00			6,992.00
Loose Change/Cash	0.00	19.00	5.00	0.00	0.00		24.00
Tithes	2,565.00	1,931.00	1,506.00	1,014.00	0.00		7,016.00
<b>06 Income</b>							
Building Use							0.00
Tidewater Singers							0.00
Mid-Shore Intergroup, Inc							0.00
Wed. Beginners							0.00
Safe Harbor			30.00				30.00
Dutchmans Lane Rent				1,155.00			1,155.00
Harrison St. Rent Deposit for 11/1							0.00
Harrison St. Rent Deposit for 11/1							0.00
Subtotal of Income	0.00	0.00	30.00	1,155.00	0.00		1,185.00
Totals	2,565.00	1,931.00	1,536.00	2,169.00	0.00		8,201.00
<b>Special Offerings (07)</b>							
Deacon Fund	1,000.00						1,000.00
Camp Mardela							0.00
Firewood							
							0.00
In Kind							
In & Out							
Totals	1,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		1,000.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3,565.00</b>	<b>1,931.00</b>	<b>1,536.00</b>	<b>2,169.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>		<b>9,201.00</b>

# Volunteer Opportunities

## Ridgeway House Lunches

The 1st & 3rd Fridays of each month. For months that have five Fridays, lunches will be provided on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Friday. **Thank you to Misti Green who has volunteered to keep this service going.** Monetary and food donations (drink boxes, individual fruit cups, small bags of chips and cookies) are always welcome.

## NSC Food Pantry

Let's not forget that food prices keep going up! When we pay attention to our local, national and international food needs, we are reminded that people suffer from food insecurity all around. If we do not share of our bounty, others go hungry. Let us give, so others may live. Any non-perishable food items with good "best if used by" dates are accepted. **Consider bringing in your non-perishable items when church re-opens.**

## Interested in Serving as Worship Leader or doing the Children's Time?

We're always looking for new people to share their gifts! It doesn't take a lot of time--just a bit of preparation and a willingness to serve. If you would like to join this team of volunteers or want more information, please contact the church office or Pastor Walt.

The volunteer opportunities listed below are currently closed due to COVID-19. Please keep these opportunities in mind when things re-open.  
Thank you!!!

## Talbot Interfaith Shelter

The 2020 volunteer list is available for sign-up. Please take the time and look to see where you can spare a few hours of your time every other month. Any questions, please contact Norma Trax. **Our next date is January 19, 2021. If you are interested in providing a meal, please contact Norma Trax. (We will keep you up-dated should COVID-19 restrictions change in allowing volunteers to come to the shelter. )**

## Neighborhood Service Center

Please contact Marilyn Neal, if you are interested in volunteering at the center. Their phone number is 410-822-5015.







# DECEMBER 2020

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