

THE NEXUS DECEMBER 2022

Presbyterian Church
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Nicki's News

Dear Congregants,

The season of Advent is now upon us. It is a time of preparation for what is to come when we celebrate the birth of our Savior, who came to free us from sins. Now I don't know about you, but when I am preparing for the holidays, I like to get my house in order and clean things up. I try to ensure that the common areas are decluttered. This had me thinking about things within my spiritual self that needed decluttering, in order to be ready for the coming of the baby Jesus. Spiritual decluttering is something we all need to do. We can do so by taking an inventory of our emotions. What are we holding onto that is leaving no room for joy? Now hand that over to God in prayer. You can also do this daily by taking a few minutes to confess to God the spiritual clutter that is weighing you down. What fears, ideologies or unforgiveness is holding you back. May we all work to do some spiritual decluttering as we prepare to receive the baby Jesus once again. May this decluttering work move us into the New Year with open hearts and minds ready for whatever God is calling us to do.

In His Peace,
Pastor Nicki

Nexus Deadline

The Nexus deadline for the January issue is Tuesday, December 27th .

Nexus Sponsor

This month's issue is being sponsored by Ron and Connie Powell. There will soon be a new sign-up sheet for people interested in sponsoring a future Nexus issue. The cost is \$35.00.

Men's Lunch

The Men's Lunch group will meet on Wednesday, December 14th in the Lounge. Please join is for soup and sandwiches and great conversation.



Advent Worship

Advent Pastor Swap - As was shared in the Pastor's letter from October 25, during the advent season, the Pastors of First Stroudsburg Presbyterian, Christ Presbyterian Church of Slate Belt, Pleasant Valley Presbyterian and our church are going to swap congregations. This means that each week during advent you will be led by one of these church's pastors. Pastor Nicki will return to lead worship here on the 18th. For more details on how this came about please refer to pastor's letter.



Hope Fund

Our HOPE Fund is a fund we began in response to the needs of our community, that can help people struggling with financial constraints. This fund has helped many congregants, or any person identified as in need, pay for electric, heating, rent assistance, glasses, car repairs and more. As the cost of living is going up, we are seeing increased needs and use of this fund. These funds are now getting low. If you would like, you can donate to this fund at any time. Additionally, if you know someone in need, you can direct them to us and we will do what we can to assist them. Please note "Hope Fund" on your check memo line.

Celebrations:

Celebrating **Birthdays in December** are:

Jenny Collins, Mary Dressel, Ann Healy, Gregory Menio Jr., David Braithwaite, Zoey Delaney, Hollie Falzone, Bob Huffman, Marge Staffaroni, Daisha Kintz, Kelli Burlingame and Crista Varrica

Celebrating an **Anniversary in December** are:

Ron and Connie Powell
Allan Erbe and Elda McCoy

Calling All Youth

There is no Youth Group for December, but we will meet again at our monthly meeting on the fourth Sunday of the month, which for January is the 22nd. In January the youth from all the local churches will come to ESPC who will be hosting the group from 2-4pm.

The Great Christmas Cookie Exchange!

Calling all bakers! Calling all cookie eaters! Calling everyone who loves making, baking, and eating Christmas cookies! Grab your aprons and join the Great Christmas Cookie Exchange on **December 18th!**

How does it work?

1. Sign up to participate on the board in the Narthex by Sunday, December 11th.
2. All bakers will be asked to bake a dozen cookies* for each other baker. (Half dozen if we have A LOT of bakers.) So if 10 people sign up, each baker will receive 9 dozen different cookies to take home just in time for Christmas!
3. Bakers will bring their yummy cookies bundled by the dozen (with recipe attached) to share on December 18th. Please drop your goodies in the Fellowship lounge prior to worship so they may be packaged together for each baker to take home.
4. The exchange will happen in the Fellowship Lounge on Sunday, December 18th after worship.
5. If possible, we would like the bakers to bake an additional dozen cookies to share after worship during Fellowship time.

If you have any questions, please contact Amanda Denny at 570-656-6443 or at adenny@evenlink.com

**if you have another yummy Christmas dessert that can be made individually (i.e.: bark, brownies, pretzels, etc..) those are welcome instead of cookies as well.*



Living Into Our Mission

Here are ways we have brought God's light to our community in recent months:

1. We have helped someone move into a new apartment with furniture and home furnishings they needed.

2. We have provided meals for Family Promise members in need.

3. We have supplied food to individuals and have also taken lots of food to the North Timberwolf Pantry.

4. We have provided temporary room and board for people traveling through our area.

5. We supplied, blessed and delivered backpacks to kids in need in our area and donated more up north.

6. We provided practice space for a summer choir.

7. We baptized a baby, 3 children and their father!

8. We completed and are starting a new TOALC session.

9. We have had several Walk & Talks.

10. We have helped in giving rides, meals and visits to our congregants.

11. We have donated money to Ukraine.

12. We donated funds to Common Threads, Angels & Dragonflies, Angel's Closet, Meals On Wheels, 2nd Coming Thrift Shop and Timberwolf Pantry.

13. We contributed to One Great Hour of Sharing.

14. We contributed to the Peace & Global Witness Offering

15. We contributed to the Alice Visionary Project

16. We provided space to the Lehigh Presbytery for some of their activities



*There will be **NO** church Sunday School (for kids or adults) on Sunday December 25th or Sunday, January 1st. Classes will resume on January 8th.*

Shared Ministry Opportunities

This year, Christmas and New Year's Day fall on Sundays. This meant there was an opportunity to do some shared ministry as the leadership of the churches were deciding to have services or not. Knowing that there will likely have little attendance in each congregation, and in honoring the request for more shared ministry opportunities, several Session members saw it best to combine services. I am excited to share that on Christmas Day, services will be held at First Presbyterian Church Stroudsburg where we will participate in building a human nativity. This will be at 11:00am, where our on Kylee Vogel will be singing! The New Year's Day service will be a lesson on carols and will be held at Christ Presbyterian Church at 10:00 a.m. We will be singing Christmas Carols and learning about where they originated and how that can inform their spiritual influence. We hope that you will take this opportunity to worship with fellow brother's and sister's in Christ in new and exciting ways.



Share Your Faith

In an effort to share our story, spread faith, and reach out to our community and beyond, we are asking you to share your faith stories. It is our hope to compile the many inspiring stories of faith we all have, into one work to be published and sold as a fundraiser for our church ministries and building needs. We welcome all stories of faith in any amount you'd like to share. You may bring the stories into church in print form, or you may e-mail them to Amanda Denny at adenny@evenlink.com (or to the church if you think that's better - I just don't want to create unnecessary additional work for anyone else). We ask that all stories be submitted by the end of the year so we can move forward with publication in 2023.

Operation Christmas Child

Our Operation Christmas Child boxes are on their way to children worldwide who need support and the message of God's love! The 36 boxes were dropped off at Reeders Methodist Church, a collection location. They were then transported to the main packaging center in Baltimore, Maryland, before being shipped out of the country. We should receive word about the country or countries our boxes were delivered to by the end of December. Check out next month's Nexus for the "big reveal."

Thanks again to our generous donors, prayer warriors, and Sunday School children for making global outreach an important mission for ESPC.



Brighter Christmas 2022

We have been blessed with the opportunity to provide a BRIGHTER CHRISTMAS for three local families this season. We have been asked to provide for ten children. A sign-up sheet, with their wish list, will be placed in the Narthex beginning Sunday, November 20th for those wishing to make this Christmas a little BRIGHTER for these families. Please select a tag with the item you would like to donate and sign your name next to that item on the sheet. As in the past, we ask that you wrap the gift and return it to the church, with the tag on it, so we are able to deliver the gift to the family for which it is intended. Please return all gifts by Sunday, December 11th. Thank you for your kindness and generosity in helping these families to have a BRIGHTER CHRISTMAS. If you have any questions, please contact Amanda Denny at adenny@evenlink.com or 570-656-6443.

Inspirarity Dialogue

You have a chance to meet your neighbors of differing faiths through conversations with them. This dialogue time is one hour and each month a different topic is chosen for the next month's discussion. Each person is to bring their faith traditions or own personal beliefs to the chosen topic. Currently we are still doing this remotely on Zoom, but the hope is to do it in person in the future.

Meeting ID: 811 4459 9578 Passcode: 621686
Next meeting is Sun., December 11th at 7:00 p.m.

Ring the Bell!

At a time when churches are struggling to find new ways to complete their mission, our church has been active in choosing different paths to spread our spirit. For the last two years, some of our members have graciously given of their time to "Ring the Bell" for the Salvation Army. As you look at your own diminishing resources, you can imagine the problems facing too many of our elderly and the working poor. The Salvation Army helps fill those voids.

Like the biblical Fishes and the Loaves, we, too, can have God multiply our gifts through gathering family and friends to help. Our shifts are two hours but you can certainly invite others to split that with you. Pastor Nicole and her family are ringing for the 11 o'clock shift. Won't you join them and ring in the joy of our faith and spread that joy throughout our community?

Where: Shop Rite at Stroud Mall

When: Sat. Dec. 10, 1-7 PM

Contact: Sonya Cole at Sonyakcole@gmail.com or leave a message 570-350-1475. Prefer email.



December Meetings & Events

Dec. 2 nd	K-Group, 1:00
Dec. 3 rd	Dave Heller memorial, 10:00
Dec. 10 th	Bell ringing at Salvation Army, 1-7
Dec. 11 th	Session meeting, after worship
Dec. 11 th	Insparity Dialogues, 7:00 pm
Dec. 11 th	Please have your Brighter Christmas gifts returned and wrapped
Dec. 13 th	Mission Committee meeting, 1:00
Dec. 14 th	Men's Lunch, noon
Dec. 18 th	Cookie Exchange!!
Dec. 24 th	Candlelight Christmas Eve service, 7:00 p.m.
Dec. 25 th	Christmas service @ First Pres. in Stroudsburg, 11:00 am
Dec. 26 th	Church Closed

P.A.T.H. Envelopes

On the bulletin board in the Narthex, you will find a poster from P.A.T.H. This stands for **Pocono Area Transitional Housing**. Each year, P.A.T.H. helps to celebrate the children in their program, both the current ones, and those who have graduated! They ask that you grab an envelope and put your donation inside. You can then mail it directly back to them or put it in our offering plate and they will come pick them up. Then P.A.T.H. will take care of purchasing a gift for that child.

Humor Corner



Christmas Eve Service

Please join us for our Christmas Eve Candlelight service on Saturday, December 24th at 7:00 p.m. Communion will be served.



Looking Ahead

New Year's Day service will be held at Christ Presbyterian of the Slate Belt at 10:00 a.m.

The Youth gathering will take place on Sunday, January 22nd here at ESPC from 2:00-4:00.

Church Elders

Sharon Laverdure Rick Sanker Ellie Buff
Sandra Rydell Judy Schreck Jim Hall
Phil Lawrence Debbie Prince Lisa Swanson

Church Staff

Nicole Vogel	Pastor
Jen Carmella	Secretary
Linda Schaller	Music Director
Sami Carmella	Nursery Attendant
Keith Karkut	Tech/ Sexton

Nexus Staff

Pastor: Nicole Vogel

Editor: Jen Carmella

Contributing Editors: Sonya Cole, Amanda Denny, Sandy Rydell, Judy Schreck, Lisa Swanson, Tim Swanson



December 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Adult Church Sunday School will be at 9:00 on the 4 th , 11 th & 18 th .				1	2 K-Group, 1:00	3 Dave Heller memorial, 10:00
4 2 nd Sunday in Advent Worship, 10:00 Communion Sunday	5	6	7	8	9	10 Salvation Army Bell Ringing! 1:00-7:00 Choose your shift!
11 3 rd Sunday in Advent Worship, 10:00 Session Mtg. Insparity Dialogues, 7:00 pm	12	13 Mission Committee Mtg., 1:00	14 Men's lunch, noon	15	16	17
18 4 th Sunday in Advent Worship, 10:00	19	20	21	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 7:00 Communion served
25 Christmas Day Service at 1 st Pres. Stbg., 11:00	26 Church Closed	27 Nexus Deadline	28	29	30	31