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From the Pastor's Desk



Greetings to you and peace from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

I trust you had a very Merry Christmas! I sometimes have wondered how we came to adapt that sentiment...MERRY Christmas. Over recent years, especially with "political correctness" we are very aware of the various celebrations this time of year for faith and heritage focuses and many of our activities include Hanukkah and Kwanza in our observances. I for a number of years have said: "Happy HOLY days" because of Hanukkah, Christmas, and Kwanza all this time of year. Before I entered Seminary, I worked for a photo-composition/typesetting company and one of my duties was to answer the phone. I knew that some of our customers were of Jewish faith so I would greet the callers with: "Seasons Greetings! Bi-Comp, Inc., how may I direct your call." and my employer gave me feedback that he received many comments of how much this was appreciated.

Of course, once again we are told our Holy-days have to be limited because of COVID and hearing that Delta and Omicron variants are both on the rise. I just continue to pray that we soon hear that this virus is such a miniscule risk to us that we can go back to fully living our lives! PRAYERS for this!!!!

But, beyond the daily news reports about COVID, this week there is another devastating element to our nation's news and we absolutely keep in our hearts and our prayers all those who have been effected by the tornadoes. I have repeatedly heard reporters say, and I myself have said, that we have NEVER experienced anything like the couple of days of horrific weather this past week. (I am writing this column on December 17th) We have definitely had numerous tornadoes effect various parts of our country - but never have I heard of any being on the ground for over 220 miles! Most do not even stay on the ground for 20 miles! And then, beyond the first tornado that devastated so many towns and communities in a few states, just days later another storm system produced tornadoes in areas where there was a foot or more of SNOW on the ground! We heard that some of these areas never had a tornado in December, let alone having one while snow was on the ground.

I do entertain the thought if something like this that has never happened before could truly be God trying to get the attention of His people. I have pondered if these events could be "signs of the times" as we hear in some of our Scriptures. I wonder if God is seeing what is going on, not only because of COVID but with other aspects of our society. When have we ever had the lawlessness that is rampant today?



January

When have we ever been so bitter and angry because someone's viewpoint is different than ours? When have we ever given a second thought about being out among others? When have we ever..... and, I invite you to fill in that blank. I really am at a loss for a plausible explanation as to what I truly think is going on other than maybe God is trying to tell us something.

God was so disappointed with where His people had gone when He flooded the earth to bring about a new beginning. Definitely that, in the day of Noah, was a "never heard of before" event. (Kind of like we had last week.) God had tried to nudge His people from their wicked ways and when the nudging didn't work, the flood waters came. We know that God has promised He would never flood the earth again. Could God be nudging us now to turn from the evil that is so rampant throughout our world? We, by faith, can only answer as to how we feel. No one can absolutely declare that what we are experiencing IS the end of time, but many people feel the signs are pointing that way.

If what is happening around us is signs of the end of time or not, I think the thing that is truly important is that we "Love one another as God has loved us!" — no matter what differences we may have socially, economically, politically. A priority for God's people should be that we love and respect one another - ALWAYS, ALL WAYS!!!! We need to put God first in our life and in our world.....before it is too late.

I do wish all a happy New Year.



With love, Pastor Lou Ann

SPECIAL SERVICES in JANUARY

January 2 - Christmas 2

Gospel: John 1:1-18

Sermon: "The Word Made Flesh—Then and Now"

January 9 - Baptism of Christ

Gospel: Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

Sermon: "Affirmed by Love"

January 16- Epiphany 2

Gospel: John 2:1-11

Sermon: "Saved the Best for Last"

January 23 - Epiphany 3

Gospel: Luke 4:14-21

Sermon: "Jesus: The Fulfillment of God's Word"

January 30 - Epiphany 4

Gospel: Luke 4:21-30

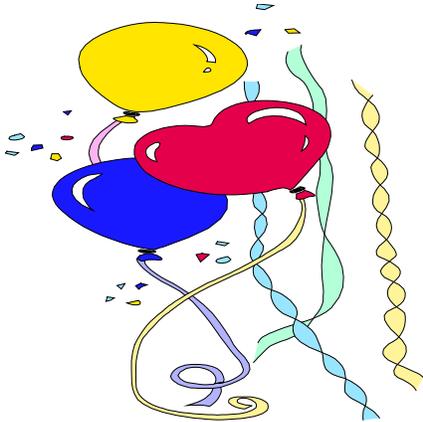
Sermon: "Truth Hurts"

TOWN MEETING



On Sunday, January 9, there will be a Town Meeting immediately after the worship service to discuss and approve the budget and the members of the Coordinating Ministry Team for 2022. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend!

JANUARY
BIRTHDAYS



*May God
Bless You on
Your
Birthday!*

1. Jared Miller
Todd Miller
Derek Troop
2. Chet Wise
3. Keith Markey
Delores Noll
4. Tracey Dilling
John Sterling
7. Nicholas Innerst
Morgan Keller
8. Nancy Myers
9. Paige Barley
11. Damion Albright
Steven Knickel
12. Tina Leader
13. Hannah Leader
14. Benjamin Barley
John Herbst
16. Brooks Barley
18. Silvia Knickel
20. Rick Sipe
21. Ed Adams
Gwen Wise
26. Cindie McKinsey
Renne Myers

REMEMBER OUR SHUT-INS and those in need of PRAYER

Peggy Luckenbaugh
Room 704B
Colonial Manor Nursing Home
970 Colonial Avenue
York, PA 17403



Keeping in our prayers
Dolores Barley
Jeanette Black
Maddie Heindel
Marti Leader
Cindie McKinsey
Todd & Melody Myers
Ginny Weber
Friends battling cancer
Covid 19 patients

Linda Trone
Room 604
Colonial Manor Nursing Home
970 Colonial Avenue
York, PA 17403

Carolyn Innerst
Room 123
Senior Commons@Powder
Mill
1775 Powder Mill Road
York, PA 17403

 **Remember**
and pray for
Our Members
in the
Military
A1C Ness, Brandon
6907 S. Camino de la Humanidad
Tucson, AZ 85756

Thank you for the Sunshine Box, prayers and support.

I didn't expect to qualify for a Sunshine Box, but life is full of changes. I was overwhelmed by the Sunshine Box presents that S.O.S. organized and delivered to my front door! Your gifts continue to sooth my skin, sharpen my brain, and please my taste buds. ☺ They all brought a smile to my face and some made me laugh out loud! ☺ ☺



Most gifts had a card, and I was able to write a personal thank you note. Others were anonymous. For those anonymous ones, I want you to know how much I appreciated your gifts. Thank you all for the thoughtful gifts, cards and prayers. They comfort and inspire me. Your gift of love showed me the way Jesus shows us His love. With love, Ginny Weber



Our offering envelopes for 2022 have arrived. Anyone who requested envelopes last year will automatically be given them again this year. If you received envelopes for 2021, but don't wish to use them in 2022, please call the church office. Likewise, call the office if you did not use envelopes in 2021, but would like some for 2022.

Using offering envelopes helps to ensure the privacy of your donations and also makes it easier for us to keep track of what you have given for tax purposes. Envelopes may now be picked up in the Gathering Room. Thank you.



You are invited to join us on Saturday, January 22, beginning at 5:00 PM for a potluck dinner, followed by the very inspirational movie "I Can Only Imagine." This movie is a biographical story about Bart Millard, the lead singer in the Christian band Mercy Me.

In addition to the potluck offerings, we will also be serving pizza. Please invite your friends and family to come with you. All are welcome.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Undesignated General Fund

Red Brick Chapel

Cemetery

Month-2021	Income	Expense	Income	Expense	Income	Expense
January	\$8,700.59	\$8,680.74	\$0.47	\$269.88	\$1,645.35	\$1,826.80
February	\$7,297.86	\$10,776.85	\$0.48	\$311.54	\$0.35	\$10,906.97
March	\$12,966.59	\$15,290.39	\$0.41	\$514.91	\$500.20	\$3,166.46
April	\$10,456.00	\$11,584.36	\$0.43	\$225.92	\$0.18	\$2,351.48
May	\$9,569.61	\$9,490.24	\$0.43	\$141.68	\$100.11	\$2,187.50
June	\$10,829.82	\$12,779.61	\$1,400.98	\$350.47	\$1,400.60	\$3,278.75
July	\$7,781.00	\$9,790.40	\$0.45	\$115.23	\$907.02	\$2,255.92
August	\$11,713.61	\$9,064.23	\$0.49	\$125.12	\$0.23	\$2,535.19
September	\$7,682.00	\$13,262.10	\$0.43	\$506.44	\$900.15	\$2,905.15
October	\$8,002.00	\$9,442.35	\$1,000.43	\$129.81	\$100.11	\$2,425.79
November	\$11,067.61	\$9,485.06	\$0.48	\$120.51	\$0.06	\$2,291.56
December						
Total	\$106,066.69	\$119,646.33	\$2,405.48	\$2,811.51	\$5,554.36	\$36,131.57

Balance of Undesignated General Fund @ December 1, 2021 \$1,01.93

Balance of Red Brick Chapel Fund @ December 1, 2021
(Includes \$63,899.94 Endowment) \$82,101.72

Balance of Cemetery Fund @ December 1, 2021
(Includes \$905,847.36 CD's, Trusts, UCC Foundation. Transferred \$15,000 in Jan, \$10,000 in June, and \$10,000 in Nov from Foundation to People's Bank) \$905,662.18

Financial Assistance Given through Hand of Hope Fund - 2021

	#	Total	Monthly	Available
	Families	\$\$\$	Donations	Balance
Beginning				\$ 651.73
January	1	\$ 50.00	\$ 21.47	\$ 623.29
February				
March	2	\$ 136.75	\$ 79.00	\$ 565.45
April	1	\$ 79.00	\$ 45.00	\$ 531.45
May	1	\$ 25.00	\$ 52.89	\$ 559.34
June	1	\$ 50.00	\$ 27.00	\$ 536.34
July	1	\$ 233.00	\$ 83.00	\$ 386.34
August	2	\$ 502.00	\$ 371.40	\$ 255.74
September	2	\$ 50.00	\$ 63.00	\$ 268.74
October			\$ 49.00	\$ 317.74
November			\$ 56.00	\$ 373.74
December				
Total	11	\$ 1,125.75	\$ 847.76	

EMMANUEL'S CLOSET
January 2022



Christmas Project

We would again like to thank everyone who contributed money to buy gift cards for 89 children and teens at Emmanuel's Closet. This may have been the only gift some of those children received for Christmas. They were distributed on December 11th and 18th.

On those same days we gave out grocery gift cards for perishable food to 56 families to help provide them with a special Christmas dinner. For Thanksgiving meals we gave out gift cards to 47 families. Thank you to everyone who donated food or extra funds to help buy them.

Cartridge Recycling

Don't forget to bring in your empty printer cartridges and place them in the box above the coat rack in the hallway. Thank you for your support of this project which will not only raise money for those in need, but also help to keep our planet "green."



E.C. Continuing Needs

- Juice
- Cereal/Oatmeal
- Peanut Butter/Jelly
- Pancake Mix
- Spaghetti Sauce
- Boxed Dry Pastas
- Helper Meals
- Dessert Items
- Condiment Items
- Canned Tuna/Meats
- Canned Fruit/Vegetables
- Soap
- Shampoo
- Toilet Paper
- Paper Towels
- Dish Washing Liquid
- Laundry Detergent
- All-Purpose Cleaners

Please, NO Expired Food Items

Our clothing and household room remains closed until further notice. Hopefully, we will be able to re-open again later in 2022.

Below is a list of items that we are especially in need of right now:

- Drink mixes (any kind)**
- Rice**
- Tuna, chicken or hamburger helper**
- Sloppy Joe mix**
- Mashed/scalloped potatoes**
- Gravy (packets or canned)**
- Stuffing mix**
- Soup**
- Pancake syrup**
- Jelly**



THANKS FOR CARING!

Today is the tomorrow we worried
about yesterday...
and all is well!

Wanda Shealy



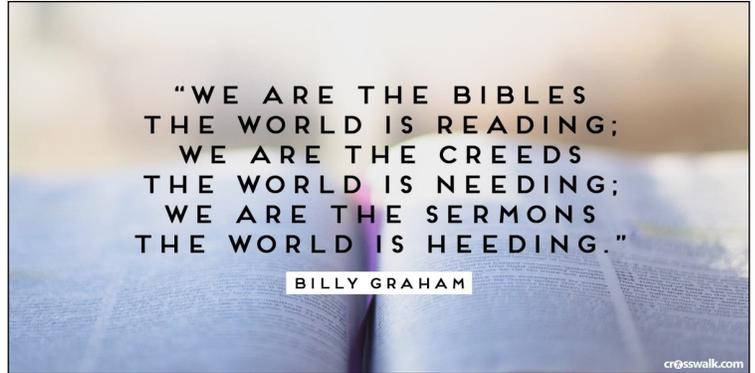
JANUARY 2022



A good life is when you assume
nothing, do more, need less, smile
often, dream big, laugh a lot and
realize how blessed you are for
what you have.

Unknown

Be still and know that I am God." With
these words from Psalm 46, the Almighty
issues us a profound invitation to rest,
reflect and find eternal refuge in Him.
It's quite an irresistible invitation, really,
to stop and have a personalized heart to
heart visit with the Almighty. And the best
part is that it's a Come As You Are party.
He doesn't care if we're scared or lonely
or sad and broken, He is our refuge.



A NEW YEAR'S PRAYER

Thank you Lord for giving me
The brand new year ahead
Help me live the way I should
As each new day I tread.

Give me gentle wisdom
That I might help a friend
Give me strength and courage
So a shoulder I might lend.

The year ahead is empty
Help me fill it with good things
Each new day filled with joy
And the happiness it brings.

Please give the leaders of our world
A courage born of peace
That they might lead us gently
And all the fighting cease.

Please give to all upon this earth
A heart that's filled with love
A gentle happy way to live
With Your blessings from above.

The New Year lies before you
like a spotless track of snow...
be careful how you tread on it,
for every mark will show.

Charlotte Anselmo

Two weeks and my scarf was still missing. It was a favorite I
had clung to for years. It had become a Linus blanket for me,
so I plundered my bedroom one day, among all the other
articles of like size and color, I found it— right there,
where it had always been.

Sometimes we overlook the God working inside us in favor
of talented spiritual singers or inspiring speakers at large rallies
or experienced mission workers come to share, all of whom
are often worthy. But in Luke 17, the Lord says, "Behold, the
kingdom of God is within you." Each smile at the gas pump at
the end of a trying day, each hospital visit and hug, every gift
ushered forth from a steady committed heart is a picture of
the kingdom that lies within believers. If we follow Jesus's
teachings, we need look no further for the kingdom than
what we carry inside, everywhere, all the time. Frantic to
find that old scarf, I'd been looking for what was in plain sight.
Problem was, my focus was skewed. Only when I retraced
the steps of my search did I find that cherished piece of
cloth lying where it had always been.

What if today, we all used what is within us to magnify our God?
What a glorious impact we could leverage! And perhaps,
as we humbly refocus, our spiritual chests would expand
a bit as mine did at the discovery of my scarf in plain sight.

Thank, You for the treasure You have placed within.

Help me never to overlook it.

Jacqueline F. Wheelock



On New Year's Eve, an old Irish tradition is to open your door at
midnight to let the old year out and the new year in.
Doesn't 2021 deserve to have all the doors and windows let open?

VANITY

Well, I didn't exactly come here for a beauty makeover! I grumble and steer away from the Department of Motor Vehicles, where I've just renewed my driver's license. Though I had groomed myself a bit more than usual, the photo is ghastly.

In fact, I am so startled by the picture of the baggy-eyed woman with unkempt hair, that when the clerk asks if the image is okay, I nod. I can't speak. Now I'm stuck with this frumpy photo for another five years.

I know, God. I know. I'm being very vain. On the scale of life's real tragedies, a bum photo doesn't even register. I know it's not important...just a minor disappointment. I'm being foolish. Yes, I can see with these eyes despite the eye bags. Yes, I have hair. Friends having chemo aren't so lucky. Right, the car still runs well and I'm competent enough to drive it... And my friends and family still beam when they see this face. And all of it works: eyes, nose, mouth, ears. No paralysis. No cancer. All these wrinkles prove I've had plenty to smile about... God, I'm sorry for complaining, Honest.

By the time I arrive home, I've hidden the offending photo in my purse and made peace, yet again, with God and my tendency toward vanity. Almost.

A few days later, a bank teller needs an ID for a transaction. She looks at my driver's license, looks at me, then says, "You know you're a lot prettier than this photo!" *Lord, do I feel you winking at me?*

Gail Thorell Schilling

THE MUSIC BOX



The front door closing behind me sounded incredibly loud in the cold, empty house. Living alone for the first time in 45 years wasn't getting any easier. A year after my husband's death, I was still struggling.

My cousin had been going out of her way to keep me company. She treated me to lunch, brought me along with her on shopping trips. She seemed determined just to make me smile. A few days ago, we'd roamed a flea market. I'd fallen in love with a small ceramic music box that had cost me only \$1. It played a tune that was familiar, though I couldn't recall the name of the song. The music box made a lovely addition to the dresser in my guest bedroom.

My cousin and I had just spent a weekend together on a spur of the moment bus tour. I'd had a wonderful time, but now the trip was over. Now standing in my darkened hallway, bags in hand, I felt so alone. I set my bags down, then went into the kitchen. The first thing I did was check my answering machine. One new message. It was from my doctor. I listened, numb, as his voice told me that the mammogram I'd had the week before was "unclear". I would need to come back for another. And soon. Now I was alone and scared. In that moment, I desperately needed a hug, one I knew wouldn't come. But the tears did. I was still crying when I heard it, faint, yet unmistakable. Music. Where was it coming from?

The farther I walked into the house the louder it became. It was coming from the guest room. There on the dresser was the little music box from the flea market. The button to start the music was under the box. There was nothing on the dresser that could have pressed it. And it couldn't have gone off on its own. I stood, mystified, my cheeks still wet with tears. I realized that I was beginning to recognize the tinkling melody. I played the music box several times until I remembered the words. "I just called to say I love you. I just called to say how much I care." I smiled. Maybe I wasn't so alone after all.

Sally Etheredge

LESSONS FROM THE PANDEMIC

The world can change quickly
Friends matter greatly
Alone and lonely are different
Hope matters
Learn from the past
The small moments are beautiful
Kindness is a great gift
Optimism is priceless
Be grateful for family
Heroes do exist
Give back generously
Never stop trying
Reach out to those you love
Live bravely

Rachel Marie Martin



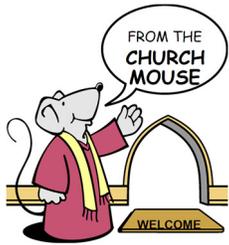
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Thanks to Tobias Nilsson

02-22-2008

SURE I KNOW MY BODY IS A TEMPLE ...
I'M JUST A MEGA-CHURCH



Revelations for January from “Bly Mire” Mouse

How was your Christmas and your HOLY-DAY season? Mire, the family and I had a great time! Unfortunately we were not able to enjoy a white Christmas this year, but, because of the great love that we share, we had a BRIGHT Christmas! Somehow though, I just cannot gel in my mind that we can be outside trying out our new “toys” while being in shirt sleeves! This is winter in the Northeast after all!!! Whenever we have these warmer temps, I always reflect back a number of years ago when our family was at Disney World in January. It was bitter cold when we left here but as we crossed the Georgia/Florida state line, we turned on the air conditioning! We loved the warmth we felt!!! But, as we trekked around Disney World the next couple of days, I noticed something that made me chuckle. We were all in shirt sleeves and totally enjoying everything we did. The temps were in the mid 60’s, but were definitely warmer than the teens temps we left back home. As we did the Backstage tour at Hollywood Studios, we were in the queue line and talking with some of the employees. One young man was wearing an ankle length wool coat; thick, heavy mittens; a scarf around his neck and ear muffs. And he was shivering. We were all standing there in shirt sleeves and toasty as a “bug in a rug.” Everything is relative—temperatures too!!! I haven’t really heard if this winter is supposed to be brutal or not. But, I do know that we have to take what we get and make the best of it!

I know too that with New Year’s, so much emphasis is placed on making resolutions. And, I know I have written about that process many times in the past. It is tradition for many folks to make promises that the New Year will bring new attitudes, new habits, new focuses to their lives. But, why limit this to January first? Many people resolve to eat healthier and lose weight. But, why keep that thought to the first day of a new year? We all have the opportunity to make today better than yesterday and to make tomorrow even better than today! We all have the ability to promise that we will be a better person today than we were yesterday and tomorrow we will be better than we are today! By the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives we will achieve these goals. And, can you just imagine how awesome our world would be if the vast majority of us would take on this challenge?

We hear of some really (for lack of a kinder word) dumb challenges that have gone viral on the internet like trying to climb up stacks of milk crates or placing a heaping spoon of cinnamon in our mouths among other really insane things. How about if we challenge ourselves and those in our social circles to do at least one act of kindness each and every day? I know this is not a new thought, but with all that we have been through with COVID these past two years, I kinda thought maybe a “reminder” would be beneficial.

So, my new Year’s resolution is that I will do AT LEAST one act of kindness every day and I will challenge Mire and all our little ones to do likewise! (Now, you know the size of Mouse familiesjust imagine how many kind acts my family and I can do each day!!!! As they say.....MIND BLOWN!!!)

January humor:

What did they give the guy that invented the door knocker? A No-bell prize.

Knock knock.

Who’s there?

Owls.

Owls who?

Yes, yes they do.



God Bless! Love, Bly and Mire

Golden GIVING

Live out Jesus' golden rule by preparing gift bags for people in need.



What you need:

- Gallon-size zip bags
- New socks
- Hand warmers
- Bus fare or tokens
- Bottled water
- Nonperishable food
- Toiletries and first-aid items
- Paper and markers

What you do:

1. Gather supplies, using the ideas above. Fill bags to make care packages.
2. Write notes or draw pictures for recipients, placing one in each bag.
3. Zip bags and keep them in a vehicle to distribute. Or deliver them right away to people in need (or to sick or homebound people, nursing home residents, a homeless shelter and so on).
4. Pray that God will use your gifts to help and encourage each recipient.

PUZZLE



A measure of love

Jesus says one golden rule sums up the law.

Directions: Match the word parts from the ruler to the incomplete words in the first three Bible verses. Then add the bolded letters (in order) to Matthew 7:12 to complete that verse.

Do not seek re_____ or bear a grudge against anyone among your _____ople, but love your neig_____ as yourself.

LEVITICUS 19:18, NIV

Learn to do right; seek jus_____. Defend the _____pressed. Take up the cause of the _____less; plead the _____e of the widow.

ISAIAH 1:17, NIV

He has shown you, O mortal, what is go____. ...

To act **justly** and to love me_____ and to walk _____ly with your God.

MICAH 6:8, NIV

So in _____ything, do to ot _____ what you would ____ve them d _____ to you, for this s _____ms up the _____w and the Proph _____s.

MATTHEW 7:12, NIV



Answer: revenge, people, neighbor, justice, oppressed, fatherless, case, good, mercy, humbly, everything, others, have, do, sums, law, prophets