



**WHAT'S UP**

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**FROM THE PASTOR**

Ian Calvert begins a hymn with these words:  
*A cry in the night and a child is born*  
*A child in a stable, there isn't any room.*  
*A cry in the night and God has made*  
*our homelessness his home.*

**CONTACT THE CHURCH**

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The Christmas season for us is usually a festive time of celebration - shopping, decorating, cooking, concerts, parties, sending greetings, and sharing gifts.

The first Christmas was not like that.

A pregnant teenage girl gave birth to a child in a stable. One needed the eyes of faith - and the help of singing angels - to see the hand of God in this. God comes to us in difficult times. God comes when and where we least expect. But God does come. God knows how difficult life can be for us; and God can be with us. And when God comes, wherever we are, we are home.

If you want a perfect Christmas, don't look for it in the perfect gift or perfect decorations or perfect menu. Just have an open heart to the presence of God. Then the Christ-child will come, and all we do for Christmas will be transformed.

*Merry Christmas*  
*Pastor Chuck Maxfield*

**2021 CONSISTORY**

Jay Smith, President  
 Rich Fiedler,  
 V. President  
 Kristen Serina,  
 Secretary  
 James Friemann  
 Ken Raspen  
 Laura Walters  
 Donna Earnshaw  
 Michael Turbush

Officers:  
 Tom Mogel, Financial Sec.  
 Margie Schweitzer,  
 Historian  
 Nancy Ewing, Treasurer

**LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH**

In the ancient world various peoples lit fires to mark the turning of the light into winter's season and to pray for the return of the light. The church has Christianized that practice in the lighting of the Advent wreath. To us, these candles are signs of the growing light of Christ who is coming again in all fullness into the darkness of the world. Until the dawning of the Great Day, we watch and wait in Holy Spirit for Christ's coming into the darkness of our world, lighting candles of hope, peace, joy, and love; and remembering the promises of God with prayer.



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## CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

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### SCRIPTURES AND SERMONS FOR DECEMBER/JANUARY

The four Sundays before Christmas are Advent, the time to prepare For Christ's coming. The Christmas Season last for 12 days, beginning Christmas Day. But our major of celebration of Christmas will be on Christmas Eve.

Sunday, December 5 Second Sunday in Advent Holy Communion	Luke 3:1-20 John the Baptist	"What should we do?"
Sunday, December 12: Third Sunday in Advent	Luke 1:39-56	Mary and Human rights
Sunday, December 19: Fourth Sunday in Advent	John 1:1-18	"The Word became flesh and lived among us"
Friday, December 24 Christmas Eve Service 3:00 pm Holy Communion	Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 2:1-20	Service of Readings and Carols and Candle Lighting
Sunday, December 26 Second Day of Christmas		Service of the Carols
Sunday, January 2 Ninth Day of Christmas	Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1:10-18	The privileges of Adoption
Sunday, January 9 Epiphany Sunday Holy Communion	Psalms 72:1-14; Matthew 2:1-12	Come and Praise the King of Heaven

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## CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

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### ANNUAL REPORTS

All committees and ministries please submit annual report to [news@stjames-ucc.org](mailto:news@stjames-ucc.org) by December 26th 2021. Thank you for your prompt assistance.




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### CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The Annual St James Meeting of the Congregation will be held following worship on January 23rd.

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### NEEDED CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All St. James committees are asked to put together their 2022 calendar and give them to the Consistory before Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> so we can put together the new calendar. Please give your dates to Jay Smith as soon as possible so we can compile the dates before the meeting. Thanks for your help.



## GREETINGS FROM THE SEARCH COMMITTEE

Our gratitude and thanks to the Transition Team for their prayerful and steadfast work preparing and submitting the St. James UCC Profile to PSEC. Their dedication and hard work are a true example for the Search Committee to follow. We are ready to move forward with the search for a settled pastor.

The profile is posted, the Search Committee organized and now we begin the prayerful process, review and discernment. With the support of Rev. Dr. Susan Minasian of PSEC Interim Associate Conference Minister for Search and Call, we are moving forward and have already received profiles of candidates for consideration. As always, all information regarding candidates and reviews, will be held in strict confidence, when we find the best candidate, one who aligns with our profile and requirements, that profile will then be presented to the Consistory.

As we continue moving forward, please support your Search Committee with prayer, asking that they listen and continue to look to God for wisdom and guidance. We will keep you informed about the progress with periodic updates.

Members of St. James Search Committee are Jay Smith, Cindy Valerio, Kristen Serina, Linda Kramer, and Laura Walters, serving as chair.

## December

### Birthdays

- 1....Pamela Marino
- 2....Mary Ann Lopardo
- 4....Benjamin Hendricks
- 7....Emily Focht
- 9....Amy Friemann
- 9....Bill Burnett
- 10....Mae Mogel
- 12....Jennifer Schell
- 15....Lisa Hendricks
- 21....Gregory Borneman
- 22....Ruth Borneman
- 28....Simone McConnell
- 29....Aaron Smith
- 30....Ian Gelwicks

### Anniversary

- 17....Ralph & Linda Bevan



Congratulations and best wishes from your church family!

## BLOOD DRIVE



Our annual Christmas season blood drive is scheduled with Miller Keystone on Monday December 27th, from 1 to 7 p.m. Donors can register online by going to [www.GIVEaPINT.org](http://www.GIVEaPINT.org) and using our sponsor code of 4044. There will also be a sign-up sheet in the Narthex in early December.

## THANK YOU!

I hope all of you are well and safe.

Thank you very much for the cards and your prayers. And also for the many phone calls during the COVID crisis!

I appreciated it very much.

May God be with you always.

Sincerely, Sang Hi Crater

*thank you!*

## January

### Birthdays

- 4....Cora Smith
- 4....Linda Alexander
- 6....Ralph Bevan
- 6....Sue Swinehart
- 9....Barbara Brightbill
- 9....Dottie Cossaboon
- 10...Avery Schell
- 16....Kyleigh Gelwicks
- 21....Leisel Sarfert
- 24....Tuker Alderfer
- 24....Lucas Alderfer
- 27....Carter Hendricks

### Anniversary

- 3....C. Wendel & Sandra Koenig
- 6....Steve & Bridgette Lightcap



## A REQUEST FROM THE ALTAR GUILD

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Most know the Altar Guild as women of the church who prepare communion for worship and special occasions throughout the calendar year, sometimes serving at the altar and other times in the pews. To follow Covid safety guidelines, we switched to serving communion in pre-packaged cups containing the wafer and the grape juice. This alternative method protects us and meets our communion needs and for now, we will continue using the prepackaged option.

Preparing the altar for worship includes the changing and placement of paraments, filling the candles with oil and adding flowers to the altar. When we use the flowers that God created and place them on the altar we are reminded of the freshness and beauty of God's love for all. The altar is the center point or focus when we worship in the sanctuary. When we place flowers on the altar, we give glory to God. Just as special music, burning candles, scriptures read and prayers spoken, heighten our senses and directs our thoughts toward God, flowers do the same. They are simple symbols of joy, reminding us of God's creation and the beauty of his handiwork.

We would like to continue the long tradition of placing flowers on the altar but your help is needed. Please consider choosing a date in the coming year when you would like to sponsor flowers for the altar. The 2022 Flower Chart will be placed on the bulletin board in the narthex. There is one line for each Sunday, and you can print your name next to the date you choose to sponsor altar flowers. When the month approaches, someone from altar guild will contact you for information to put in the bulletin and find out if you have any special requests regarding type of flowers or colors. The order will be placed with Three Peas in A Pod, and they will send you the invoice. The flowers you sponsored will be ready for you to take home after worship.

When summer arrives and we once again worship in the pavilion, we encourage people to bring a plant, or cut flowers for the altar. Please continue to fill in the Flower Chart indicating the Sunday of your choice. That way we know flowers are coming.

We will also be refreshing the artificial flower arrangements to use as needed. If you would like to contribute an everlasting flower arrangement, please let Altar Guild know. If you have a month or two when you could serve on Altar Guild, please let Laura Walters know. Everything runs smoothly when we have enough volunteers to keep things going and help is always appreciated!

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## MIDWEEK ADVENT STUDY

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The Advent Season is a special time of year. It precedes Christmas but often gets lost in the hustle, bustle, and the bright lights of the coming holiday. The first day of Advent is the first day of a new Liturgical /church calendar marking the beginning of four weeks anticipation and preparation to celebrate the nativity and the birth of Jesus on Christmas Day.

If you would like to try something new this Advent Season, you are encouraged to join the Midweek Study as we begin a new advent series on Wednesday, December 1<sup>st</sup>. The short five-week study is based on the book, "All I Want for Christmas." Each session includes a short video drawing from themes in the book and a time to discuss and share the real-life stories from the video. It will be a time to remind us that the best gifts are heaven wrapped.

We will meet on ZOOM at 1 PM each Wednesday, beginning on December 1<sup>st</sup>. and ending on December 29<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to join us, please contact Laura Walters for the Zoom link for the Midweek Study.

So, as you prepare for Christmas, ask yourself, "what are the gifts you would really like to receive from Christmas this year? Then come to the

Midweek Study and share among friends!

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## CONSISTORY

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Parking lot repair: complete

Planning for the Future:

1. Worship – technology-Jay had acquired 4 quotes.
2. Choir/Music-Planning to have Mark sing for Christmas Eve service.
3. Fellowship dinners-On hold due to covid
4. Bible Studies-Almost done the first series and setting up a new series for Advent
5. Women's groups-Meeting to help stuff stockings for the Salvation Army
6. Website-Improving, but need to continue as we are having pastors apply that will be viewing the site.
7. Community outreach - Arcadia at Limerick Point -Laura, Donna, and Charlotte are meeting with them on Monday to assess what they want set up
8. Work against Racism Committee-Workshop during Advent on Tuesdays at 3 pm, Laura and Chuck have expressed interest

Candidates for Consistory-Charlotte Fiedler, Sue Myers, Bob Walters

Formation of Search Committee-Jay Smith, Laura Walters , Kristen Serina, Linda Kramer, Cindy Valerio

Christmas Eve service will be held at 3 pm.

Transition Committee Report: Profile posted

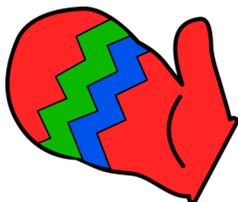
Office space for G&P-We will offer the Spiritual Library and relocate that to the choir dressing room.

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## MITTEN TREE

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The mitten tree will be put out in the Narthex. Donations of mittens/gloves, hats, and scarves are welcome. Donations will be sent to our sister church, Ponca Creek UCC to help them combat the cold winters in North Dakota.



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## BLANKET SUNDAY

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January 9 and 16 donations will be collected to support this Church World Service offering. When difficult times happen, a kind and loving response can make all the difference. That's why the CWS Blankets program was created—to give a kind, loving and tangible response to someone facing a difficult time, reminding them that they are not alone.

Through the generosity of CWS partner organizations, congregations and individual supporters, our most vulnerable neighbors around the world can feel safe and keep warm with fresh linens and clean sleeping quarters.

When our neighbors are in need, even \$10 for a single blanket goes a long way.

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## THE CHRISTMAS STAR

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The Christmas star has traditionally been associated with the spirit of the celebration. What is so special about it?



The stars that appear in the sky today are the same ones that were there two thousand years ago.

Was there a nova at the time of Jesus' birth? The exact time of His birth is not known, but astronomers cannot place a new star appearance anywhere near the possible time. Could it have been a shooting star? Again, the astronomers say it was not likely. A meteor lasts only a few seconds or minutes at best. The wise men followed the star for weeks looking for Jesus. We can rule out comets as well. They can be seen by the naked eye for a week or months. But modern astronomers know which comets were close enough to earth hundreds and thousands of years ago and there was no comet visible to humans around the time of Christ's birth.

Some star gazers suggest that if we move the birth of Jesus to the springtime of 6 B.C., we can attribute the star to the time the planets Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn were close together in the heavens. They formed a triangle in the group of stars known as Pisces.

## PRAYER CONCERNS

For our friends Betty Wines, Heather Yates, Melissa Moore, Ellie Donofrio, Frank Miller, Sang Hi Crater, Joan Rosen, Mary Barnaik *and others who are in long term care or unable to leave their homes. We pray for comfort, peace, healing, and companionship for each of them.*

For our friends Peggy M, Jean S, Van S, JC, Michelle, Ken, Betsy R, Barry G, Sue J, Mildred, Charlotte F, Bobbie T, Paul M, Chet M, Dottie, Bonnie, BJ, Diane, Ric F, Sharon R, Linda S, John K, Jessica, Jay P *and all cancer survivors, we pray for treatment where it is possible and release from suffering where it is needed.*

For our friends Taylor, Jim, Richard H, Fred R, Joan R, Mary B, Rita L, Kenny H, Terry P, Joy R, Cass, Loni R *and others with ongoing health concerns and challenging life of God's presence through the support of our congregation.*

*Prayers for all veterans that are still suffering from PTSD and all other side effects from their service in the military.*

*Lord we come to you with thanksgiving for all of your children you have healed. There are still many who are struggling with health issues that still need your healings, hear our prayer. There are many who suffer with pain and discomfort, we pray that you heal them from their suffering. We continue to pray for those who are putting their lives back together from fire and storms. We pray for our church that we may continue your work here on earth and be able to continue to reach out to others. We give you praise and thanksgiving for all your blessings you give us each day and we pray for healing and wholeness of mind, body and spirit upon us all. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*

Please note that we will remove names on the prayer list after one month, except for homebound and hospitalized members. Let us know if you would like to add or renew a request by office phone or email.

## PRAYING FOR ST. JAMES MEMBERS

Initiated by St. James Prayer Team, each Sunday two church families are being included in the Sunday worship prayer time. You are invited to include these members and their families in your prayers throughout that week.

### January

#### December

- 5 *Robert and Cora Smith  
Jay and Gail Smith*
- 12 *Clinton Starkey  
Scott and Susan Swinehart*
- 19 *Michael and Michele Terbush  
James and Cynthia Valerio*
- 26 *Robert and Laura Walters  
Lillian Weidner*

- 2 *Eleanor Wellman  
Betty Lou Wilson*
- 9 *Elizabeth Wines  
Ken, Nona, Tucker, Lucas and Ted  
Alderfer*
- 16 *Millie Alderfer  
Mary Barnaik*
- 23 *Ralph and Linda Bevan  
Gregory Borneman*
- 30 *Ruth Borneman  
Stacy Bosi*



# CALENDAR

## December 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			<b>1</b> Zoom Bible Study 1pm	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> Men's Breakfast 8:30am Advent Decorating 9am G/P Women's Luncheon 11am
<b>5</b> Second Sunday of Advent Worship Service 10:15am	<b>6</b> Boy Scouts 7pm	<b>7</b> Missions 7pm	<b>8</b> Zoom Bible Study 1pm	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> Women's Fellowship 10am
<b>12</b> Third Sunday of Advent Worship Service 10:15am	<b>13</b> Boy Scouts 7pm	<b>14</b> Consistory 7pm	<b>15</b> Zoom Bible Study 1pm Coventry Community Chorus rehearsal	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> Coventry Community Chorus concert 7:30 pm	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> Fourth Sunday of Advent Worship Service 10:15am	<b>20</b> Boy Scouts 7pm	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> Zoom Bible Study 1pm	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> Christmas Eve Service 3pm	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> First Sunday after Christmas Worship Service 10:15am Annual Reports Due	<b>27</b> Boy Scouts 7pm	<b>28</b> District AA 7pm	<b>29</b> Zoom Bible Study 1pm Blood Drive 1-7pm	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	

# CALENDAR

## January 2022

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2 Second Sunday after Christmas Worship Service 10:15am	3 Boy Scouts 7pm	4	5 Zoom Bible Study 1pm	6	7	8 Men's Breakfast 8:30am
9 The Baptism of Christ Worship Service 10:15am	10 Boy Scouts 7pm	11 Consistory 7pm	12 Zoom Bible Study 1pm	13	14	15
16 Second Sunday after Epiphany Worship Service 10:15am	17 Boy Scouts 7pm	18	19 Zoom Bible Study 1pm	20	21	22
23 Third Sunday after Epiphany Worship Service 10:15am	24 Boy Scouts 7pm	25 District AA 7pm	26 Zoom Bible Study 1pm	27	28	29
30 Fourth Sunday after Epiphany Worship Service 10:15am	31 Boy Scouts 7pm					

## CONFERENCE NEWS

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### CHRISTMAS CAROL

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BY SARA TEASDALE

The kings they came from out the south,  
All dressed in ermine fine;  
They bore Him gold and chrysopease,  
And gifts of precious wine.

The shepherds came from out the north,  
Their coats were brown and old;  
They brought Him little new-born lambs—  
They had not any gold.

The wise men came from out the east,  
And they were wrapped in white;  
The star that led them all the way  
Did glorify the night.

The angels came from heaven high,  
And they were clad with wings;  
And lo, they brought a joyful song  
The host of heaven sings.

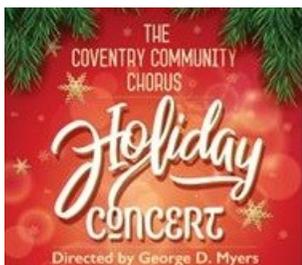
The kings they knocked upon the door,  
The wise men entered in,  
The shepherds followed after them  
To hear the song begin.

The angels sang through all the night  
Until the rising sun,  
But little Jesus fell asleep  
Before the song was done.

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### COVENTRY COMMUNITY CHORUS CONCERT

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Coventry Community Chorus at St James, scheduled for Friday, December 17th, starting at 7:30.

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### SOME HUMOR

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Three men die in a car accident on Christmas Eve. They all find themselves at the Pearly Gates waiting to enter heaven. On entering they must present something relating to or associated with Christmas. The first man searches his pocket, and finds some mistletoe, so he is allowed in. The second man presents a cracker, so he is also allowed in. The third man pulls out a pair of stockings. Confused at this last gesture, St Peter asks, 'How do these represent Christmas?' Answer: 'They're Carol's.'

Q: What's a good Christmas tip?

A: Never catch snowflakes with your tongue until all the birds have gone south for the winter.

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### RECYCLING RITA!

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While I'm sure we all recycle, I'd like to share some helpful hints and facts you're probably not aware of. So here goes!

1. 90% of all solid wastes in the US do not get recycled.
2. 80% of items buried in landfills could be recycled.
3. A single recycled plastic bottle saves enough energy to run a 100watt light bulb for 4hours.
4. It takes 500 years for a plastic water bottle to decompose and 4000 years for a glass bottle.
5. A single American consumes annually 2 trees for the paper products they use.

Next month ...some things you never thought that you could recycle.

St. James United Church of Christ  
321 South Limerick Road  
Limerick, PA 19468

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December/January 2022 NEWSLETTER

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## Notes & Reminders

Materials for the February Newsletter are due on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

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