



Salem Church of the Brethren

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Continuing the work of Jesus: Peacefully. Simply. Together.

Salem Church of the Brethren

December 2019 Issue

Greetings Brothers & Sisters

This note is being composed on Halloween. I know that when you read this, Thanksgiving will have concluded and Advent is a few days away. The fall season is one of waiting for celebration it seems. While we are prone to liking and seeking places of celebration, we run the risk of being overwhelmed by these celebrations. They lose the joy and gain obligation the more we do them. When these celebrations become obligations, the joy and goodness that surrounds these celebrations is lessened. This year my hope, for our community and the individuals within it, is that we are able to approach Advent and the birth of Christ as a time of eager anticipation, not obligatory fulfillment.

I have selected readings from the book Goodness and Light: Readings for Advent and Christmas, which is available through Brethren Press. This anthology of writings from varied writers carries unique perspectives and insights that invite us to do something different with this season; it invites us to be goodness and light and to see goodness and light. This is an easy invitation to accept, but it is not an easy invitation to adhere to. Many start the season with conflict of schedules making the hoped for, and sometimes obligatory, gatherings near impossible to plan. It can be difficult to experience the goodness in the season because of stress and anxiety that appears within us during this season. It can be difficult to be warmed by the light when the darkness creeps in quicker than any other time.

Within the writings of our Advent text was this poem which I hope will provide you a breath, a pause, a reminder that this season of waiting, anticipation and celebration are meant to tell a story about the love and grace of God.

Prayer

*O God, who spoke all creation into being;
When you created human flesh,
We betrayed you by our disobedience.
When you led us out of slavery in Egypt,
We doubted and defied you.
Yet you chose to come among us
Through your Son, Jesus Christ,
Who suffered death on our behalf,
Putting an end to the power of sin and death.
For this great gift of your steadfast hope,
We give you thanks.
Help us, O Lord, to keep vigil this night.
Help us to watch for the signs of your coming into our
Midst,
Not in splendid palaces of power,
But in hearts humbled by need.
Help us to believe that the darkness of cruelty and sin
Will never overcome the light, and the mercy, of Christ.
Help us to endure,
Knowing that the evil and injustice of this world
Cannot prevail against your Word.
We ask this in the name of your Word made flesh,
Our Savior, Jesus Christ. AMEN*

May this season of Advent, a season of eager anticipation, be a season in which we receive and share the goodness and light of the love of God. AMEN

Blessings

Pastor Lee Saylor

Serve the Lord with gladness...

Those Serving in December

Greeters: December 1—Kent & Phyllis WQ December 8—Carla D0& Tom D0 December 15—Kay & Tom H0 December 22—Diana H0& Doris S0 December 29—Betsy D0& Sue W0

Acolytes: December 1—Grant H0 December 8—Eric B0 December 15—needed, December 22—Colin H0 December 29—needed

Ushers: Stan M0 Taco C0 Brian P0 Doug S0

Worship Leaders: December 1—Bonnie W0 December 8—Tom W0 Jr., December 15—Kent W0 December 22—Sue W0 December 29—Tom H0

Mark Your Calendars

Deadlines

Next Newsletter Deadline:
Sunday, December 22
 Bulletin Articles: Thursday, 10:00am
Board Meeting
 Thursday, December 12, 7:00pm
Shepherding Prayer Group
 Tuesday, December 17, 7:00pm

Sunday Worship

Sunday Sermons

- December 1 *from Isaiah 2:1-5*
Desiring in Advent
- December 8 *from Romans 15:4-13*
Hope and Harmony
- December 15-**Advent Offering**
from James 5:7-10
Waiting in Line
- December 22 *from Matthew 1:18-25*
Do Not Be Afraid
- December 24 7:00pm Christmas Eve Service
From Isaiah 9:2-7
Seeing a Great Light
- December 29 *sermon from Matthew 2:13-18*

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Lee Saylor, Pastor
 Office Hours 9:30am-12:00noon, Tues.-Fri.
 937-540-4533; iamleebob@gmail.com
 Carrie Smith, Administrative Assistant
 Office Hours 9:00am-12:00noon, M-F
 Karen Dillon, Director of Christian Ed.

December Birthdays-*Happy Birthday!!*

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 4-Lila M0 | 16-Kimberly A0 |
| 6-Samantha S0 | 16-Edith H0 |
| 9-Chuck H0 | 17-Jane E0 |
| 8-Theo S0 | 18-Shirley C0 |
| 11-Diana B0 | 20-Elois E0 |
| 12-Bob K0 | 20-Genevieve F0 |
| 13-Darlene D0 | 22-Casey D0 |
| 13-Isaac S | 31-Tom Y Q Jr. |
| 15-Robbie S0 | |

Sunday Morning Schedule

9:00am Adult, Young Adult, and High School Sunday School with Childcare
 10:00am Morning Worship
 10:15am Children's Sunday School Nursery (ages 2 and under)

Wednesday Meal & Activities

The meal will resume after the first of the year. Christmas play practice will be at 7:00pm on December 4, 11, 18.

In Our Prayers

Barbara EQ Shirley CQ Janet HQ Leon & Waneta M., Earl M., Jayne S.

Long Term Needs: Elois C., Aaron M., Sam P., Chad P., Reta S.

Churches and more: Our district churches, Trinity Presbyterian Church, Church of the Brethren in Nigeria (Godiya Bitrus), Bethany Theological Seminary



This & That & Special Events during Advent

If you have a **prayer request** you'd like to go through the prayer chain One Call, please call Sue Wampler at 286-4590. If she cannot be reached, please call Pastor Lee at 836-6145.

Sew What is at 9:00am on Wednesdays. No experience needed! Just come and tie, sew, and press, blankets and quilts to be donated to people around the world. Bring a packed lunch. See Carol Shroyer with any questions.

The board would like to replenish the Home Emergency Fund. **A soup and salad lunch is planned for Sunday, December 1 after worship** with donations going towards this fund. If you'd like to help with the luncheon see Ashley Saylor.

Wednesday Meal & Activities-For December 4, 11, 18 there will be play practice at 7:00pm. Everyone is invited to join in the preparation and being part of the Christmas play.

The next **Shepherding Prayer Group** meeting is Tuesday, December 17 at 7:00pm in the parlor. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend.

Thank you for your gift to the Brethren Retirement Community Women's Auxillary. We are grateful for your ongoing generosity!

Directory Time! Please verify all your information in the directory is correct and up to date! Please get any updated info to Carrie in the office by calling 836-6145 or emailing at salemcob@gmail.com . If you are receiving the monthly newsletter via US postal and have an email, please consider getting it through email instead. Just let Carrie know by emailing her at salemcob@gmail.com . New directories will go out the first of the year.

Celebrating the Season

through community, giving,
gratitude, and grace...

Welcoming Advent - an event with the local Church of the Brethren hosted at Happy Corner Church of the Brethren, Dec. 1, 6:00pm. The Christmas season approaches in a rush of twinkling lights, Santa hats, Christmas presents, and relentless commercialism. Come and join our wider community as we invite each other to take a breath, dive into the symbols of advent, and begin the anticipation of our coming and already present Christ. Come and learn what the hospitality of Advent is all about! In good Brethren fashion, we will share in fellowship around cookies and cocoa after the service. Please bring a dozen cookies to share if you are able.

Salem's Annual Christmas Play will be Sunday, December 15, at 7:00. Join us for an evening of celebration, Christmas carols, and light refreshments. Practices are Wednesday evenings at 7:00 starting December 4. Everyone is invited to participate and/or enjoy the program. See Karen Dillon with questions.

Women's Annual Christmas Banquet

Women and girls of the congregation, mark your calendars and plan to attend our annual Women's Christmas Banquet on Thursday, Dec. 5, at 6:00pm. Sign up on the narthex bulletin board or call the church office to reserve your spot.

Servers for the Women's Banquet

Men and boys are invited to help serve at the Women's Christmas banquet on Thursday, Dec. 5th. Please plan to be at the church by 5:15pm if you are able. Please sign up on the narthex bulletin board. See Pastor Lee with any questions.

Advent Events Continued

Southern Ohio COB Cookie Camp-December 6-7, at Salem COB.

Join us for a Bakin' Good Time from 12:00-5:00pm and 6:00-9:00pm on Friday & 9:00 AM-2:00 PM on Saturday (lunch provided). Sue Wampler will be taking Orders for cookies. Orders are needed by December 1. You can pick up your cookies on Dec. 7th from 2:00 - 4:00. Profits will help support Winter Blast sponsored by the Camping & Retreat Ministries.

The Church of the Brethren Advent offering will be Sunday, December 15.

We will be collecting gifts for our Adopt-A-Family project again this year. Grab a tag from the tree in the narthex, buy the gift, wrap the gift, and don't forget to attach the tag. Gifts need to be returned by Sunday, Dec. 8. Please see Stephanie Stratton if you have any questions. Thank you for making Christmas special for these families!

A Blue Christmas with the Brethren churches. Lower Miami will be hosting a Blue Christmas service on **Dec. 19, 7:00pm** with Salem, and Happy Corner churches. The holiday season is full of happy and cheer... unless it isn't. Loss of loved ones, divorces, isolation from family and friends, and other life transitions can make fellowship with happy people this time of year a bit difficult. On one of the longest nights of the year, you are invited to come just as you are into the presence of the Divine. In this space we sing, light candles, and acknowledge that while not everything about this season is joyful - all is sacred. Come.

Christmas Remembrances— Remember our shut-ins during this time by visiting them during this season. Please pick one or two shut-ins on the list located on the narthex bulletin board (Dec. 1), then plan on visiting them in the next several weeks. This can be a visit you do with your family or by yourself, it can be visiting with a church member you don't know very well or an old church friend. Whatever you decide, please don't let this opportunity to reach out and connect during this season pass you by!

Christmas Card Fund-Instead of sending a Christmas greeting to your friends at church in the mail, send them a greeting through the church bulletin and donate the card and postage money to a family in need. Donations for the Christmas Card Fund will be accepted through the end of the year. Your Christmas greetings will be in the bulletin on Sunday, December 22. All donations will be shared with a family/ families in need at this time. If you have a recommendation for a family in need please let Pastor Lee know.

Scrip! GREAT FOR HOLIDAY SHOPPING as well as GIFTS! All the major discount retailers in the area – Wal-Mart, Meijer, and Target are available, as well as many restaurants and retail locations. We keep many cards in stock for weekly sales. All proceeds benefit the youth of our church. See Karen Dillon. Thanks for your support!

