

Sewickley United Methodist Church

December 2021 Newsletter

From The Pastor's Heart

During Christmas there is a popular family tradition you can find gracing many young households. This tradition is called *The Elf on the Shelf*. There is an Elf that parents set up in various places around the house during the month of December. The Elf is a symbol of the fact that Santa can't be everywhere but is watching, and his little helpers will report back and let him know if the kids are being good or bad. Over the past couple of years, the Elf has morphed into a bit more of a mischievous character. The Elf has been known to spill the milk, and tip over the dog's bowl of food. The Elf has even been caught shaving a man's head while he sleeps.

Much like Santa's little helper, there is a character in the biblical narrative of the birth of Christ that can be found in each person's story. But unlike Santa's little helpers, this character proclaims a story of truth and exudes power. This character isn't just present because the big guy can't be everywhere, but this character is present because God loves us so much that he invites each of us to be a part of the story. An Angel can be seen journeying for Jesus. There is an angel who brings the news to Zechariah that he and his wife, Elizabeth, will have a son whom they are to name John and that he will be the one to prepare the way for Jesus. There is an Angel who comes to Mary to tell her she has been chosen to carry Jesus. There is an Angel who visits Joseph to tell him to stay with Mary. There is an Angel who proclaims the good news to the Shepherds that the Savior was born. Angels have long been a part of the biblical narrative of heaven and of earth. We understand them to be God's messengers, a part of God's army, protectors of truth, witnesses to the kingdom of God, and sometimes even our very own guardians. As we ourselves journey to the manger this Christmas season we will find in the Angels good traveling companions. Pay attention to where they show up. Pay attention to the things they have to say. Pay attention to the One whom they are always pointing us to. This advent season, when you come to church, look for the Angel who is journeying to Jesus and discover what truth we are to learn from the birth of Christ.

From one light to another,

Hannah M. Loughman
Pastor Hannah Loughman





Be on the look out for some growth opportunities. Beginning the second full week of January 2022 we will be hosting growth groups once again. Some will be held in-person and some will be available online. As you look eagerly at the year ahead, be in prayer about which group you should join so you can experience a year of personal growth and a thriving relationship with Jesus Christ! There will be a link sent out to you in the next couple weeks with more information regarding the groups and how to sign up!

CALL FOR CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS

Anyone wishing to have Church Council approval of Resolutions to be presented at the annual Western Pennsylvania Conference of The United Methodist Church should present the resolution in writing to either Rev. Hannah Loughman or Council Chair, Mitch Hortert, on or before **December 31**.



It's time to think about the Christmas Purse. This is our chance, as a congregation, to provide the staff with a gift as a show of appreciation for their hard work. If you wish to donate, please give your contribution to a Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) member **by Sunday, December 19**. Checks should be made out to "CASH" with a notation on the memo line of "Staff Purse." We will also accept cash contributions or you may select "Staff Christmas Purse" in easyTithe. Please note that Christmas Purse donations are not tax deductible. We thank you in advance for allowing us to honor and remember our wonderful

staff at this special time of year. SPRC members are: Mark Benjamin, Barbara Bower, Johnathan Burnett, Mitch Hortert, Jennifer Jones, Otis McAliley, Donna Sawhill, Ron Smith, and Kristine Swaney.

DOORS TO HOPE AT HOME/RED STOCKINGS SPECIAL OFFERING SUNDAY DECEMBER 5TH



Offering will be divided between Doors to Hope and Red Stockings. Doors to Hope at Home supports 6 Western PA Conference agencies: Pittsburgh Northside Ministries (including The Bridge, aka Bethany House Academy); Prison Outreach Ministries (provides Bible studies); and Erie UM Alliance, Connellsville Area Community Ministries and UM Human Services of Johnstown (all of which provide various services to low income and homeless persons). Red Stocking supports the Health and Welfare Ministries of the Conference. Funds are given to: Westbury Community, Arbutus Park Manor, and UM Services for the Aging in Mt. Lebanon. Please designate "Doors to Hope" on your envelope or check; you may also donate via EasyTithe.

If you would like to order any poinsettia plants to adorn the chancel for Christmas, please order [online here](#), or use an order form found in the rear of the sanctuary and outside the office, and return it to the office or place in the offering plate with your payment. You may also call the office. **Orders are due by Tuesday, December 7.** Dedications will be included in the Christmas Eve bulletins and in the January Newsletter. If you purchase a poinsettia, you will be able to take it home after the Traditional Service on Christmas Eve.



Worship Opportunities - December 2021



Contemporary Worship Service: 9 am
 Traditional Worship Service: 11 am
 Our Worship Services are live streamed on
sewickleyumc.org and [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com).

The recorded services are also available later on Sunday afternoon.

Angels from the realm of glory...we have so much to learn from them. If we were to pull together all the characters of the Christmas story, we find that an angel had something to do with each of them. Journey alongside the Angels with us this advent season as we make our way to Jesus.

December 5, 2021
Second Sunday of Advent
Communion

Liturgist: Grace Rogansky
Scripture Lesson: Luke 1:26-38

Message: "The Angel Gabriel and Mary:
 We are Capable of Good Things"

Gabriel is known to be an angel of great importance. Gabriel shows up a number of times throughout the biblical narrative of heaven's interactions with humanity. When Gabriel appears to Mary we understand this to be a sign of great hope. Because of the message Gabriel brings, we understand that, like Mary, we are capable of important things. Even if we don't always see it in ourselves, there are others who are sent to remind us of this truth.

December 12, 2021
Third Sunday of Advent
Handbell Choir (11 am)

Liturgist: Warren Kinneer

Message: "An Angel and Joseph: It's Okay to Change Your Mind"

Scripture Lesson: Matthew 1:18-25

Put on the breaks!! It's okay to stop and turn around and head in the other direction. It is okay to change your mind. Sometimes there seems to be a lot of pressure to know the answer and to know it right away. How often have we been sorry for saying something we wish we would have taken a bit more time to think about first? What we learn in the interaction between Joseph and the angel is that we have the time to make sure our decisions are right and we have permission to change our minds if they are not.

December 19, 2021
Fourth Sunday of Advent

Liturgist: Marilyn Evans
 Make a joyful noise all the earth!

Leap of Faith Christmas Concert (9 am)

Christmas Cantata (11 am)

"The Glory of Christmas: Celebrating Christ's Birth" by Lloyd Larson

The message of Christmas is not solely for a people who lived long ago. It is a message that our world needs to hear today. It is for young and old alike, for people of every tribe and nation regardless of one's station in life. The Christmas story is filled with hope, promise, wonder, majesty, and mystery. It is a perpetual reminder that in the darkest moments of life, the brilliance of the eternal Light of Christ has entered our world to guide us on the journey of life and faith.

December 26, 2021

One Service at 10 am

First Sunday after Christmas
Hymn Sing!

Liturgist: Mitch Hortert

Message: "A Heavenly Host and the Shepherds: Keep on Singing!"

Scripture Lesson: Luke 2:8-20

Keep on singing! Even if you were not trained to do so, don't stop singing God's praises. We have so much to sing about. The Shepherds heard it first, and even after returning home, back to their duties, back to their responsibilities, even when no one was there to hear but the sheep, they continued to sing about God's goodness through Jesus Christ.



Friday, December 24, Christmas Eve

Family Christmas Service: 4 pm

Candlelight Service: 7 pm (Liturgist: Barry Lewis)

Watch Night Service: 11:30 pm - 12:15am

Saturday, December 25, Christmas Day

We will gather on Christmas Day, 10-10:30 am, for a time of prayer, bible reading and a Happy Birthday celebration. Come in your pajamas and with your favorite brand new toy!

Sunday, December 26th, one joint service at 10 am. We will have a Christmas Hymn sing which will continue to grow the hearts of all the grinchers around the world!



CHILDREN'S COAT COLLECTION

SUMC collected 83 coats plus 124 hats/mitten/gloves/scarves, with an additional 22 coats provided by two community partners. These will be distributed as part of a Church Union and City of Pittsburgh Police December 4th

event in Northview Heights (where The Bridge aka Bethany House Academy) is located.

SEWICKLEY COMMUNITY CENTER FOOD PANTRY –

Thank you for the generous outpouring in completing 21 Thanksgiving Bags and donating toward the \$25 gift cards that were provided with each bag.



For December's Food Pantry Collection, the suggested items are pasta sauces and pasta (or canned items like ravioli). The grocery carts are in the hallway so that you can conveniently drop off your donations.

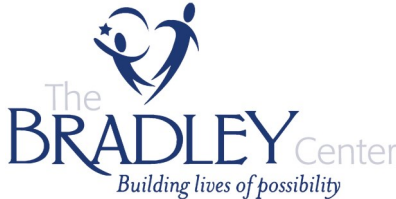


Part of our mission to reflect the inclusive heart of Jesus is to include and embrace the members of our SUMC family who, in this season, are unable to join us for worship and ministry. Our tradition has been to deliver gift bags to the shut-in members of our family for Christmas.

The Fellowship of the Cross youth will be collecting contributions for the gift bags through the morning of December 19. Please consider donating small gifts or treats for the gift bags or, if you prefer, make a monetary donation and let the FOTC team shop for you.

Suggested contributions to the gift bags include notecards, tea bags, sugar-free and sugared cookies, fruit, crackers, candy, soaps, lotions, puzzle books and pens. The FOTC collection box is located beneath the table outside the church office. We have 12 people on our list.

The gift bags will be delivered before Christmas, or placed in the mail in time to arrive before Christmas.



Christmas Gift Collection



THE BRADLEY CENTER YOUTH CHRISTMAS GIFTS

Outreach is coordinating with The Bradley Center to provide gifts for 20 residents. The Bradley Center is a residential mental health treatment facility located in Robinson Township, which treats children ages 6 to 21. **All 20 tags have been selected!** Remember that is extremely important to carefully read the guidelines for gifts that you select, for the safety of the recipient and of other residents. If you did not select a child's wish list but would like to purchase items for use by the residents, please email Martha Boward at maboward@yahoo.com for the general wish list.

UNWRAPPED GIFTS MARKED WITH THE CHILD'S NAME AND CODE MUST BE BROUGHT TO CHURCH BY DECEMBER 12TH. The church is open from 8:30 am to 1 pm M-F and on Sundays from 8:30 am to noon, with the office open until 4 pm on Wednesdays and Fridays. Contact Martha Boward for other drop offs. Thank you to each person who is helping make the wishes come true for these children.



UMCOR (UMC Relief Agency) CURRENT DISASTER RESPONSE - UMCOR and its partners are responding to disasters both in the United States and around the world. Please join in prayer for the areas affected and consider a gift to UMCOR Disaster Response (which you may do with your regular offering or via EasyTithe, marking "UMCOR" – if you wish to specify "domestic" or "international," please do so).



BREAKFAST FOR BABY JESUS — On **December 19**, after the 9 am service there will be a Breakfast for Jesus. A main dish will be provided by the Nurture Committee. Please bring a side dish to share for 8-10 people. Please sign up on poster in back of the sanctuary. ALL are welcome. Join us to Celebrate the Birth of Jesus!!!

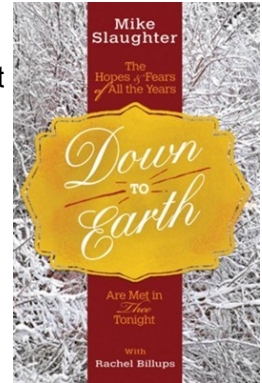
DECEMBER



- Cheryl & Tom Barwell 12/10
- Allen & Peggy Gleason 12/17
- John & Edie Erkert 12/20

ADVENT STUDY

Join us this Advent Season as we study “Down to Earth: The Hopes and Fears of All the Years Are Met in Thee Tonight” by Mike Slaughter with Rachel Billups. The 3 options, all on Sundays, are below. If participating, please purchase a book available through [Amazon](#) and other retailers.



In Person:

- Nov. 21 & 28, Dec. 5 & 12 — 10 am in the church parlor
- Nov. 28, Dec. 5, 12 & 19 — 1 pm in the church library

On Zoom:

- Nov. 28, Dec. 5, 12 & 19 at 6:30 pm

Please help us plan by letting us know which study you will take part in by visiting <https://forms.gle/oRzqUMqsDPHeTv6KA> or by contacting the office at secretary@sewicleyumc.org or 412-741-9430.

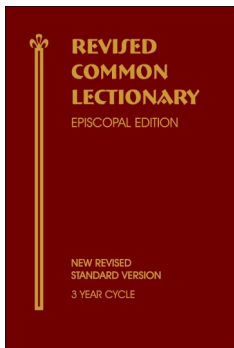


Blood Drive! SAVE THESE 2022 DATES

Vitalant will conduct blood drives on Sunday, April 24th & Sunday, September 25th right here at SUMC. If you regularly give blood, consider timing your donations so you can participate at SUMC's drives. Some restrictions on who may donate have changed in recent years, so if you were once excluded, you are encouraged to call Vitalant to check if you may now donate.

For further information on qualifications, please visit vitalant.org or call (877) 25 VITAL.

DID YOU KNOW?



The Revised Common Lectionary is a lectionary of readings from the Bible for use in Protestant Christian worship, providing for the liturgical year with its pattern of observances of festivals and seasons. It was publicly released in 1994. It was preceded by the Common Lectionary, assembled in 1983, itself preceded by the COCU Lectionary, published in 1974 by the Consultation on

Church Union (COCU). This lectionary was derived from various Protestant lectionaries in current use, which, in turn, were based on the 1969 Ordo Lectionum Missae, a three-year lectionary produced by the Roman Catholic Church, following the reforms of the Second Vatican Council.

As in its predecessors, readings are prescribed for each Sunday: a passage typically from the Old Testament, or the Acts of the Apostles; a passage from one of the Psalms; another from either the Epistles or the Book of Revelation; and finally a passage from one of the four Gospels.

Also like its predecessors, it runs in three-year cycles; the gospel readings in the first year (Year A) are taken from the Gospel of Matthew, those in the second year (or Year B) from the Gospel of Mark, and in the third year (or Year C) come from

the Gospel of Luke. Portions of the Gospel of John are read throughout Eastertide, and are also used for other liturgical seasons, including Advent, Christmastide, and Lent where appropriate. **With the start of Advent on November 28 we switched to Year C.**

- ◆ Year A begins on the first Sunday of Advent in 2023, 2026, etc.
- ◆ Year B begins on the first Sunday of Advent in 2024, 2027, etc.
- ◆ Year C begins on the first Sunday of Advent in 2022, 2025, etc.

The Revised Common Lectionary is used in its original or an adapted form by churches around the world. Protestant denominations in the United States which use the Revised Common Lectionary include: American Baptist Churches, USA; Community of Christ; Disciples of Christ; Episcopal Church in the United States of America; Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; Moravian Church in America; Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod; Presbyterian Church USA; Reformed Church in America; United Church of Christ; United Methodist Church; and Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship. The Roman Catholic Church uses an adapted form of the RCL.



I wanted to thank you for the invitation to attend the All Saints Day service. Unfortunately, I won't be able to travel up to Pennsylvania that weekend. But in memory of my mother, Edith, and my father, James, I would like to make a donation to the church for all of the good things the church does for the community.

Sincerely,
Diane Riker

Remember our Shut-ins

Please write to our shut-ins and keep them in your prayers. The church office can provide you with contact information.

Sylvia Bajsec
Mignon Emmert
Renee Gittins
Atleah Grubb
Virginia Harriger
Jan Jones
B.J. (Elizabeth) Manzinger
Pat Rudy
Patricia Smith
Shirley Sye
Lura Zaremba

DEFINITELY PUMPKIN TO TALK ABOUT!!

Wow! On behalf of myself and Diane Bartley, we'd like to thank all who helped to make this year's pumpkin patch the best ever. Total sales were \$32,596.26, with a profit to the church of \$13,038.50. This is the first year we completely sold out of pumpkins, which occurred on Saturday, October 30 at around 4 pm. I guess we could have used that second load they offered us! ~~ Lou Ann Scott



CENTER FOR HOPE GAMECHANGER



The Center for Hope (CFH) in Ambridge, which SUMC supports with meals every 5th Thursday (which have been bagged meals during the COVID-19 pandemic), has worked to find new ways to assist its clients, especially in response to the pandemic.

In a recent letter, CFH shared some of those new ways. Food and clothing distributions moved outdoors! Activity kits were sent to youth to provide mental stimulation. CFH was also chosen to be a pilot program to provide clients food in outside lockers! This will be quite a game changer since clients will have access to their locker at their convenience. At SUMC's recent Church Conference, Donna Sawhill expressed hope that SUMC will soon be able to provide those 5th Thursday dinners in person; sitting down and talking with the clients has been missed. That is what is hoped for with all of CFH's programs. As the year draws to a close, if you feel called to donate financially to CFH, you may either mark your SUMC gift accordingly or send directly to the Center for Hope, 740 Park Road, Ambridge PA 15003.

Celebrating 20 Years of Pumpkins!!



Sewickley United Methodist Church is excited to offer Pumpkin Patch ornaments celebrating our 20th anniversary of selling pumpkins. Designed by Jack Moffett and custom made by Wendell August Forge, these 3" hand-forged ornaments are unique and limited in number. The front reads "SUMC 20th anniversary pumpkin patch 2021" and the back reads "The church with time and pumpkins for you!" Each ornament comes in a box and includes a card celebrating the pumpkin patch and the creation of the ornament. Proceeds benefit the church's General Fund.

These beautiful ornaments make wonderful Christmas gifts. Order yours now, as we are sure to sell out. Each ornament is \$20. You may pick up your ornament when Pam is in the office on Wednesdays and Fridays. Other arrangements can be made by coordinating with Lou Ann Scott, Diane Bartley or Pastor Hannah.

As I reviewed Biblical passages recounting the Christmas story recently, I was struck by the word “overjoyed.” The angels in Luke’s Gospel promise “great joy,” but no one is described as “overjoyed” until the Magi begin moving across the second chapter of Matthew.

Some translations say the Magi “rejoiced,” while others insist they were “overwhelmed with joy” or “filled with joy.” One version uses “overjoyed beyond measure.”

The star led them on this long, demanding journey to find the Savior, but for a day they took their eyes off the star. They asked people in the city to direct them to the new king. They talked with Herod, who consulted his chief priests, but no one could help them.

We can imagine they were weary from travel. We can imagine doubt rising as no one in Jerusalem was familiar with the new king. Was there a new king?

But, as they lifted their eyes again ...

“... the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.”

“When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.” (NIV)

“When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy.” (NRSV)

“When they saw the star, they were overjoyed beyond measure.” (HCSB)

Haven’t many of us had similar experiences? We’re challenged. We’re struggling. We’re hurting. We look to ourselves for answers. We look to others for answers. We run. We hide. We quit. We ache. We agonize. But, as we lift our eyes again, there He is, waiting with the Light and Love that leads to peace and patience and healing and joy beyond measure.

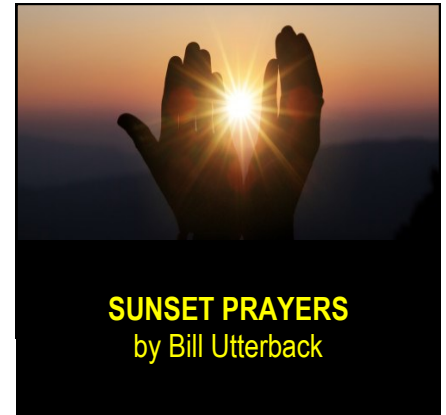
As our 2021 Advent season launches and advances, let’s ask God for more stars and more Light and more overwhelming joy. Let’s ask for ourselves, for the ones we love, for the ones we know are struggling, for church family, for neighbors, for co-workers and classmates, for people we once knew, for people we see but haven’t met yet.

At our sunset prayer on **December 5, at around 4:55 pm**, from wherever you are, with whomever wants to join, let’s each ask God to provide a Christmas star for someone who needs some of the good news and great joy He provides for all people.

Please consider joining me each day through Christmas, at sunset or at any time, in adding another name to the star list. Lord, let these people find you. Lord, let them see you again. Lord, draw them closer to you.

And, if we have the courage, we can ask to Him to use us as stars in this year’s Christmas story. Lord, show us how and where and when to share and connect and reflect your light in ways that draw others closer to you.

Lord, let us this year lift our eyes again and, through seeking and finding and sharing your Light, be overjoyed beyond measure. Amen.



SHOP ON AMAZON SMILE AND AMAZON WILL DONATE TO SEWICKLEY UMC



AmazonSmile is a way for customers to support their favorite charitable organization every time they shop with Amazon. Shopping at smile.amazon.com you will find the same Amazon you know and love, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the price of eligible purchases to the charity of your choice. Signing up is easy! Visit smile.amazon.com and select “Sewickley Methodist Church” as your charitable organization. Then when shopping be sure to shop through smile.amazon.com.

Sewickley United Methodist Church—Financial Summary through October 2021



	2021 Budget	Budgeted to Date	Through October	Over or (Under) Budget
TOTAL EXPENSES	268,982.53	227,604.55	217,189.38	(10,415.17)
TOTAL RECEIPTS	244,090.00	202,305.00	229,775.36	27,470.36
OVERAGE (DEFICIT)	(24,892.53)	(25,299.55)	12,585.98	



We brought lollipops to reward the kids for using their Children's Church activity time to fill shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. No game. No craft. We had a service project in front of us.

The Bible story we shared that morning featured the boy who offered his lunch to Jesus, who then used the fish and small loaves to feed thousands. We do our best for Him, and trust Him to use it in miraculous ways.

Can you guess what happened?

The lollipops went into the shoeboxes. The children didn't ask us about it. They understood: We give him our best and trust him. The kids were listening!

And, yes, we know that the OCC people no longer accept candy in the shoeboxes.

Grace found and removed the lollipops as she spent more than an hour re-packing the shoeboxes. The children were not listening when I said the lids to every box need to fit. They stuffed each box beyond capacity and handed them to Grace, who is gifted with much patience and the ability to cram notebooks and crayons and slippers and sunglasses and balls and dolls and dinosaurs neatly into small spaces.

Jade, Bella, Gideon, Jordyn, Amelie, Christian, Emma, Roger and Evan spent their Sunday hour filling boxes, and four of them returned after the service to fill more boxes.

This is our 11th year of filling OCC shoe boxes, and each year brings a new Light into the process. This year, He shined the light on the youngest among us and their willingness to serve and share and do

their best for Him. While the boxes are intended to share His Love and Light with children around the world who would not have anything for Christmas, and may not know Jesus, they also serve to shape the hearts of our children.

Thank you, from the Fellowship of the Cross, to everyone who contributed. For the 10th consecutive year, we have filled at least 100 shoeboxes. We have contributed more than 1,100 boxes, reaching Africa, South America, Central America, Caribbean nations and Ukraine.

Thank you to those who contributed shoeboxes, and wrapping paper, and thank you to Kara and her daughters, Elliott and Evarett, for again wrapping 100 boxes for our project.

Thank you to everyone who contributed gifts to fill the boxes. Every box was blessed with an array of school supplies, a tooth brush, a washcloth, sunglasses, socks, a stuffed animal, a ball, adhesive bandages, tissues and "wow" gifts from a menu that included t-shirts, flip-flops, ball caps, bandanas, dolls, hair accessories, flashlights, water bottles, cups and toys.

Thank you to everyone who contributed financially

Thank you to the Pumpkin Patch team and the Sale for Missions team for supporting our project in multiple ways.

Thank you, Pastor Hannah, for your support and for the Christmas in July idea that accelerated our gathering. Thank you, Pam H. for your energy in so many areas. Thank you, Martha, for all you have done for us since we launched in 2011.

We haven't talked about next year yet, but I know of nine children who want to help, and I recently found a bag of pencils and glue sticks in our collection box outside the church office. We accept donations year-round, and we never have too much. Grace will make it fit! But we cannot pack lollipops!

The Fellowship of the Cross

Pamela Mayo
Grace Rogansky
Bill Utterback



Prayer Requests

John A.
Kim Bur-
Family of Rose Barlow
Hurst Bartley
Cathy
Bruno Crapis
Jack Certain
Lauren McAiley Cephus
(Otis McAiley's daughter)

Irene Chenot
(Beth Zeanchock's mom)
Joyce and Stan Dobrowski
Betty Dornetta
Nancy Erdmann
Pat Fulton
(Scott Matthew's mom)
Carroll Furry
(Jenine Furry's mom)
Jean Gionfriddo
Dan Gittins
June Graham
(Carole Ford's sister-in-law)
Jessica H.
Jim Heffley
Angela Helms
Lois Hiles

Ceel Janosik
Wayne Johnson
Family of Brad Jones
(husband of Jan Jones)
Brandy K.
Henrietta Kretzler
Lisa L.
Daniel Lewis
(Susie Moffett's dad)
J.R. McFadden
Craig McClean
Mary Maminski
Tom Moog
Tony Morgan
(Dominic Odom's cousin)
Jack Morrow
Bola Nicholson

Sandra Obeng
Lorraine Offner
Steve Powell
Dominic Odom
Jim Rogansky
Mario Russo
Blake S.
Karen Shong
C.R. & Lorraine Simpson
Ron Smith
Ronli Smith
(Ron Smith's son)
Linda Sollinger
(Travis Sollinger's mom)
Pam Squires
Rich Z.
Dennis Zeveny

Renee Gittins	12/2
Jennifer Jones	12/3
Jack Morrow	12/6
Mark Wiggins	12/9
Laura Geason	12/10
Megan Guzma	12/15
Chris Jezzi	12/16
Sophia Geason	12/17



David Malarik Jr.	12/17
Jacob McCoy	12/18

Willie Nicholson	12/19
Kristen Ryerson	12/21
Evarett Briggs	12/22
Nick Martinez	12/25
Jessica Leety	12/28
Barb Bower	12/29
Mary Jablonski	12/29
Gail Hiles	12/31



It's that time of the year when followers of Jesus begin to examine important decisions about charitable giving. The following information is designed to help you make the most of your year-end gift. Keep in mind the following...

The adjusted gross income (AGI) limit for cash contributions to qualifying public charities remains increased for individual donors. For cash contributions made in 2021, you can elect to deduct up to 100% of your AGI (formerly 60% prior to the CARES Act).

Cash Gifts

Gifts of cash are common and convenient and can be made in person, online, or by mail. Gifts of cash are generally made with currency, check, credit card, and even electronic funds transfers (EFT). For 2021 cash gifts must be completed prior to December 31". Remember to save all receipts and acknowledgements.

Non-cash Gifts

Non-cash gifts offer advantages too. Works of art, collectibles and other property can hold great value. Special IRS rules apply to these gift types. For example, for a non-cash gift greater than \$5,000, a donor needs to have an independent appraisal for tax purposes. Check with your advisor(s) for more information on arranging charitable gifts with non-cash assets.

Securities

Along with regular tax savings, you may be entitled to additional tax benefits when giving appreciated securities. Making gifts of highly appreciated securities allows you to avoid the capital gains tax that would be due if those assets were sold, offering tax savings even if using the standard deduction.

If you have owned the securities for more than one year, your gift is deductible and can be used to eliminate tax on up to 30% of your AGI in the year of the gift. Any unused deduction amount may be used to help reduce taxes in as many as five future tax years. If you are considering a gift of securities, allow enough time for your gift to be completed by December 31st.

Retirement Plans

You may not realize you have other assets that can be used to help you meet your charitable goals. Many individuals have funds in a qualified retirement plan such as an Individual Retirement Account (IRA), a 401 (k) or a 403 (b). These may be a good choice for making current or future gifts, depending on your age and future needs.

For Those Age 72* and Older

(*The change in the RMD age requirement from 70½ to 72 only applies to individuals who turn 70½ on or after January 1, 2020. Please speak with your tax advisor regarding the impact of this change on future RMDs.)

If you have an IRA, you can transfer up to \$100,000 per year to qualified charitable interests; \$200,000 per year for a couple that each has an IRA. These charitable IRA transfers are not taxed and count towards the annual Required Minimum Distribution (RMD). Those who qualify should carefully consider the additional benefits of making all or a portion of their charitable gifts directly from an IRA. These tax-free gifts are particularly wise for those who may no longer itemize deductions for income tax purposes.

Other Gifts

Other gifts can be made from assets that may no longer be needed. For example, **Life Insurances Policies** that were taken out years ago for a specific purpose but are no longer needed today. If you have a policy like this, you may assign all rights and benefits of the policy to the Church.

You can also arrange a future gift by naming a charitable recipient as a beneficiary of a retirement plan. You and your family can enjoy use of the assets and charitable beneficiaries can receive any remaining funds in the future, free of income tax on amounts they receive.

The end of the year is the one of the most generous times of the year. Hopefully the information provided will assist you in meeting your giving goals.

SEWICKLEY UMC LUNCHEON — JANUARY 6

You are invited to enjoy our popular luncheons in person or as take-outs on **Thursday, January 6, 11 am - 12:30 pm** and the first Thursday of each month.

Complete [this form online](#) or return this printed form to make dining-in reservations or to order take-out meals. For questions, call the church at 412-741-9430. Reservations and take-out orders will be taken through December 26. Each meal is \$10. Thank you for your continued support!!



January's Menu: Chili, Baked Potato & Toppings, Cole Slaw and Texas Sheet Cake. Dine-in also includes Beverage.

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ e-mail: _____

MEAL SELECTION

of Meals _____

DINING-IN or TAKE-OUT

If dining in, time: 11 am 11:30 am 12 pm

SOUP & HUMMUS SALE FOR THE BUILDING OF FAITH

All proceeds from this sale go toward the principal on the building loan. To order, [click here for the online order form](#), call 412-741-9430 or email (secretary@sewickleyumc.org) or bring your form to the office.



Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Cash Amount: _____ or Check (made to SUMC) # _____ or EasyTithe

Choices	Indicate quantity below	
	\$9 Quart	\$6 Pint
Pasta e Fagioli (Ground Beef, Diced Tomatoes, Onions, Carrots, Celery, Garlic, Tomato Sauce, Red Kidney & Great Northern Beans, Pasta, V-8, Vinegar, Salt, Oregano, Basil, Pepper, Thyme)		
Vegetable Cheddar Chowder (Broccoli, Potatoes, Tomatoes, Celery, Carrots, Onion, Bell Pepper, Salt, Corn Starch, Butter, Milk, Worchester Sauce, Cheddar and Colby Cheeses)		
Sandra's Hummus (vegetarian/vegan - chickpeas, lemon juice, garlic, tahini, spices)	\$5 for ½ pint	

Orders are due by Sunday, December 26 and will be ready for pickup January 6, 7 or 9. Include payment with your order or pay when you pickup your soup or hummus. If using EasyTithe, please include the 3% transaction fee.

Pastor Hannah's availability: I am available Tuesday through Friday, 8:45 am to 4:45 pm. On Sundays I am available following the church service till 4 p.m. If I am not in the office, I can be reached via my cell phone. I am available after-hours on my cell phone for emergencies. My email address is open 24 hours a day and, with the exceptions of Mondays, which is my day off, I will respond in a timely manner.

Church Office: (412) 741-9430
 Pastor's Office: (412) 741-9433
 Cell Phone: (412) 294-7587
 E Mail: pastor@sewickleyumc.org
 Website: www.sewickleyumc.org



Sewickley
United Methodist Church
Hannah Loughman, Pastor

Light Up Night
Friday, December 3rd
6:00 Leap of Faith
6:30 Carol Sing
7:00 Clocktower Ringers
7:30 Carol Sing
8:00 Sophia & Friends (ventriloquist)
Live nativity, Santa phone booth, cookies & hot chocolate

www.sewickleyumc.org
337 Broad Street
Sewickley, PA 15143
412.741.9430

We invite you to join us on our journey to the manger. Prepare ye the way of the Lord... and come as you are.

DECEMBER 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 6:30 PM Leap of Faith	2 11 AM - 1 PM Community Luncheon 6:15 PM Bell Choir	3 6 PM Light Up Night 6:30 PM AA	4
5 9 AM Contemporary Service 10 AM "Down to Earth" Advent Study 11 AM Traditional Service 1 PM "Down to Earth" Advent Study 6:30 PM "Down to Earth" Advent Study	6 7 PM AA	7 7 PM "But I'm Not Racist... Am I?" Discussion Series 8 PM AA	8 6:30 PM Leap of Faith	9 6:15 PM Bell Choir	10 6:30 PM AA	11
12 9 AM Contemporary Service 10 AM "Down to Earth" Advent Study 11 AM Traditional Service 1 PM "Down to Earth" Advent Study 6:30 PM "Down to Earth" Advent Study	13 6:30 PM Finance Committee 6:30 PM Trustees 7 PM AA 8 PM Council Meeting	14 8 PM AA	15 6:30 PM Leap of Faith	16 11:45 AM Learning Tree Christmas Concert & Reception 6:15 PM Bell Choir	17 12:15 PM Learning Tree Christmas Concert & Reception 6:30 PM AA	18
19 9 AM Contemporary Service (Leap of Faith Christmas Concert) 10 AM Breakfast for Baby Jesus 11 AM Traditional Service (Christmas Cantata) 1 PM "Down to Earth" Advent Study 6:30 PM "Down to Earth" Advent Study	20 7 PM AA	21 8 PM AA	22 6:30 PM Leap of Faith	23 6:15 PM Bell Choir	24 4 PM Family Christmas Service 6:30 PM AA 7 PM Candlelight Christmas Eve Service 11:30 PM Watch Night Service	25 10 AM Christmas Day Service
26 10 AM Combined Worship Service	27 7 PM AA	28 8 PM AA	29 6:30 PM Leap of Faith	30 6:15 PM Bell Choir	31 6:30 PM AA	