

PRINCE OF PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Rev. William A. Schaefer, Pastor

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POP NOTES

December 2023 Volume 61 Number 12

A Christ Focused Christmas

The Chipmunk Song by Alvin and the Chipmunks proclaims in its opening lyrics what Christmas is about in their eyes. "Christmas, Christmas time is here. Time for toys and time for cheer. We've been good, but we can't last. Hurry Christmas, hurry fast." This seems to be the dream I remember having, that Christmas would hurry so I could get the things I wanted. The Chipmunks dream of the gifts they would receive was the only thing they could see in the midst of all that was happening around them.

As a child, I did not appreciate the reality that Christmas was less about the gifts that were brought by Santa and more about the gift of salvation that is given to us in Christ. Each Christmas we make our lists for gifts to give and gifts to receive and we forget about the greatest gift we have been given. We focus on everything but the Christ child.

During this season, take time each day to focus your thoughts on Christ and the gift of salvation that was given to us in Bethlehem. Take a few minutes to say a prayer of thanksgiving for God's gift to us. Pause for a few moments and *slow down* in the midst of the hectic holiday season and contemplate how life as a child of God changes who you are as a person and where the focus of your life is called to be. Do a random act of kindness for someone around you and make that part of your daily walk with God. Share a kind word and make it a daily practice.

There are so many ways that we can live into the joy of Christ during this season. Give yourself the gift of Christ this season. It is the gift that will touch your life every day. Come to worship not just during Christmas Eve services, but on Sunday mornings and grow in the gift of life that is Jesus Christ.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Bill

Christmas Eve Worship Opportunities

5:00 PM and 7:30 PM at Prince of Peace

10:00 PM at Trinity, Derry

Finance

TREASURER'S REPORT – October 2023

CURRENT FUND	
Beginning Balance	\$ 18,909.06
Receipts	\$ 12,918.92
Disbursements	\$ 12,754.63
Ending Balance	\$ 19,073.35
BENEVOLENCE	
2023 Pledge	\$ 13,500.00
10 months Pledge	\$ 11,250.00
Received as of 10/31/23	\$ 11,914.07
Difference Over/(Under) YTD	\$ 664.07
Paid out as of 10/31/23	8,526.07
BUILDING FUND	
Beginning Balance	\$ 18,242.03
Receipts – Offering	\$ 1,664.55
Interest	\$.16
Total Receipts Plus Balance	\$ 19,906.74
Less Disbursements other	\$ -----
Insurance	\$ 1,173.40
Ending Balance	\$ 18,733.34

November Worship Attendance	
	10:30am
Nov 5th	58
Nov 12th	54
Nov 19th	61
Nov 26th	64
Please bring a friend!	

Monthly Bible Quotes

Lord, now I can die in peace! As you promised me, I have seen the Savior you have given to all people. He is a light to reveal God to the nations, and he is the glory of your people Israel! ~ Luke 2:29-32

He is a voice shouting in the wilderness: Prepare a pathway for the Lord's coming! Make a straight road for him! Fill in the valleys, and level the mountains and hills! Straighten the curves, and smooth out the rough places! And then all people will see the salvation sent from God! ~ Luke 3: 4-6

Year-end Committee reports due to the office by January 14th - PLEASE
January Congregational Meeting will be January 28, 2024

STEWARDSHIP

Zack Davis, Betsy Naggy – Ministry Chairs

Sent to Tell the Good News

The season of Advent has provided opportunity for us to reflect on God's great love for us fallen sinners that has caused Him to send His very own Son Who came for the ungodly, even for those who will never acknowledge His sacrifice and who reject His free gift of salvation. Along with the joy that we have in our Savior, especially at this time of the celebration of Jesus' birth, the knowledge that not all experience this joy brings a sorrow to us as it does to the heart of our Lord.

Just as God in His love sent His Son into this world to save the lost, so we are now sent to tell others of that love. The shepherds at Jesus' birth did not hesitate to tell others. *"And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had seen..."* (Luke 2:20). Like the shepherds, our joy and mission are to share the good news with all people that Jesus came *"to seek and to save the lost"* (Luke 19:10). By grace, we are invited to be participants who declare to the world how God has reconciled us to Himself through His Son. God makes His appeal to unbelievers through us, and, therefore, it is imperative that we share the Gospel, which is the life-giving truth. We are to preach and teach the Word of God.

God calls us to share our faith and to let His light shine brightly. You and I have something to share that is needed by others, and that is the Good News of salvation through Jesus Christ, Who came to us as a babe in a manger. In light of what Christ has done for us, we respond with a desire to serve and glorify Him. We are equipped and enabled by the Holy Spirit through His Word and Sacraments (2 Timothy 3:16-17) to be participants in His mission. We are the feet,

eyes, ears, mouths, and hands who carry the message, who see the needs, who listen to the cries of those in need, who bring help to them, who tell them the message of reconciliation.

God's Word challenges us to use our time, talents, and money, so we can make an eternal difference in the lives of others. Because God is always with us, we can be faithful in our purpose to be God's participants in His mission to save all people.

May we all keep Christ as the heart of our Christmas and see Jesus as the reason for our joy. God's blessings on your Christmas worship and celebration with loved ones.

Have a blessed Christmas!

PROPERTY

Lee Semasko, Mark Lucas, Kevin Spangler, George Walter – Ministry Chair

Outside work on hold till spring. We think it is time to have D-Bug come place bait traps around the church to keep the mice out.

OUTREACH

Janie Hayden, Amy Schultz – Ministry Chair

- The angel tree is up, please take a name and help us make some children happy. **Return by December 10**
- We need gloves and hats along with socks for kids.
- We will be collecting underwear and socks again in January.
- Ginger is collecting blankets; a Thrivent action project was completed and furnished 4 comforters and 7 blankets.
- Also continuing to collect toiletry items, socks, and t-shirts for the veterans.
- **Food Bank Donations** – There is still a bin for collections for the Food Pantry. Any and all donations are needed and appreciated.

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

Pam Yuhaniak & Pat Maatta– Ministry Chair

The All Saints Sunday and Veterans Day Remembrance went very well. Christmas Eve services have been set. **Prince of Peace** will have service at 5 and 7:30pm. **Trinity in Derry** will have service at 10:00pm.

We will continue to post the 10:30 am worship service on Facebook at www.facebook.com/poplatrobe and as a link on our website www.princeofpeacelatrobe.com



	<u>Communion Assistant</u>	<u>Lay Reader</u>	<u>Counters</u>
December 3 rd	Pam Yuhaniak	Amy Schultz	Vickie Onusko & Lee Semasko
December 10 th		Amy Schultz	Kellie Douglas & Bob Woller
December 17 th		Sherry Stahl	Ed Sparber & Kathy Bangor
December 24 th – 10:30am		Kellie Douglas	Vickie Onusko & Pat Maatta
December 24 th -5pm 7:30pm	Angie Schaefer Pam Yuhaniak	Denise Hegemann Sherry Stahl	
December 31st		Kellie Douglas	Betsy Naggy & George Walter

Altar Care: Angeline Schaefer

Usher: James & Amy Schultz

EVANGELISM - FELLOWSHIP

Carol Fannie, Ann Frye & Vickie Onusko – Ministry Chairs

The TNT meeting for December will be at Dino's in Latrobe and we're looking to return to DeNunzio's in January. Sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the gathering space.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Amy Schultz – Ministry Chair

Confirmation studies will begin January



I wish to thank everyone for the kind words, thoughts and prayers during my mother Mary's hospital stay and her passing. During her hospital stay the cards she received brightened day. They were on her window sill and she told me every day how pretty they were and she wanted me to make sure I thanked everyone.

Then I was blessed when she passed away with all the kind words, prayers, hugs and cards. I am so grateful and blessed to have my Prince of Peace family. Words cannot express how thankful I am to be part of such a loving and caring church.

Thank you all from the bottom of my bruised heart and God Bless, Cathie Schall.

****** If anyone would like a prayer shawl or knows of someone who would like one please let Sue Tschupp or one of the other members of the knitting group know! ******

Prayer Chain – If you would like to be a part of the Prayer Chain, there are three easy options for you to choose from to be a part of this important group. For text messages: text @popprayer to 81010. For email: go to rmd.at/popprayer and sign up for messages there. For phone calls: call Ginger Warren at 724-593-7524 .



Prayer is an essential part of who we are as a people of God. Below is a list of people from our congregation to keep in your daily prayers. If you know of others who should be added to these lists, please contact the church office with the names.

If you or someone you know from the congregation is in the hospital or is at home and sick and needs a visit from Pastor Bill, please call the office so that he can schedule a visit. The Pastor is only told by the hospital when a person is a patient if they ask for the church to be notified.

From our congregation: Debbie & George Lindsey, Esther Toth, Ginger Warren, James Schultz, Jane Six, Kevin Spangler, and Verna Frontz.

Our Shut-in members: Audrey Spangler, Newhaven Court, Dorothy Myers (Ridgeview Residential Care), Ken Lloyd (Loyalhanna Suites), Kay Shaw (at home), Raymond Fry (Loyalhanna Suites)

Others in need of our prayers: Bill Bangor, Bruce, Chase Hill, Irene, Judy Long, Judy James, Leona Lewis, Lucy, Mason Martin, Peggy Taylor, Stan, and Scott Thompson.

Those in the Military: Michael Clevenger, Jacob Hay, and Matt Mickinak.

Your Light has come



In the introduction to his book *For All God's Worth*, theologian N.T. Wright says, "Christmas is God lighting a candle, and you don't light a candle in a room that's already full of sunlight. You light a candle in a room that's so murky that the candle, when lit, reveals just how bad things really are. The light shines in the darkness, says St. John, and the darkness has not overcome it."

For that reason, Wright explains, Christmas isn't a dream or a momentary escape but reality. And the same is true for Christianity. "Either Jesus is the Lord of the world and all reality makes sense in his life, or he is dangerously irrelevant to the problems and possibilities of today's world," he adds. "There is no middle ground. Either Jesus was, and is, the Word of God, or he, and the stories Christians tell about him, are lies."



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

11	Donna Smith
14	Myles Douglas
17	Kyle Brewer
21	Margy Williams
22	Rev. Janice Altenberger
27	Emma Zavatsky
30	Carolyn Sparber

December

Baptisms

1	Shane Koontz
6	Jennifer Brewer
8	Patty Williams
11	Courtney Warren
19	Donna Gerhart



DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

12	Jack & Kathy Bangor
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PLEASE NOTE: If you do not see **your** Birthday or Anniversary listed, please let us know in the church office. We apologize if you were missed and we will make the necessary corrections so that it does not happen again



Lutherlyn
PO Box 355
Prospect PA 16052
(724) 865-2161
www.lutherlyn.com

Date November 30, 2023

Dear Member of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church,

Lutherlyn is committed to providing life-changing adventures in faith for kids, youth, and families. The cabin leaders and staff serve as positive role models through small-groups, relationship-based programs, intentional Christian community, and Gospel-centered living. Campers are welcomed into a community where they are accepted, just as they are, as beloved children of God.

Once the *Building for the Future* Capital Campaign is successfully completed, much-needed upgrades and improvements to Lutherlyn's facilities will help to provide even stronger ministry well into the future.

Funds are needed to complete the necessary projects over the next three years of the Campaign. That is why we are asking every member to respond generously to help us reach the goal.

Soon, you will have an opportunity to join in this effort by making your commitment to Lutherlyn's *Building for the Future* Campaign. We will seek your own pledge or gift through a Statement of Intent form that will be distributed at worship on **December 3**. Please prayerfully consider your response.

Yours in Christ,
Kathy Bangor

Advent meanings

During Advent, which begins this year on December 3, many churches and families use wreaths to symbolize watchfulness and increasing joy as Christmas approaches. Colors for the candles vary, with some traditions using blue (for hope or creation) and others preferring purple (for royalty, humility or penitence).

The four candles that each represent a week in Advent also signify hope, peace, joy and love. (The third candle is often pink.) In the center is the white Christ candle, representing Jesus as the light of the world. That candle is lit on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

The round, green Advent wreath has special meaning of its own. It symbolizes eternal life and the unending love of God, who sent his only Son to earth to die in our place.

Share
the
Joy
of
Christmas

Moments of incarnation



The wonder of the infinite-personal God is displayed, more than anywhere else, in the Incarnation. Nothing can prepare us for the birth of God: a six-pound, four-ounce Jewish boy with dark brown curly hair born in the fall or winter of 5 B.C. in a shepherd's cave on the side of a hill in the city of Bethlehem in the Roman province of Judea in western Asia.

It is so particular it staggers the imagination. God found a parking spot, a specific place and time where his love would touch our world. [Similarly,] prayer is a moment of incarnation — God with us. God involved in the details of my life.

—Paul E. Miller, *A Praying Life*

Joyful
MERRY & BLESSED

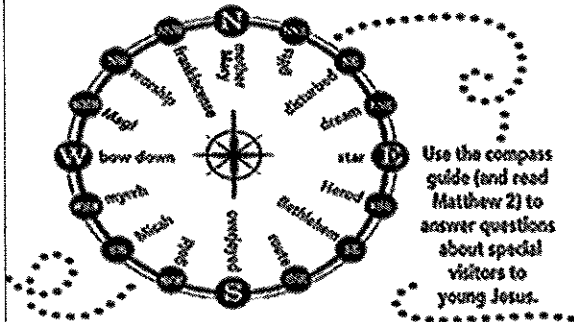
Don't miss out!

In his poem "The Inn That Missed Its Chance," Amos R. Wells writes from the perspective of the "fairly crazed" innkeeper who recalls Bethlehem becoming "a hive at swarming-time." Of the couple who requested shelter on what became Christmas Eve, the proprietor asks, "Could I know that they were so important?"

There was a sign, they say, a heavenly light
resplendent; but I had no time for stars.
And there were songs of angels in the air
out on the hills; but how was I to hear
amid the thousand clamors of an inn?

If the innkeeper had only known Jesus' true identity, he says, he would have turned the place upside down, sending other guests out to the stables instead. When Jesus returns — "as he will surely come" — the anonymous innkeeper wants everyone to know: "Tell my Lord that all my inn is his, to make amends."

Puzzle!



Use the compass guide (and read Matthew 2) to answer questions about special visitors to young Jesus.

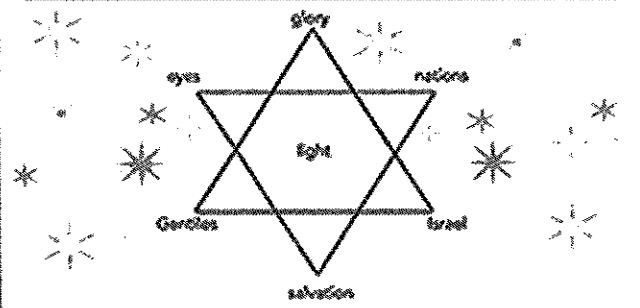
1. Who was king at the time of Jesus' birth? _____ (ESE)
2. Who came from the East to worship the one born king of the Jews? _____ (WNW)
3. How did King Herod feel about Jesus' birth? _____ (NE)
4. Which prophet did the chief priests and teachers of the law quote when King Herod asked where the Christ would be born? _____ (SW)
5. In what city would Christ be born? _____ (SE)
6. King Herod led to the wise men, telling them to search and report back to him, so, could do what to Christ? _____ (NW)
7. What did the Magi see in the east and follow to find Jesus? _____ (E)
8. When the star stopped, how did the Magi feel? _____ (S)
9. Who else did the Magi see with Jesus? His _____ (W)
10. Before they worshiped the child, what did the Magi do? _____ (NE)
11. Name the three treasures the Magi brought for Jesus. _____ (WSW) _____ (NNE) _____ (NSE)
12. These three treasures were all brought for Jesus as _____ (NW)
13. What warned the Magi not to return to Herod? A _____ (NE)
14. The Magi had to return to their country by another _____ (SE)

PUZZLE

SIMEON'S SIGHT

When Joseph and Mary brought baby Jesus to the temple, they heard a special prophecy from Simeon.

Directions: Using the star key, write the words in the correct spaces to complete Luke 2:30-32, NIV.

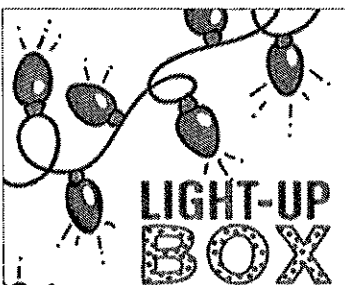


"For my _____ have seen your _____, which you have prepared in the sight of all _____; a _____ for revelation to the _____ and the _____ of your people _____."

Luke 2:30-32, NIV

Answers: eyes, salvation, nations, light, Gentiles, glory

Answers: 1. Herod, 2. Magi, 3. angry, 4. Isaiah, 5. Bethlehem, 6. kill, 7. a star, 8. amazed, 9. Jesus, 10. worshiped, 11. gold, frankincense, myrrh, 12. gifts, 13. dream, 14. another way.



Christmas lights remind us that Jesus shines in the darkness. Here's a fun way to play with holiday lights.

- What you need:**
- A strand of Christmas lights
 - A large clear plastic container and lid
 - Green tissue paper
 - Colorful beads



What you do:

1. Plug in the lights and place them in the container.
2. Put on the lid. (If the lid isn't transparent, flip the box over.)
3. Play with your light box, using these ideas as starters:
 - Cut tissue paper into triangles and arrange them in a tree shape. Decorate the tree with colorful beads.
 - Use the light box for tracing. Place a picture on it, with a clean sheet of paper on top. Then trace the drawing.
 - Use magnet tiles to build designs atop the light box. Try building a 3-D Christmas tree!

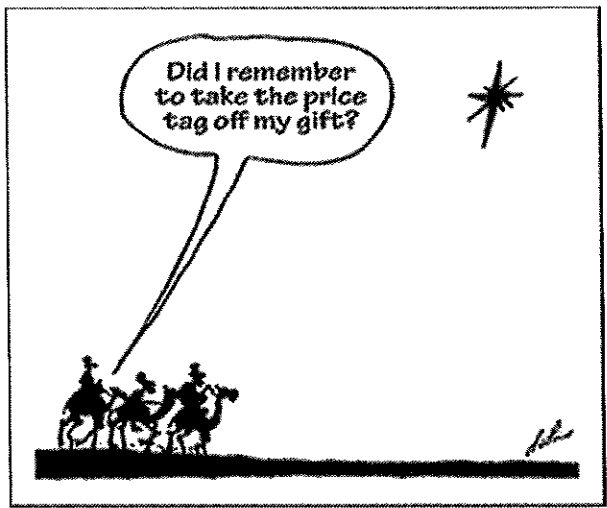
Bible Quiz

Elizabeth, an older relative of Mary the mother of Jesus, was miraculously pregnant at the same time as Mary. What was the name of Elizabeth's husband?

- A. Aaron
- B. Zechariah
- C. Joseph
- D. Simeon



Illustration by [unclear]





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It is that time of year again to let us know how you would like to receive your copy of the Prince of Peace Lutheran Church Newsletter, POP Notes.

If you would like to continue to receive the newsletter **online**, you don't have to do anything.

If you would like to receive the newsletter via **US Mail**, please fill out the form below and return it to the church with a fee of \$8.00 to cover the cost of mailing.

If you would like to pick up your newsletter **at the church**, please fill out the form at the bottom of the page and return it to the church.

If you need to **make changes** to how you receive your newsletter or to your address, please fill out the form below and attach the mailing fee if necessary and return the form to the church.

Forms need to be back to the church by December 23rd.

Newsletter Delivery Form

_____ I would like to receive my newsletter by the US Mail. I have enclosed \$8.00 to cover the cost of mailing for the year.

_____ I would like to pick up my newsletter at the church.

_____ I would like to receive my newsletter online.

_____ This is a change from how I got the newsletter this past year OR this is a new newsletter request.

Name _____

Address _____

Email Address _____

Please return to Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 1325 Mission Road, Latrobe, PA 15650

December 2023

December 2023							January 2024						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
31							29	30	31				

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Nov 26	27	28	29	30	Dec 1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Francis Xavier, missionary to Asia, 10:30am Sunday Worship	John of Damascus, theologian and hymnwriter	7:00pm Miracles at Work	1:00pm Bible Study 6:00pm Choir Practice 7:00pm Bell Choir	Ambrose, Bishop of Milan 6:00pm Thursday Nights Together (TND)	7:00pm A New Beginning	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
10:30am Sunday Worship 3:00pm Blue Christmas service (LUCC)		10:00am Prayer Shawl Group 7:00pm Miracles at Work	1:00pm Bible Study 6:00pm Choir Practice 7:00pm Bell Choir	John of the Cross, renewer of the church 6:30pm Girl Scouts	7:00pm A New Beginning	10:00 AM Decorate the sanctuary
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
10:30am Sunday Worship 2:00pm Margy's Christmas Recital		7:00pm Miracles at Work	1:00pm Bible Study 6:00pm Choir Practice 7:00pm Bell Choir	7:00pm Congregation Council	7:00pm A New Beginning	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
5:00 & 7:30 PM Christmas Eve 10:30am Sunday 10:00pm Trinity svc		Stephen, Deacon and Martyr 7:00pm Miracles at Work	1:00pm Bible Study 6:00pm Choir Practice 7:00pm Bell Choir	The Holy Innocents, Martyrs 6:30pm Girl Scouts	7:00pm A New Beginning	
31	Jan 1, 24	2	3	4	5	6
10:30am Sunday Worship						

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Find us on Facebook at
www.facebook.com/poplatrobe

Sunday Worship is at 10:30 AM
Sunday School 9:15 AM

Our Mission Statement

Prince of Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church is a loving family, forgiven by Jesus Christ, who through prayer and the work of the Holy Spirit are called to be actively living, learning, and growing in the Word of God and are being sent out to share the Gospel with our neighbors through our words and deeds.

We are a member congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod.

We serve the Greater Latrobe community as part of the Greater Latrobe Ministerial Association.