

Presbyterian News

First Presbyterian Church of Paw Paw, Michigan

Volume 88, Issue 12

December 2020

All We Want For Christmas Is Each Other!



Hope. Peace. Joy. Love. Disappointment. Frustrations. Stress. Despair. Resolve. Laughter. Forgiveness. Humility. If I were to string the succession of feelings I carry with me into the Season of Advent like a garland of popcorn and cranberries, this is what it might look like. For someone who cycled over 1000 miles last summer, I've never been so exhausted as with the current spiritual marathon of staying together while being apart!

How do we keep going? So far, I've embraced commercial Christmas a little more than usual with decorations and listening to Christmas music; getting my shopping done early and supporting mission by buying local or from the Presbyterian Giving Catalog, UNICEF or SERRV; baking and making comfort food; and singing along with all those tacky holiday pop songs: *All I Want for Christmas is YOU!!!*

Yes, the one thing that we cannot have is what we want the most - each other. I miss you, church. I miss the sound of your voices. I miss your purple Advent accessories and festive Christmas sweaters; the smell of damp snow on your boots and coats when you pass through the office; the sound of the choir singing; the business and craziness of trying to carry on all the regular church meetings and activities, along with those special seasonal activities: caroling with the choir, wrapping and sorting gifts with the youth, taking the staff out for Christmas lunch.

Can you share a little bit of yourself and your family this Christmas? As we did for Easter Sunday, I'm asking for your videos: gather with your family by the tree or in the snow, don your festive best and say (or sing) "Christ Our Savior Is Born!" I'd also love to have videos, pictures or letters of anything else you are willing to share, like your family singing a Christmas Carol or Hymn, or share a recipe. Do you make Chrismons or ornaments or other Christmas crafts? Take a picture or short video and send it to me at TKoMcCaff@gmail.com or text to (614) 596-1995. Technology got you stumped? Give me a call and I'll try to help.

Thanks to our Deacons Rick & Mary Diemer and Rhonda Riegle and Sue Martin for making our church look festive inside and out. The twinkling lights on our sanctuary tree and the candles in our advent wreath are but a glimmer of the light we can see shining at the end of this long tunnel. We will be together again. We will worship, sing and praise God in our sanctuary!

A light shines in the darkness; the darkness has not overcome the light.

Peace - *Pastor Tiffany*

New Requirements for Annual Snowman Contest

Greetings from the Deacons. Thanks to the outgoing deacons; Jan Ogden, Rhonda Riegle, Sue Martin, and Scott Beck. We appreciate their contributions to us. A special thanks to both Rhonda and Jan who both served two three-year terms. We welcome Barb Dundon, Phyllis Sahr and Marge McKee who will begin their terms January 2021.

Covid 19 has required us to think "outside the box". Therefore rather than selling poinsettias to honor loved ones, we decided to buy some and give them to some of our members. Jan Wilder, Connie Nielson and myself delivered them. They were very well received.

The annual Snowman Contest has some new requirements. This year we want you to create a sculpture that represents a Bible story. A person, object or animal that tells a story. When it's complete send a photo, photos or video to Pat Peters pipeters.1040@gmail.com. You may enter as many times as you like. There are two categories: Teenagers and older and children ages 12 and under. Prizes will be given, 1st and 2nd places from each category. Get your creative juices going and LET IT SNOW!!!! The contest will end March 16, 2021.



Enjoy and God Bless
Pat Peters, Deacon Moderator

Pat Peters & Connie Nielson

Light an Advent Candle with Us

The Worship and Music Commission would like to make you aware of an opportunity to bring the wonder of the Christmas season to your home. The PC(USA) is offering an [Advent devotional on-line](#) for any who wish to participate. Join with other worshippers in the Presbyterian Church and others of faith throughout the world in waiting in for the long expected Messiah. There are devotionals for each day from November 29 through the end of Advent.

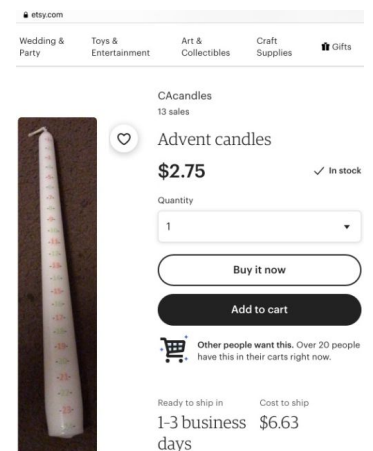
Perhaps you would like to order an Advent candle to light as part of your devotionals. We are also attaching a link to [Etsy.com](https://www.etsy.com) where Advent candles

can be purchased, although they can be purchased at many other websites too.

We hope you will join us in lighting a candle to shine a light as we prepare to welcome the Christ child into our homes.

> [Advent Candle from Etsy.com](#)

> ["Let Us Light Candles" from PCUSA](#)



Keeping Our Employees Safe

November was a month of learning more about Covid-19 safety procedures and policies, as we faced our first instance of needing to perform contact tracing. With guidance from the State of Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Session has now implemented a comprehensive Covid-19 Preparedness and Response Plan for our staff, volunteers, and all users of our building. You can view the plan on our website: www.pawpawpres.org.

The main safety feature of our plan is that our employees are able to continue working remotely or from the church building, but only because we have very limited access to the building. No outside groups are meeting at this time, and employees are

working staggered shifts to minimize contact. When volunteers, musicians and our pastor come to the sanctuary to lead worship for Sunday, masks are worn whenever we are not on camera, and spacing is arranged to allow for maximum distance.

Session implements these procedures not only in response to its duties as an employer and a place of public accommodation as required by law, but also as a Christian response to caring for the most vulnerable in our community, and to do our part to lessen the burden on our healthcare system and our community. We thank you for your patience at this time, and ask that you only come to the church as necessary, and please call first.



Although Covid-19 put a damper on some of our Urban Plunge plans, several groups were still able to make the most of a beautiful day and serve our neighbors by raking leaves. Bagged leaves were then used as compost for the community garden.

We normally collect change for Cents-Ability on the third Sunday, Dec. 20 and Jan. 17. Fifty percent is split between United Christian Services and Eleanor's Pantry with the other 50% going to fight world hunger. But remember, even without coins in this season of change, we may still give thanks and share our blessings by sending a check to First Presbyterian Church of Paw Paw marked "Cents-Ability" in the memo line; by donating to Eleanor's Pantry, UCS or Presbyterian Hunger relief directly or through the links at our website, pawpawpres.org, through the on-line giving page under the "Sunday Experiences" tab.



Church School Pageant for Christmas Eve!



Calling all angels,
shepherds and
innkeepers -
Covid-19 won't keep
us from telling the
greatest story ever
told.

Thanks to an innovative program from Illustrated Ministry, kids of all ages are able to participate in our Christmas Pageant this year. Just learn your part, pick out your costume and make a recording, or set up a ZOOM session to record with Pastor Tiffany. Info will be sent out to our regular Church School attenders by email, but anyone is welcome to participate! Do you have a grandchild, nibblin' or neighbor who would like to join in the fun? Just contact Pastor Tiffany at TKoMcCaff@gmail.com for a script and recording instructions.

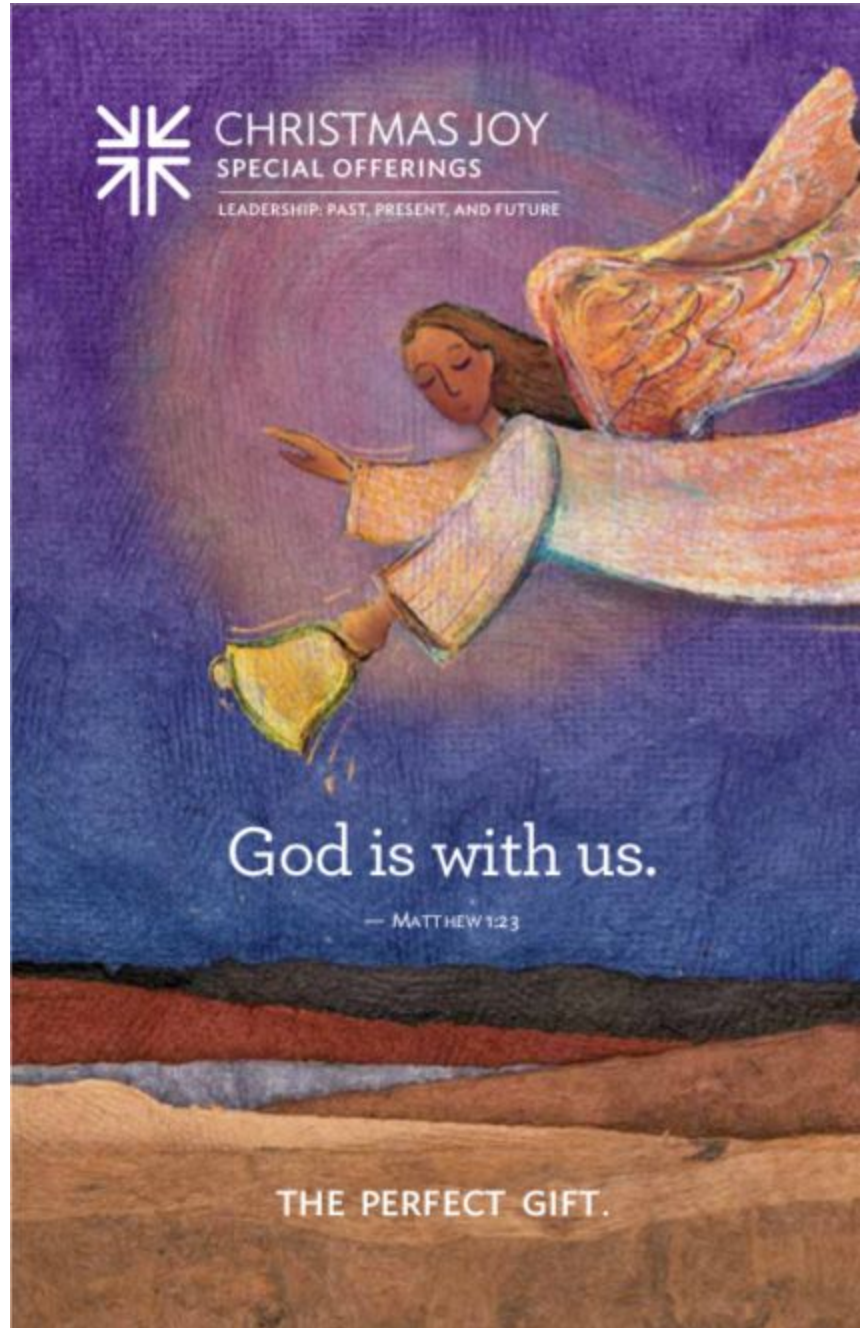
Christmas Joy Offering

Now through December 20 we will be collecting donations for the PCUSA Christmas Joy Offering.

This offering supports past, present and future church leaders. The offering distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and the Presbyterian related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

The Assistant Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families.

Presbyterian related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage.



The special offering has been a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years.

Eleda Zygadlo
Mission Commission Chairperson



Thanks to George Bolton and Pat Connor for decorating the courtyard at White Oaks Assisted Living.

pcusastore.com **Glory to God--Hymns and Songs for Advent and Christmas**


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Glory to God--Hymns and Songs for Advent and Christmas

Publish Date: 10/6/2017
Product Number: 0664263984
ISBN 978-06642-6398-0

Format: Paperback
Availability: 3-5 days processing

\$ 5.00

Quantity:

pcusastore.com **Glory to God - Hymns and Songs for Advent and Christmas** is available for purchase from the PC(USA) store found on-line at pcusastore.com. Purchase one for yourself and please choose a second for the church too. If you have ever joined us for Advent caroling you know that the books we currently use are falling apart. Treat yourself to the songs that we so cherish at this time or year and gift one to our church so we can bring these familiar melodies to others.

Birthdays and Anniversaries will return next month! Thank you for your patience as we teach our new office manager how to generate this list.



Were We at Our Beloved Church

Worship and Music

In these unusual times our congregation is most fortunate to be able to continue to worship at our 10 AM hour. We can join in spirit each Sunday morning to our church live stream feed from the sanctuary. Reverend Tiffany McCafferty continues to lead worship assisted by our tech team members, liturgist for the week, and musicians. We are fortunate to have put the needed pieces of technology in place to offer our congregation a live worship experience with many of the same features we are accustomed to if we were to be at our beloved church for in person worship.

Our continued gratitude goes to those who bring us this weekly message of hope in times of uncertainty. Worship and Music Commission wishes to thank Brandon Mattson, Chris Gray, and Theresa Vaughn for the sharing of their musical talents. We are blessed to have their gifts shared with us each week. Keelin McCafferty, Logan McCafferty, Patrick McCafferty, Nathaniel McCloskey, Matthew Mroczek, Andy Thorburn and Tom Shoemaker under the production guidance from our pastor comprise the tech team that brings the weekly production to life on our church [Facebook page](#).

All of our worship services are saved and available to view on our website, pawpawpres.org, under the "WORSHIP VIDEOS" tab.

We will be together again. Until then please stay connected to worship by joining the many households that worship live on Sunday morning or at some time during the week. Stay healthy, stay safe, and stay in touch with our worship services. We give thanks for the message of the Word of God that sustains us.

Advent Worship

The season of Advent begins on the 29th of November. During this time we will be worshipping via live stream only. This is not our custom and we will all miss seeing one another during this joyous time of year as we wait for the coming of the Messiah. At our recent meeting the Worship and Music Commission discussed ways to keep our congregation involved. We hope to implement some of our ideas soon. Look for emails about our plans.

Our Christmas Eve Service will be held at 7 PM this year. There will be only one Christmas Eve service.

Let us all pray that this pandemic that has kept us sheltered for so long has not dampened our desire to be in worship together and that Christmas 2021 will see us all together again. Waiting in great anticipation for an answer is difficult but it is also the theme of Advent.

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Return Service Requested

Presbyterian News

First Presbyterian Church of Paw Paw, Michigan

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Happenings

Sundays @ 10 a.m. Advent Worship - Online and via email only

Thursday, December 3 @ 6:30 - Mission Commission Zoom Call with guest speaker Fernando Urbina of Immigrationhelp.org

Sunday, December 6 @ 10 a.m. - Worship for Advent II with Communion. Have your bread and grape juice standing by! Light the second candle of your advent wreath. Facebook Live or on demand at www.pawpawpres.org

Sunday, December 13 @ 10 a.m. - Worship for Advent III, music from Chris Gray

Tuesday, December 15 @ 6 p.m. - Session final meeting of the year; 2021 Budget presented (budget will be based on 2021 pledges received by that date).

Sunday, December 20 @ 10 a.m. - Worship for Advent IV, music from Theresa Vaughn, Brandon Mattson

Thursday, December 24 @ 7 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship and Virtual Christmas Pageant: One Service at 7 p.m. on Facebook Livestream, or on demand at pawpawpres.org

Synod-sponsored Worship and Hymn Sing - December 27 @ 10 a.m.

WORSHIP EVERY SUNDAY through Facebook Livestream! No Facebook account required, just search for "First Presbyterian Church of Paw Paw Facebook" for our livestream at 10 a.m. Find our worship videos both on Facebook and our website, www.pawpawpres.org at the "Worship Videos & More" tab. Ask for the email reminder too. Need something else to stay connected? Call Pastor Tiffany, let's discuss: (614) 596-1995.

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