

Pennfield Press

December 2021 Newsletter

Growing in Christ Through Faith, Family, and Fellowship

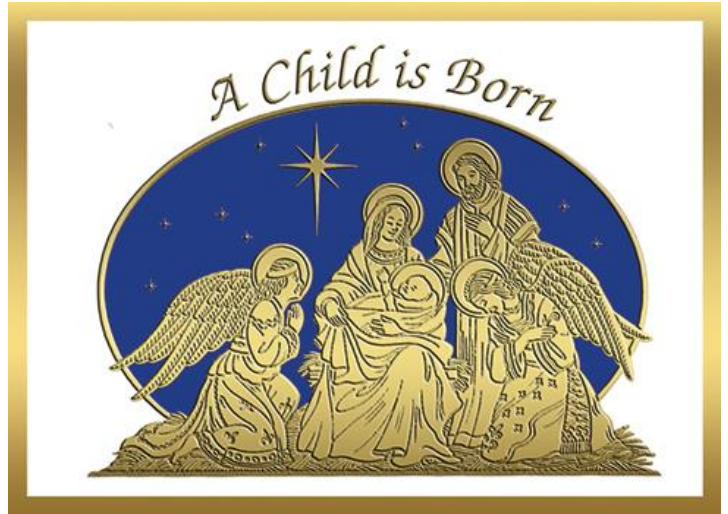
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Dear Friends,

We are in the season of Advent. The word "advent" means coming. We wait for the coming of Christ, the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, his birth in our hearts. And maybe we are asking: Why do we celebrate the birth of Jesus again and again? Does he need to be reborn to us and do we need to be reborn again and again? I believe that being human means many good things but it also means that we are supremely forgetful and oblivious. We are oblivious to our own bodies and their needs, to the needs of others, especially the poor and forgotten and easily overlooked, and to the most obvious needs of friends and family. It's because of such obliviousness, such blatant neglect, that we are in need of redemption, along with regular reminders and wake-up calls. Advent culminates in the birth of Jesus and is an annual wake-up call to the reality that Jesus is God with us, Immanuel, the Savior of nations, of you, of me.



For the **first Sunday in Advent, Nov. 28** we are being treated to a musical special by the family of Gayla Metzger as her grand-children will be singing. On the **second Sunday of Advent, Dec. 5** we celebrate communion. So if you are watching online, please have a piece of bread and some juice ready.

This year's Christmas Eve service is **on Friday, Dec. 24 at 7 p.m.** and will be our traditional candle light service. We are fortunate to have Paula Krontz-Harris leading us musically at the piano, Carla Stine-King will lead us in song, and Josh and Kaylee Tucker will bring the special music on their saxophones.



Due to the rising number of Covid 19 infections in our state of Michigan, we ask that you wear a mask in church.

We hope to see you for our Advent worship services and the **Christmas Eve service at 7 p.m.**

Wishing you a blessed Advent and a very Merry Christmas!
With much joy and love,

Pastor Annemarie

A Stewardship Testimonial: Elder Lois Shubert

On Stewardship Sunday, Nov. 21, the Shuberts gave a powerful testimonial. Here is an excerpt:



“Good morning, I am Lois. I was born into a Presbyterian family. After college we moved to Battle Creek in 1973. We visited Pennfield Presbyterian and stayed. We were welcomed and got involved right away with Youth Fellowship. Did you know Presbyterian Church is one of few churches who have committees that keep the church functioning?

Curiosity got me moving: I have been a deacon and been on every committee in the church. Currently I am on Session, the board of Presbyterian Women, Worship and Music, Fellowship and Evangelism. I also serve as your Worship Coordinator and the chair of Property and Finance.

We found a purpose here at church by learning about Jesus Christ, who offers us eternal life,

and by sharing his message with others so others will know the eternal life in Him.

My husband, Mick, and I have been active in stewardship. We have worked consistently in taking care of the church's property and its finances so we could all enjoy God's house. I am particularly pleased that for the past three years we have had a balanced budget, made possible by your generosity.

When COVID 19 hit, many churches were struggling and even closed. We here at Pennfield Presbyterian Church met outdoors first and then began meeting via Zoom. In addition, we made a conscious effort to stay connected with our members by phone, email, and through livestreaming our worship services. This was a time of INTENSE prayers and efforts. In the process, our outdated sound system was replaced and we are livestreaming now via audio/video to the city, state, and nation. Think of that! A mission was created to get out the Word of the Gospel, the Word of God.

Please know that every Sunday we are LIVE, not pre-recorded. I hope you feel connected through that ministry and that you will also feel committed. Our website has a GIVE button, that directs you to making a financial contribution. Or you can mail in your support directly to the church. Today we are committing a small portion of what God has given to us, which is in effect a pledge to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Thank you!”

Stewardship Update

“The earth and everything in it, the world and its inhabitants belong to the Lord” (Psalm 24:1)
The stewardship committee would like to send out a huge thank you to all who have committed resources to support our church for the coming year. We are so fortunate to have such generous and giving members and friends.

--Woody Booher, Chair, Stewardship and Mission Committee Chair

Adult Education Classes

--**The Contemporary Issues Class** addresses topics of current interest on social, economic, and political issues and examines them through the lens of the Christian faith. You will receive the articles with discussion questions beforehand.



For the next few months, we will continue to meet virtually via Zoom on the first Sunday of each month at 1:00pm. Normally, we would also meet on the third Tuesday of each month at 8:00 pm. However, because of the proximity to Christmas, we will instead meet on Tuesday, December 14, 2021 at 8:00pm in December. You will receive a Zoom link via email prior to the

class. If you would like more information about this class, Mark Atma will answer any questions and may be contacted at markatma@comcast.net.

Half Truths: What the Bible Doesn't Say

We continue our study of pious Christian sayings, which Adam Hamilton calls Half Truths. They are popular but not really theologically sound. Help us unpack them.

The class meets via Zoom AND in person in the sanctuary. This month, we will meet on **Dec. 12 and 19 only**. The class is facilitated by Pastor Annemarie.



Worship: In-Person and Via Facebook Live

We meet for in-person worship and we livestream via facebook. If you choose to attend worship, please **be present no later than 9:50 a.m.** If you need a hearing device, please contact Lois Shubert beforehand. Livestreaming will begin at 10 a.m.

Office Hours are Mo.-Tue. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.



Jean Smith has resumed her role as administrative assistant as well as continuing as our financial secretary. We are so grateful to you, Jean! She will be in the church office from **9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Mondays and Tuesdays**, along with a few hours on either Thursday or Friday.

Fellowship and Evangelism

Each Sunday prayer cards are available to fill out and drop in the offering plate after worship. The prayer requests will be forwarded to our deacons' prayer chain and will remain confidential.

Our Oct. 18 wave-a-thon was a blast again. We had so much fun that we hope to do it again in the spring. Thanks to Darrell and Marcia VanVleet, Jessica Harvath, and Rev. Annemarie.

Since there has been an uptick in Covid cases, we decided not to serve refreshments after the Greening of the Church, Nov. 28. Also there will be no coffee and conversation after church this month. Note that Christmas Eve invitations are available in the narthex to hand out to friends and neighbors. Visitors will receive a church pen on Christmas Eve.

Remember we are Christ's ambassadors!
– Trina Sleper, Chair, Fellowship and Evangelism Committee

Greeters are:

Dec. 5—Darrell and Marcia VanVleet

Dec. 12—Mick and Lois Shubert

Dec. 19—Bart and Trina Sleper

Dec. 26—Steve and Jeanette Higgs



Church Business Cards and Christmas Eve Invitations

We hope you will pick up a stack of invitations, made by Trina Sleper, to invite friends to our Christmas Eve service on **Dec. 24 at 7 p.m.** We also have church business cards, which list our worship time in person (at 9:50 a.m.), our livestream time (10 a.m.), our church's address with directions, phone number, email address, and webpage. Happy Inviting!

Deacons' Corner



December means donating to the Deacons' Fund. Annually in December, the Deacons are asking for your financial support in order to carry out their ministries throughout the year. The ministry of providing Christmas baskets to needy families in our community is by far the most costly of these programs.

This year, with existing funds, the Deacons will provide a Meijer gift card for each family to purchase their food and gift needs. Please know that the Deacons are working hard to get the best value for the dollars you

donate.

Thank you so much for your continued support of the Deacon's Fund and our caring ministries.

--Sandi Rothney, Deacon

Nominating Committee Update

A big thank you goes to the Nominating Committee, whose members are Carolyn Hammond (Congregation), Aaron Jordan (Congregation), Jay Moore Sr. (Congregation), Charlotte Pierce (Congregation), Marica VanVleet (Deacons), Trina Sleper (Session), and Woody Booher (Session, Chair). They presented at the congregational meeting on Sunday, Oct. 24 a complete slate for the offices of elder, deacon, and nominees for members of the Nominating Committee of 2022.

The vote for all three slates was unanimous and we welcome these new officers:

For elder of the Class of 2024 Kathy Lyon

For deacon:

Class of 2022 Jessica Harvath

Class of 2024 Lila Back

Class of 2024 Carla Stine-King

Class of 2024 Marcia VanVleet

For Members of the Nominating Committee 2022:

Carolyn Hammond

Aaron Jordan

Jay Moore Sr.

Charlotte Pierce

Hannah Circle--Presbyterian Women

This month, the Hannah Circle will be meeting on the **SECOND** Tuesday, December 14 , at 1 p.m. Again we will be meeting via Zoom and in person in the church library. Marie Hull will be sending you a zoom link on that day.

Our study is on Rahab in lesson three of our study book, "What my Grandmothers Taught Me." Rahab is a socially unacceptable outsider who is intelligent and strong. A marginalized woman, she recognizes the power of the God of Israel. When God's own people are melting with fear, her wit and presence of mind allow God's plans to come to fruition (Joshua 2; 6:22-25).



Come join us, as we share in studying, learning and fellowship one with another. Books are still available for \$10 from Kathy Lyon. Wishing you all a most Blessed Christmas, and peace and harmony in the New Year.

--Deanna Stults, Coordinator

Online Giving

You may give online from our church website, www.pennfieldpresbyterian.org. Click on the Give Now button, and you will be guided to our Giving Page. Thank you for giving!



Livestreamed Worship and Facebook Devotions

We livestream worship from Pastor Annemarie's facebook page at 10 a.m. If you are early, you may have to refresh the page. Please leave a comment and like and share. Each Wednesday Pastor Annemarie posts a devotion and on Fridays the scripture on which the upcoming sermon is based. All worship services and devotions are also posted on our church's FB book and remain there.



Presbyterian Women's Bedding Blitz

In November the Presbyterian Women collected gently used bedding and monetary donations to purchase new pillows. The PW Mission Coordinator Christine Ayers says, "I would like to thank all who contributed to the Bedding Blitz. We delivered pillows, sheets, quilts, blankets, towels and washcloths to the Charitable Union on Monday, Nov. 15. They expressed their gratitude for our continued generosity."

Also a thank you to those contributing to the Thank Offering, which benefits the worldwide Presbyterian Mission. As our 2021 year comes to a close, we are looking for members for the coordinating committee for the 2022 year.

--Sara Galloway, Moderator



Student Violin Recital on Saturday, Dec. 11 at 6 p.m.

Our church will host a student recital for the students of Jacqueline Burke on **Saturday, Dec. 11 at 6 p.m.** in the sanctuary. The recital is free and open to the public.

Northeast Food Pantry News

The number of clients who visited the pantry increased during the month of November. We are blessed to be able provide food help for our neighbors in need, especially during the holidays.

The Northeast Pantry was gifted with 13 turkeys Wednesday before Thanksgiving. We were able to deliver them to some of our larger families thanks to Joy Thomas and her daughters. The girls thought it was great delivering them!! What a great outreach experience for them.



The pantry is so fortunate to have wonderful volunteers working for us; most of them from Pennfield Presbyterian, Maple Methodist and St. Paul's Episcopal churches. The pantry is also blessed to be financially stable at this time due to the continued support from Pennfield Presbyterian, Convis, North Avenue Church of God, and many other members of our community.

The clients are also grateful for the toiletries that we are now getting from Direct Your Dollars Spartan Nash (Family Fare) program. We recently received \$1,000 and are about halfway to being able to getting our next Direct Your Dollars money. Thanks to all of you who are saving receipts from Family Fare stores as well as Maple, Convis, Covenant Hope, Kiwanis, and other members of the community who mail them to the pantry. Thanks also to Esther Rayburn who tallies up all of the receipts. Please keep saving them. We need the whole receipt and it must have Direct Your dollars printed on it.

The next Meijer Simply Give Double Match Day is Saturday, Dec. 11. This is another community outreach program which has benefited the Northeast Food Pantry in many ways. Pantry needs for December are canned vegetables, soup, peanut butter, macaroni and cheese and anything that that can be used to supplement a holiday meal.



Also, any small change can be dropped into the offering plate on any given Sunday and will go toward the Food Pantry.

I am so thankful for the blessings that the pantry has received and in turn can give back.

Merry Christmas!

--Laurie Riley, Coordinator

Thank You Note

I received a phone call from one of your caring members, who were checking in on me. Even though I wasn't home at the time, I wish to thank them for doing so.

--Mary E. Rose

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- Dec. 3: Kathy Adler
- 4: Beth Tucker
- 9: Kathy Lyon
- 10: Aaron Jordan
- 11: Elsie Page
- 12: Karen Newhard
- 13: Jeanette Higgs; Michael Lockett
- 17: Sandy Prince
- 18: Cathy Boyer; Elijah Brown
- 19: Christine Ayres
- 21: Allison Baxter; LuAnne Pierson
- 29: Joshua Tucker
- 31: Jameson Elliot

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Dec. 19: John and Linda Baxter

Deacons--Moderator: Marie Hull

- Deacon Assigned to Members: Adler to Beaver: Sandi Rothney
Booker to Fleming: Marcia VanVleet
Fox to Heath: Harry Scheuffele
Hewitt to Kidder: Joy Thomas
Lewis to Monroe: Marie Hull
Moore to Phillips: Marcia VanVleet, et al.
Pierce to Schlubatis: Session Elder
Shaffer to Teichman: Rosemary Hahn
Thomas to Yost: Steve Phillips

**Wishing You a Very Blessed and Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
From Your Church Staff**

Annemarie S. Kidder Jean Smith Jessica Harvath Bill Rothney
Gayla Metzger Franklin Ballard Lois Shubert Kevin Elliot

