



# ST. JAMES UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## LIMERICK, PA

### DECEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER

St. James United Church of Christ in Limerick, PA is called to be disciples of Christ providing a caring, supportive, welcoming and inclusive community. We seek to faithfully spread the good news of Jesus Christ through generous mission, loving fellowship and curiosity about the Bible and our faith, with the help of God.

*For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*

Jeremiah 29:11

Dear St. James family,

It's December so you know what that means – the holiday season is upon us! In the church, it also means it is the season of Advent, which is the beginning of the church year. I always thought it was interesting that the church calendar and the secular calendar started a month apart. For me, December and Advent are a great time to prepare for the new year. Prepare for what? More on that in a minute.

First let's talk about Advent. In my first year with you, I struggled with the idea of what Advent is all about, so I decided I needed a clearer idea. I knew it was a time of waiting. But waiting for what? To get some answers, I turned to...Facebook. I asked my pastor friends what they thought we were waiting for. Some said, "Baby Jesus." That didn't really do it for me. I mean, Jesus has been born, lived, died and was resurrected, so why are we waiting for him to be "born again"? But someone did post something that I thought rang more true – we're waiting for rebirth.

Aaaahhhh...now this is more like it. As we prepare for the new year, we are preparing for our own rebirth. Some might call it writing spiritual New Year's Resolutions. For me, Advent and preparing for Christmas are about looking back over this year and thinking about the spiritual practices I have. What works and what doesn't? Are there new practices I might want to try?

Now, in between all of the hullabaloo of holiday events - end of the year work deadlines, family events, parties, shopping, decorating, baking, hosting, etc., we might be thinking, "When will I have time to reflect on anything?? I already have so many things to prepare for!" And yet, this is a great time to make the time – even just a few minutes a day – to talk to God and then to breathe in the Spirit, and then act on what we hear. I find that when something is really important to us, we will make the time. When we make the time to breathe and reflect, that will keep us calmer and less anxious, more able to take on the events of the day with confidence. When we make the time to put God first, (not to neglect the rest of our lives, but to talk to God first when making decisions), we will find ourselves making better decisions and feeling braver, more peaceful, and more prepared for whatever December has to throw at us. Thanks be to God!

With love in Christ,

Pastor Beth

---

Beth Biehl from Aging Resources, Inc. will be coming on **December 1** after worship to talk about what our options are as we age and find ourselves in need of change. Please bring a lunch or grab something from the coffee and conversation table and stay for this informative discussion. Any questions, ask Pastor Beth.

---



### Women's Fellowship Christmas Tea

Saturday, December 7 at 12 noon This event will be held at the home of Donna Earnshaw, 18 Phaeton Way, Limerick, PA. Please bring an exchange gift of \$15. Please sign the sheet in the narthex to attend. PLEASE BRING A FEW DOZEN COOKIES TO SHARE.

---

### Saturday Christmas Dinner December 14

Instead of a potluck dinner hospitality will be making a Christmas dinner. There will be a sign-up sheet for anyone who would like to bring a dessert.

*Merry Christmas from the hospitality committee.*

---



A Christmas Carol Hymn Sing will be held during the Sunday morning worship service at St. James on December 29.

---

You can provide or sponsor altar flowers to honor someone or an event, see Beth Miller or Donna Earnshaw, altar guild volunteers for December.

---

### Bethany Children's Home

We will again support Bethany with gifts for the children. There is information on the board along with suggestions for gifts. All gifts need to be at the church no later than Dec. 15 for delivery on Dec. 16. If you have any questions, please contact Charlotte Fiedler

---



The **Missions Committee** is seeking your help in determining the focus of our Mission Partners for the coming year (2025). Please be in touch with any of the committee (Jay Smith, Kristen Serina, Linda Kramer or Sandy Koenig) to let them know of your interest!

Dear St. James family,

Earlier this year, we settled on our priorities for the near future—for what God is calling us to in worship, as a faith community, and in the world. We are already doing almost all of what we felt called to.

Just to refresh your memory -

For worship: mics used during announcements, continuing of guest musicians, join with other congregations, and more spirit filled music.

As a faith community: fellowship dinner/game night, visit homebound, women's fellowship.

In the world: mission, social justice issues, and curb appeal

If you have any questions, or suggestions for how to improve any of these in the future, please let me know.

With love,

Pastor Beth

---

## Prayer and Suffering

by Henri Nouwen taken from "Prayer Embraces the World"

"Come to me," Jesus says, "all you who are weary and find life burdensome, and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon your shoulders and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart. Your soul will find rest, for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matt. 11:29-30).

Here the deeper meaning of prayer becomes manifest. To pray is to unite ourselves with Jesus and lift up the whole world through him to God in a cry for forgiveness, reconciliation, healing, and mercy. To pray, therefore, is to connect whatever human struggle or pain we encounter—whether starvation, torture, displacement of peoples, or any form of physical and mental anguish—with the gentle and humble heart of Jesus.

Prayer is leading every sorrow to the source of all healings; it is letting the warmth of Jesus' love melt the cold anger of resentment; it is opening a space where joy replaces sadness, mercy supplants bitterness, love displaces fear, gentleness and care overcome hatred and indifference. But most of all, prayer is the way to become and remain part of Jesus' mission to draw all people to the intimacy of God's love.

Submitted by Charlotte Fiedler

## Praying Is Living

from the book, "With Open Hands" by Henri Nouwen

Prayer leads you to see new paths and to hear new melodies in the air. Prayer is the breath of your life which gives you freedom to go and to stay where you wish and to find many signs which point out the way to a new land. Praying is not simply some necessary compartment in the daily schedule of a Christian or a source of support in time of need, nor is it restricted to Sunday mornings or mealtimes. Prayer is living. It is eating and drinking, action and rest, teaching and learning, playing and working. Prayer pervades every aspect of our lives. It is the unceasing recognition that God is wherever we are, always inviting us to come closer and to celebrate the divine gift of being alive.

Submitted by Charlotte Fiedler

---

"To my Friends and Family at St. James UCC:

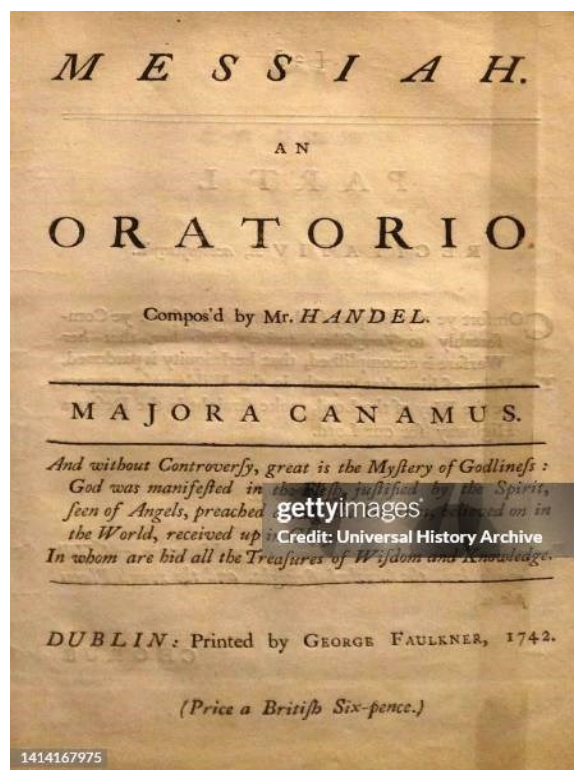
I want to thank you from the deepest part of my heart for your healing prayers, thoughtful meals, flowers, cards, calls, and visits. Your caring and encouraging messages lifted my spirits and brightened some difficult days. You were a constant source of strength and comfort during my recovery and rehabilitation I am so blessed by your support and love and filled with much gratitude. Thank you, thank you all for being there for me.!

Peace, Love and Blessings to you!

Laura Walters

---

The Wayne Oratorio Society will again present George Frideric Handel's MESSIAH on December 7 and 8 at 7:30 pm. A 140 voice choir with professional orchestra and soloists will gift the audience with a free concert. A freewill offering will be taken. The conductor will be John Grecia, with soloists Melanie Sarakatsannis, soprano, Raffaella Lo Castro, alto, David Price, tenor, and Mark Hightower, bass. The concerts will be held at Wayne Presbyterian Church, 125 E Lancaster Ave, Wayne, PA.



---

*For our friends Heather Yates, Melissa Moore, Sang Hi Crater 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 Vickie K, Debarah B, Dan S, Priscilla M, Daran B, Barb G, Shirley, Van S, Ken M, Brian S, Cheryl, Jim S, Alison L, Jackie, Dee L, Betsy R, Ginny T, JC, Paul M, Amy D, Barb M, Christine J, Barb G, Jean S, Michelle, Paul M, Bonnie, BJ, Ric F, Linda S, John K, Tabby, Karen, Phil, Dodie S, Carol T, Kork M, Don G, and all cancer survivors, we pray for treatment where it is possible and release from suffering where it is needed.*

*For our friends Kris B, Ruth B, Bettie, JT, Pete M, Wendel K, Elaine N, Michael S, Franklin R, Lorraine R, Marion H, Brian, Kenny B, Mary Lou B, Sonny B, Cathy M, and others with ongoing health concerns and challenging life circumstances. May they be reassured 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 thank you for the healing you have given many of your children, but there are still so many dealing with health issues that need your healing. We know you hear our prayers and sometimes we get impatient when we don't get an answer right away. Help us to be more patient knowing things don't always go as quickly as we like, but still knowing all things happen in your time. We pray for all the people that have been affected with the storms and ask that you give them comfort and hope in the recovery of their lives. We pray for the Spirit's guidance each day and we pray for wholeness and healing of mind, body and spirit upon us all. We pray this in Jesus' name, 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 contacting Charlotte Fiedler by phone or email.

---

### PRAYING FOR OUR FELLOW MEMBERS OF ST. JAMES

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.

December 1— Hannah Iannozzi and Marilyn Jorgensen

December 8— Wendel & Sandy Koenig and Eric Kramer

December 15— Linda Kramer and Sherry Kulp

December 22—Phil & Joanne Levering and Paul & Betty Meyers



CALENDAR DECEMBER 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<b>1</b> Worship service 10:15 with Com- munion Beth Biehl aging presentation fol- lowing worship	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> Men’s breakfast 8:30 am Ladies’ Fellow- ship Christmas Tea at noon at Donna E’s house
<b>8</b> Worship service 10:15 am	<b>9</b> Girl Scouts 5:30 Boy Scouts 7pm	<b>10</b>  Consistory meeting 7 pm	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>  Special Christ- mas fellowship dinner 5 pm
<b>15</b> Worship service 10:15 am Annual reports due to the church office during this week	<b>16</b> Boy Scouts 7pm	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>  Coventry Com- munity Chorus rehearsal 7 pm	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>  Coventry Community Chorus Con- cert 7:30 pm	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> Worship service 10:15 am	<b>23</b> Girl Scouts 5:30 Boy Scouts 7pm	<b>24</b>  Christmas Eve Service 7 pm	<b>25</b> Pastor Beth on vacation now through Janu- ary 1st. Christmas Day	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> Worship service 10:15 am, Hymn Sing	<b>30</b> Boy Scouts 7pm	<b>31</b>  AA 7 pm	Happy New Year!			



**Spiritual Library -The Little Free Library**—Have you visited the Spiritual Library lately? We have added additional books and there is now a binder with categories and books listed under each one.

Please **save the tabs** from your soda cans for Keira Serina. The tabs will be collected to benefit the Ronald McDonald House of Philadelphia. A **jar** for this is on the table in the narthex.



## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

7 Emily Focht  
9 Beth Eustis  
9 Amy Friemann  
10 Mae Mogel  
21 Gregory Borneman  
22 Ruth Borneman



## DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

17 Ralph & Linda Bevan

December 2024 Newsletter

## 2024 CONSISTORY

Richard Fiedler, President  
Bob Walters, V. President  
Kristen Serina, Secretary  
Cindy Valerio  
Ken Raspen  
Jay Smith  
Susan Myers  
Laura Walters

### Officers:

Tom Mogel, Financial Sec.  
Margie Schweitzer, Historian  
Jay Smith, Treasurer

**Materials for the January 2025 Newsletter are due to the office on December 18th, 2024.**

## CONTACT THE CHURCH

321 South Limerick Rd.  
Limerick, PA 19468  
610-489-0990  
[www.stjames-ucc.org](http://www.stjames-ucc.org)  
Rev. Beth Eustis  
[pastor@stjames-ucc.org](mailto:pastor@stjames-ucc.org)  
*Music Director/Organist:*  
*Donna Pinto*  
[music@stjames-ucc.org](mailto:music@stjames-ucc.org)  
(610) 792-1679  
*Church office hours*  
Mon. & Thurs. 1pm—4pm  
[office@stjames-ucc.org](mailto:office@stjames-ucc.org)  
“Like” us on Facebook!  
[www.facebook.com/stjamesucc](http://www.facebook.com/stjamesucc)

The Coventry Community Chorus will again be holding their annual holiday concert here at St. James on December 20th at 7:30 pm. All are invited to attend this free concert.



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