

FOCUS



ON

FAITH

Volume 48, Number 1
2019



Sunday School—9:00 am
Worship—10:15 am

PASTOR: Rev. Dr. Bruce C. Stevenson
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC/ORGANIST: Dennis J. Duda

Faith United Church of Christ

5992 Route 378
Center Valley, PA 18034
610-282-3939
faithchurchcv@gmail.com
www.faithchurchucc.org



Thank you to the newsletter crew for their help in mailing the newsletters each month -

*Ruth Cressman, LaVerna Diehl,
Joan Hassler, Evelyn Hovis,
and Sue Walter*

2018—2019 Consistory

Officers:

President: Deb Orach
Vice President: Kevin Long
Secretary: Mary Ellen Long

Elders:

Deb Orach
Mim Allison
Jane Van Horn
Kevin Long

Deacons:

Colleen Kandt
Tom Berghold
Barb Scattergood
Mary Ellen Long

Justin Koser
Becky Hite

Church Treasurer: Joe Orach

Liaisons:

Christian Ed: Barb Scattergood
Kitchen Krew: Jane Van Horn
Fellowship/Outreach:
Enduring/Memorial Gifts: Mary Ellen Long
Property:
Staff Relations:

Worship: Mim Allison
Budget & Finance: Deb Orach
Mission: Kevin Long
Youth:
Day Care:
Choir: Tom Berghold

*We are a people
who have come together
through a common faith,
a common love,
and a common covenant
with the triune God;
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
and together we endeavor
to be a community of
worship,
education,
mission,
fellowship,
and stewardship.*



A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Friends,

June 21, 2018 was the “longest day of the year.” It was the “longest” not because we were able to squeeze a few additional hours into it but rather because on that day there were more hours of daylight than on any other day of the year. It was the Summer Solstice. But for those of us who like day light it was only down hill from there. Each day that followed contained less and less daylight until we arrived at December 21, 2018 the shortest day of the year, the Winter Solstice. As the Summer Solstice is called the longest day the Winter Solstice is called the shortest day of the year. It's all measured by the amount to sunlight, not hours.

As I write to you the Winter Solstice is approaching. Each day is getting darker. It is even possible that this newsletter will arrive just about that time.

Shortly after Easter, sometimes less than two months, the days start getting shorter. “Short days” give us less light and therefore less vision, less sight, and fewer opportunities. It’s a frustrating situation. We prefer light over darkness.

I always find it interesting that the darkest days of our year are the days before Christmas. In our darkness we desperately seek for a light to shine upon us. As the days get shorter and darker we look for this process the reverse itself. We want light and Jesus arrives and slowly the hours of daylight return; a little bit each day.

We may not notice it at first. Usually the cold of January and February distracts us but be assured that more light has come and day-by-day even more.

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

Isaiah 9:2

These words are among the many messianic promises of how a new day of hope, peace, joy, love, and light will be ushered by our Savior.

This newsletter is dated January 2019 but it will arrive in your home before Christmas, sometime around the Winter Solstice. However pay attention to the new light that is gradually coming into your life day by day and proclaim it as God's promise for a new year.

Peace,



**Sunday
January 6, 2019**

**10:15 Worship with
Communion**

FROM THE DISCIPLESHIP DESK

“I miss the way snow used to slow the world down.” That’s what this retired school administrator said to me as we sat across from each other sharing an afternoon coffee.

What a powerful observation? I instantly knew what my friend meant, and through his single statement, I understood a hidden yearning in myself. A sentiment, so strong that even though it stood concealed, I could not help but feel it emanate from my bones. Yes, days off from school because of snow was great. “No school!” I’d yell as I ran through the house. The fact that my mother stood at the front door offering me a snow shovel was, admittedly, a bit of a damper, but still, I was happy to be out of the classroom for a day.

As a kid, snow slowed the world out of a necessity and that slowing, in its necessity, gave me a great comfort. Six inches of snow not only meant there was nowhere *to* be except snuggled on the couch watching a movie with the family. The presence of snow meant there was nowhere else anyone *could* be but at home having a snowball fight or sledding down your favorite hill.

With advancements of PennDOT’s road-clearing technology in the last decades, the world isn’t forced to stop, and so it does not stop or even slow when the flakes begin to fall from the sky. Getting from place to place is a great thing, but I wonder if it is in-line with God’s plan for us.

The Old Testament talks about work that needs doing, but we also read about the times in-between work. God rested on the seventh day of creation. The Israelites were commanded to rotate their crops and let one field go fallow every year—“let your fields have a rest,” the

Lord said. God also commanded that the people observe days of celebration and feasting spaced throughout the year.

From the ancient days through the middle ages and even in the early years of the twentieth century, outdoor laborers were forced into days of rest by the rain and the snow. When God said to the world, “Slow down!” the world listened out of necessity.

Today, the world slowing down is usually not a necessity, but we still need those slow times in our lives. Our challenge is finding the spaces, the things in our lives that cause our individual worlds to slow down and take advantage of these spaces when they come along.

“Remember the Sabbath and keep it Holy,” God says. My sabbath lies in getting lost in a book or writing a fiction story. Movies are great for me, too. Find your time for Sabbath and when you do, make it a sacred time, and most importantly, fight for that time, because the world will not slow down all at once to give it to you.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Josh". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

GROWING IN FAITH WITH FAITH

Join us in the Memorial room on Sunday at 9 am to learn about the apostle John.

We will have refreshments and fellowship.

The Penn Northeast Conference Presents.....
the 14th Annual Youth Retreat



“#REALTALK”

“Sexuality and our Faith”

All youth in grades 6th-12th are invited!

February 22-24, 2019

Check-in Friday 6:00/Pick up Sunday at 1:00 pm

Blue Mountain Christian Retreat

1 Christian Ln, New Ringgold, PA 17960

Cost \$145/per person

(includes meals Saturday & Sunday)

*This is a technology friendly event – cell phones, IPADS, tablets, etc are welcome!

Our Whole Lives

Join us as we explore the UCC Curriculum, “Our whole lives” with trained facilitator Rev. Aaron Lauer

LIMITED SPACE! REGISTER EARLY!

REGISTRATION FORM for the 14th ANNUAL PNEC YOUTH RETREAT

Name _____

Birthdate: _____ Age: _____ *Grade at time of Event: _____ Male: _____ Female: _____

Address(Street) _____ City _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Cell Phone _____

Email _____@_____.

Home Church/Location _____

ONE ROOMMATE PREFERENCE? _____

*Preference is considered, but not guaranteed

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: Along with this form, please send a non-refundable \$50 deposit (per person) by January 15, 2019 to: Penn Northeast Conference, ATTN: Patty, 431 Delaware Avenue, Palmerton, PA 18071. After registering you will receive forms and information pertaining to the “PNEC Annual Youth Retreat”. Final payment and forms will be due February 1, 2019. *Adult chaperones, please mark Grade at time of Event - ADULT

Within Our Church Family



*Ezekiel Ryan Sosnowsky,
son of Andrew & Ashley Sosnowsky,
was baptized on Sunday, December
16, 2018. God's blessings!*

To Faith UCC,

Thank you for hosting PNEC Ministry Day!

*We also want to especially say THANK YOU
to Michelle and the fellowship crew! They were
absolutely AMAZING!*

*Pastor Bruce did a good job of announcing where the rest-
rooms were located!*

*Blessings,
The Planning Team*



~~oops!~~

From a church newsletter:

THANKS TO OUR NEW SUGGESTION BOX ...

... you can remain anonymous ...

while commenting about the church

Now the church mouse's identity can remain secret.

PENNY PARTY

*Where: Faith UCC
5992 Route 378
Center Valley, PA 18034*

*When: Sunday, January 27, 2019
(Snow date March 3)*



12^{pm} Doors Open

Lunch & Desserts

available for purchase

1^{pm} Games Begin

\$5/bag of tickets

Bring your coins! Change will be available!

***Fun and Prizes for
the whole family!***

DOOR PRIZES

BASKET RAFFLE

Penny Party Auction
Sunday, January 27, 2019
Help Needed Please!!

We invite everyone to join in the fun! The proceeds will benefit the General Fund and Mission.

How Can You Help?

~**Come**, and bring your friends, relatives, and neighbors! Please spread the word, YOU are the best form of advertising to share this fun event.

~Price is \$5 for a sheet of 70 numbers to bid on over 300 items that will be auctioned. Items are for children and adults.

~**Donations** are needed for these items:

~Monetary Donations are very helpful

~Donations of penny auction items (canned goods, snack foods etc.)

~Door Prizes \$5-\$10 Value (Gift Cards are a great help)

~Basket Raffle Items \$20 and up (Suggestions are available)

Or make a donation and we will make a basket for you.

~Baked Goods - looking for all of Faith's Favorites

~Hot Dog and Hamburger Rolls

~**Help is Needed to Set Up:**

~Set up in Fellowship Hall on Sat, Jan. 26 at 3:30 pm

~Work in the kitchen on Sunday

~Clean up after the party is over.

If you have any questions or would like to help make this fundraiser a huge success please contact Caroline Frantz at 610-691-8714 or any member of the Fundraising Committee!

Please See Flyer enclosed in the Focus for more details.

2019 Annual Faith Church Talent Auction



Our Annual On-Line Talent Auction will begin on February 3rd and run through February 23rd! You can help to make this one of our top fundraisers of the year!! If you can provide an item or talent to auction off, please email the details to Wes Koser at koser1@yahoo.com or fill out the enclosed form and drop it in the offering plate!

Items up for bid could include delectable homemade foods, entire meals delivered to your door, household services like HVAC maintenance, gardening, sports certificates, travel bargains, computer technical assistance, specialty services, hand crafted items and more all donated by church members. All items or services are intended for local pick up and not to be extended outside of the Lehigh Valley, PA.

Look for the Auction Website address in the February Focus on Faith!!



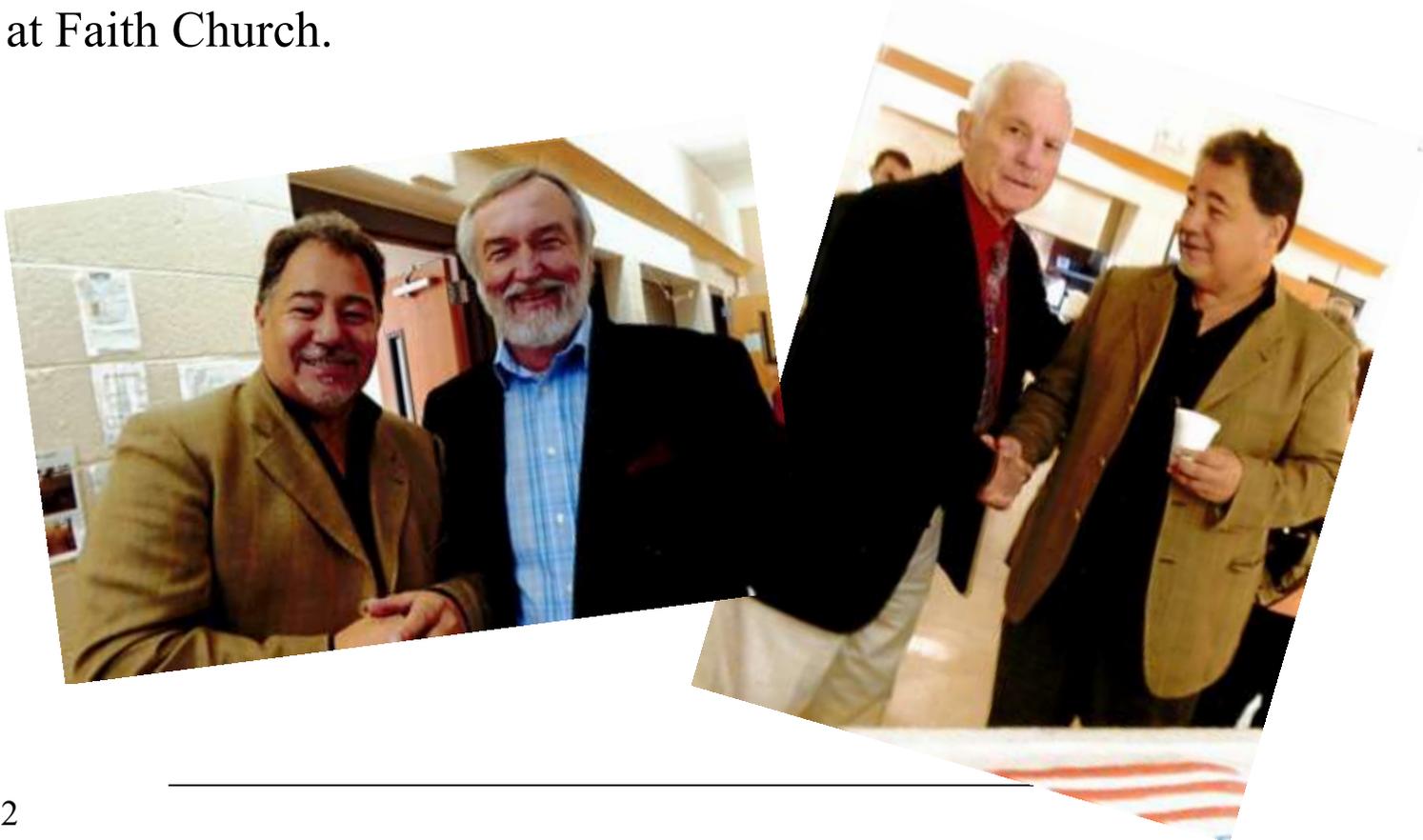
*The Church Office will be closed
December 25—January 1, 2019
and January 21 in observance of
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day*

*Puzzle Answer:
f, i, e, l, e, w, n; new life*

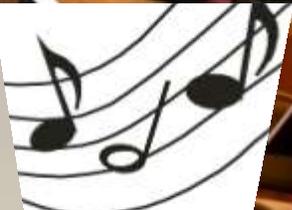
*Music
at
Faith*



Daniel Rodriguez, nationally recognized tenor soloist, graciously offered extraordinary special music at a worship service in November. He was the guest soloist with the Allentown Symphony for their weekend series of concerts. Pictured with him is our own Dennis Duda, MME, Director of Music/Organist at Faith Church and Faith member, George Rau. Daniel's appearance was supported by a gift to the Music Fund of Memorial Gifts in loving memory of Mary Schlaner, soprano, life-long member of the Senior Choir, given by her family. We sincerely appreciate this generous gift in support of special music at Faith Church.



The Music Ministry of Faith Church has been most fortunate and blessed in offering special music to the congregation and greater Lehigh community this season. These special events included hosting the Schumann Quartet and Walden Players Nonet, Mainstreet Brass Quintet, Meistersingers of SOLEHI, SATORI Chamber Trio, guitar/vocalist Darin Jellison and renowned tenor Daniel Rodriguez.



THOSE WHO WILL SERVE IN JANUARY

Nursery: Catherine Stevenson

| | January 6 | January 13 | January 20 | January 27 |
|----------------------------|--|--|--|-----------------|
| Head Usher | Kevin Long | Barb Scattergood | Colleen Kandt | Deb Orach |
| Greeter | Deb Herstine | Dennis & Caroline Frantz | | Doris Horwath |
| Ushers | Kevin & Karen Long Donna Schoenberger, George Rau | Ken & Kim Ritter Cindy Talaber Mike Ford | Scott & Louise Christman Tony & Sandi DiSanto | |
| Lay Reader | Karen Long | Cindy Talaber | Louise Christman | Darin Jellison |
| Acolytes | Alex Kane Will Kane | Noah Ritter Noah Jellison | Damyn Allison | |
| Nursery Helper | | | | |
| Flowers | Horwath | Hassler | Neidermeier | |
| Financial Secretary | Doug Hutchinson | Doug Hutchinson | Doug Hutchinson | Doug Hutchinson |



FROM THE TREASURER— NOVEMBER FINANCIALS

| NOVEMBER | INCOME | EXPENSE | Last Year | |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|
| Receipts | \$23,104 | \$216,466 | \$20,738 | \$238,140 |
| Disbursements | \$20,229 | \$224,488 | \$19,067 | \$243,560 |
| | \$2,875 | (\$8,022) | \$533 | (\$5,421) |

| | Weekly Attend. | Weekly Offering | over/under \$3500 goal |
|--------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| 11/4 | 83 | \$ 2,546 | (\$954) |
| 11/11 | 103 | \$ 2,950 | (\$550) |
| 11/18 | 82 | \$ 2,666 | (\$834) |
| 11/25 | 81 | \$ 2,767 | (\$733) |
| | | | |
| Total | 349 | \$ 10,929 | \$ (3,071) |

Special Offerings:

Neighbors in Need—\$50

Basket Bingo Income: \$4,300

2018 Offering must be received in the Church Office by Monday, January 7, 2019. Offering received after the 7th will be credited to **2019**.

Your **2019 Offering Envelopes** are in the Narthex. (*PLEASE DO NOT USE UNTIL 2019!*) If you don't have envelopes but would like some, or have them but don't use them, please call Sandy at 610.282.3939.



From the Secretary:

The **deadline** for **February Newsletter** articles and information is **January 10th**. Please email to faithchurchcv@gmail.com or place them in the Secretary's mailbox in the conference room.

2019 ALTAR FLOWER SCHEDULE is hanging in the Narthex. Place your name and bulletin listing next to the date you want to reserve. Please hold your payments until January 2019. The cost is \$35 for the new year.



Many thanks for your support of Betty Lou's Pantry as fall begins! For the last two Sundays of November and the first two Sundays of December, our regular donations included 177 items and \$75.

MOST NEEDED ITEMS:

**CANNED PASTA • BAKED BEANS • CANNED TUNA
BOXED POTATOES • CHUNKY/HEARTY SOUPS
BOXED PASTA (NO SPAGHETTI) •**

Items stocked at the Pantry include:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Pork & Beans | Chili |
| Canned Fish (salmon) & Meat | Canned Pasta |
| Peanut Butter | Canned Tomatoes & Canned Sauce |
| Kidney & Black Beans | Chunky Soups |
| Canned fruit | Macaroni & Cheese |
| Canned Tuna | Canned Vegetables |
| Beef Stew | Dry Pasta & Spaghetti |
| Spaghetti Sauce | Canned Tuna |

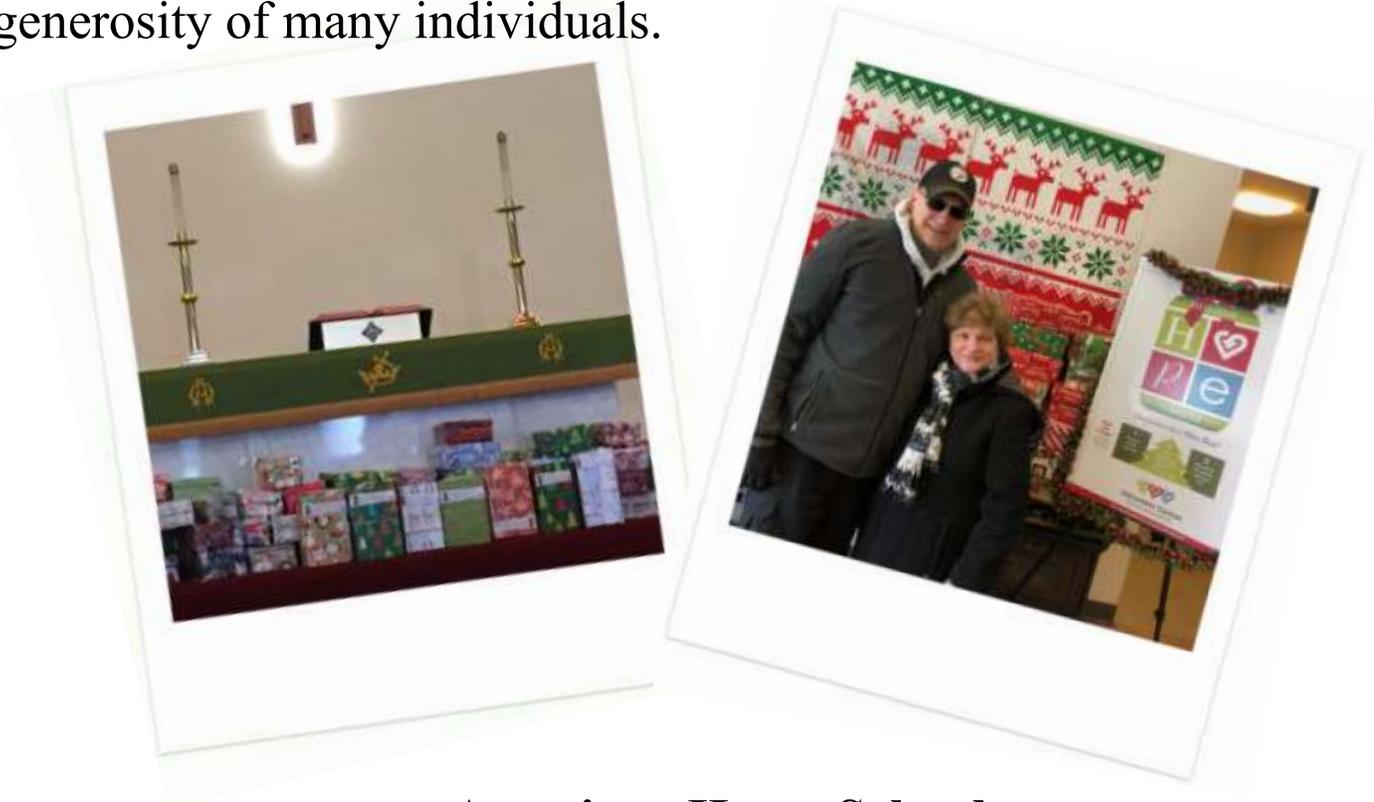
Monetary Donations are a particularly effective way to help the Pantry. A donation of \$10 will buy over 60 lbs of food through Second Harvest. If you are in need or know of someone in the area who is, please call **610-282-2838** and leave a message, or email bettylouspantry18036@gmail.com

—Mike Ford

Mission News

Holiday Hope Chests

Thank you to everyone for sharing your generous spirit in packing **101 Holiday Hope Chests**. The children of the Lehigh Valley will greatly appreciate your wonderful gifts. We delivered Faith's **Holiday Hope Chests** on Thursday, November 29 to the processing center in Bethlehem. They have reached their goal due to the generosity of many individuals.



American Horse School

WOW, you knocked *our socks off* with all of those **socks** you donated for the children! After counting and packing 727 pairs of socks we lost count. Along with the socks were over 100 scarves and hats from our Faith Knitters. The children will have a wonderful surprise when the filled boxes arrive at their school in Allen, South Dakota. These gifts will go a long way to keeping them cozy warm over the long winter. Thank you so much for supporting our new mission. Stay tuned for more ways you can help the children and teachers of the **American Horse School**.



11/25/18 Decorating Bins to Collect Socks during Mission Sunday



12/16/18 Boxes filled with Socks, Scarves, and Hats ready to go!



In 1990 the **Souper Bowl of Caring** began with a simple prayer from a youth group in South Carolina. The prayer was simply this: “Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat”.



Since then, more than \$110 million has been raised and donated to organizations that provide shelter to the homeless and food for the hungry. Right here in the Southern Lehigh area, Betty Lou’s Pantry provides food for over 100 families and 300 individuals, many of whom are children.

The Mission Team would like to challenge all of you to support the **Souper Bowl of Caring** by bringing several of these food items **EVERY Sunday starting January 13 through every Sunday in February:**

BEEF STEW

HEARTY SOUP

CHILI

We challenge the congregation to donate at least **125** cans of soup. Donations can be left in the Narthex in the bin marked for **Souper Bowl of Caring**.

THEN...On February 10, we will be holding a “**Soup Cook-Off**” after worship. Start planning now to bring your favorite soup to share and maybe your recipe will be Faith Church’s Best Winner! More details will be available in the February Newsletter.

I am sure that many of you will be gathering with friends and family to watch the Super Bowl. There will more than likely be an abundance of snacks and beverages. As we gather for this event let us not forget our neighbors in need and help to provide a family with a hot bowl of soup on a cold winter’s night.

Be an Angel Mission is Returning!

YES! The Mission Team will once again be offering money to the children to create their own mission. The amount offered will be increased to **\$25** from \$20 this year. The offer will be available for the first 20 individuals who express an interest in participating. *We will be visiting the Sunday School classes on Sunday, January 20, 2019* to explain the process and provide suggestions.



*Angel Mission Sunday will be held on
March 31.*

On that Sunday participants will be given 2-4 minutes to share their experience. This year you will be able to present your experience using the church's technology system. All you have to do is take pictures or a video and Pastor Bruce will download it onto the computer for all to view. All pictures must be emailed or presented on a thumb drive to Pastor Bruce by March 18. If you prefer to create a poster as done in the past, you may do so. Please talk this over with your children before January 20. We would love to have 20 wonderful mission projects!



*"A New Year's resolution is
something that goes in
one year and out the other."*

- Unknown



JANUARY BIBLE READINGS

January 1

Gen. 17:1–12a,
15–16

Col. 2:6–12

John 16:23b–30

January 2

Gen. 12:1–7

Heb. 11:1–12

John 6:35–42, 48–51

January 3

Gen. 28:10–22

Heb. 11:13–22

John 10:7–17

January 4

Exod. 3:1–5

Heb. 11:23–31

John 14:6–14

January 5

Josh. 1:1–9

Heb. 11:32–12:2

John 15:1–16

January 6

Isa. 52:7–10

Rev. 21:22–27

Matt. 12:14–21

January 7

Isa. 52:3–6

Rev. 2:1–7

John 2:1–11

January 8

Isa. 59:15b–21

Rev. 2:8–17

John 4:46–54

January 9

Isa. 63:1–5

Rev. 2:18–29

John 5:1–15

January 10

Isa. 65:1–9

Rev. 3:1–6

John 6:1–14

January 11

Isa. 65:13–16

Rev. 3:7–13

John 6:15–27

January 12

Isa. 66:1–2, 22–23

Rev. 3:14–22

John 9:1–12, 35–38

January 13

Isa. 40:1–11

Heb. 1:1–12

John 1:1–7, 19–20,
29–34

January 14

Isa. 40:12–24

Eph. 1:1–14

Mark 1:1–13

January 15

Isa. 40:25–31

Eph. 1:15–23

Mark 1:14–28

January 16

Isa. 41:1–16

Eph. 2:1–10

Mark 1:29–45

January 17

Isa. 41:17–29

Eph. 2:11–22

Mark 2:1–12

January 18

Isa. 42:(1–9) 10–17

Eph. 3:1–13

Mark 2:13–22

January 19

Isa. (42:18–25) 43:1–
13

Eph. 3:14–21

Mark 2:23–3:6

January 20

Isa. 43:14–44:5

Heb. 6:17–7:10

John 4:27–42

January 21

Isa. 44:6–8, 21–23
Eph. 4:1–16
Mark 3:7–19a

January 22

Isa. 44:9–20
Eph. 4:17–32
Mark 3:19b–35

January 23

Isa. 44:24–45:7
Eph. 5:1–14
Mark 4:1–20

January 24

Isa. 45:5–17
Eph. 5:15–33
Mark 4:21–34

January 25

Isa. 45:18–25
Eph. 6:1–9
Mark 4:35–41

January 26

Isa. 46:1–13
Eph. 6:10–24
Mark 5:1–20

January 27

Isa. 47:1–15
Heb. 10:19–31
John 5:2–18

January 28

Isa. 48:1–11
Gal. 1:1–17
Mark 5:21–43

January 29

Isa. 48:12–21 (22)
Gal. 1:18–2:10
Mark 6:1–13

January 30

Isa. 49:1–12
Gal. 2:11–21
Mark 6:13–29

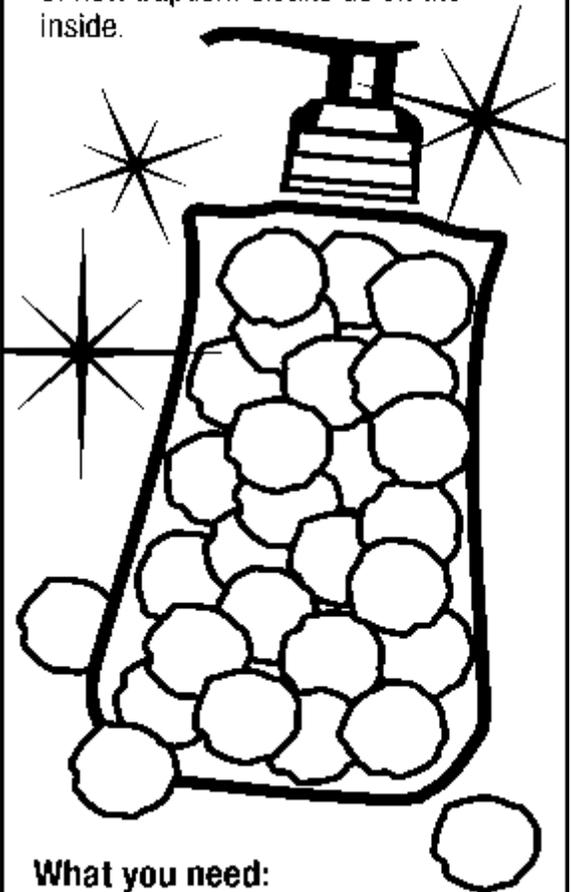
January 31

Isa. 49:13–23
(24–26)
Gal. 3:1–14
Mark 6:30–46



Washed Clean

Decorate a soap bottle as a reminder of how baptism cleans us on the inside.



What you need:

- Bottle of clear liquid hand soap
- Small craft pompoms (different colors)
- Wooden skewer

What you do:

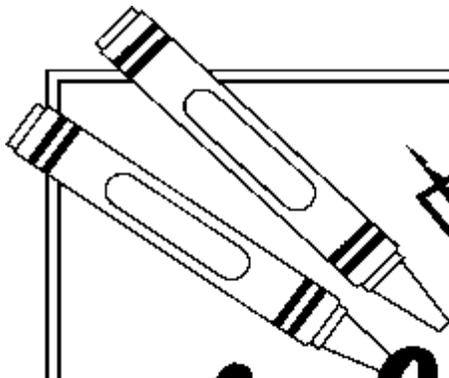
1. Remove the bottle label and unscrew the lid.
2. Using the skewer, push pompoms down into the soap one at a time.
3. Replace the lid and put the dispenser in a bathroom or kitchen.

January Birthdays

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 01 Daniel George | 22 Chris Thompson |
| 01 Eric Schoenberger | 22 Koltin Leh |
| 01 Justin Koser | 25 Matthew Talboo |
| 02 Sandra Biery | 27 Luke Schafer |
| 04 Jameson Hughes | 27 Riley Snyder |
| 04 Liam Shelly | 28 Ronald Stoffey |
| 05 John Marple | 30 Leah Connors |
| 09 Dennis Eisenhart | 31 Gail Clark |
| 10 Jared Gunther | 31 Matthew Allison |
| 10 Preston Amato | |
| 13 Joan Hassler | |
| 13 Thomas Heineman | |
| 15 Stanley Turel | |
| 15 Andrew Sosnowsky | |
| 15 Jerry Trexler | |
| 16 Robin Davis | |
| 19 Dwayne Schantz | |
| 21 Richard J Featherman | |
| 21 Christian Heaps | |
| 22 Christian Miller | |



Please call the church office with any omissions or corrections.

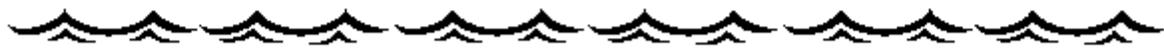


PUZZLE

A fresh start

Baptism is a blessing because it changes us and gives us hope.

Directions: Write the boxed letters in the squares below. Then unscramble those letters to form two words that complete the Bible verse and represent the gift of baptism.



We were therefore buried with him
through baptism into death in order that,
just as Christ was raised from the dead
through the glory of the Father,
we too may live a _____.

Romans 6:4, NIV

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |