

THE TOWER TIE

The Newsletter of the
First Presbyterian Church of Goshen

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December 2022

Faith Matters

**“For a child has been born for us, a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”** (*Isaiah 9:6, NRSVue*)

My Dear Goshen Presbyterian Friends and Family,

I am writing this letter the day after our Advent Event where we created beautiful wreaths made of lovely greens and multi-colored candles to be used throughout the holy season for weekly devotions at home. As this activity was held on the first Sunday in Advent—also known as “Hope Sunday”—I asked the participants, “What gives you hope?”

I hadn’t intended this to be a trick question but in the face of foreign wars, stories of violent deaths at the hands of “neighbors” and co-workers, and the far-too-frequent virulent threats made against perceived enemies as an anxious nation battles over a political and ideological divide, it can be hard to see the hope that stands before us in the promise of Christmas.

And yet, on that Sunday, after a few quiet moments, one soft voice was heard to say, “A baby...a newborn baby gives me hope.” Those few words summed up well Isaiah’s oracle, shown above: “For a child has been born for us.”

In the face of the child being prophesied by Isaiah, we see the face of God—the face of One who shall make a sacrificial decision to enter the world to return peace to a planet that was created “good” but has been befouled by power-hungry authoritarians whose disregard for others has led to darkness and death.

Isaiah foretells a very different kind of leader—a King who shall bring forth a Peaceable Kingdom in which all the Lord’s children shall be blessed to dwell. Amazingly, this new King will enter the world in vulnerable fashion as a little baby. And, in this infant, we shall witness an awesome bridge between this present moment in time and a time that is to come. This vision of a new Kingdom reveals a future in which many of the hostilities, fears, and prejudices of our current age are overcome and we are given to see a future which offers the opportunity to close out old chapters and start life afresh.

And, if we are given to wonder about how a mere child can invert an unjust and violent world by re-crafting it into a just and peaceful world, Isaiah gives us clues. This child shall be a “Wonderful Counselor”—wonderful not in the sense of lovely or pleasant but wonderful in the original sense of awesome and incomprehensible. We will witness the inversion of the world in Jesus through his remarkable birth, his amazing teachings, his healing miracles, and his resurrection from the dead.

This new King shall be to us a “Counselor”—a wise listener who knows us through and through and who guides us in life: encouraging us in prayer and showing us a deep and abiding love which shall be “Everlasting.” Yes, this child born to reign as King over all creation shall be a Mighty God whose plan it is to share the light of grace with a hurting world.

In the Hebrew Bible, the language for Isaiah’s oracle is a little different: “The Mighty God is planning grace. The Eternal Father, a peaceable ruler.” Both translations of the original Hebrew are wonderful and both ring true: Our God, who is humble unto death, is an Everlasting Father who plans to protect us and provide for us in perpetuity.

And just as children alert us to the preciousness of the future and remind us of our responsibility to care for them, so too does the Everlasting Father remind us of God’s choice to grant us life and sustenance without fail, while also reminding us of our radical dependence upon the One who comes to bring about peace—not just the absence of war, but the true Shalom of God which brings with it the gift of wholeness and complete harmony among all living beings.

As we grow nearer and nearer to Christmas, it is my prayer that we will not only witness the new hope granted us in Christ, but that we will choose to share this hope of incomprehensible wonder, everlasting peace, and mighty presence broadly so that the child born in Bethlehem becomes known by all and life shall begin anew for all those who trust and believe in this Christmas miracle.

I close with the same question I asked of the participants at our Wreath-making event: What gives you hope? I shall trust that you will find hope in the gift of the newborn baby, the humble infant, who comes to us as a great and gracious savior, choosing to love us long before we have the capacity to “love him back.”

Happy Advent, My Friends,
and best wishes for a joyful, hope-filled Christmas!

Pastor Rhonda

December Schedule Includes Special Events

December 11th—Congregational Forum to discuss the Transition Team’s Report after worship
December 18th – Christmas Carol Sing-a-Long @ 3:00 p.m. Reception to follow in Fellowship Hall
December 22nd—Caroling Caravan @ 6:15pm (See Jonathan Hall’s article for more info.)
December 23rd—Living Nativity with Animals @ 5:30-6:30pm in front of the Church
December 24th—Christmas Eve Service @ 7:30pm
December 25th—Christmas Day Service @ 9:30am, Pastors Rhonda and Dave Myers Preaching
January 1st—New Year’s Day Service @ 9:30am

Church Office Closings

The Church Office will be closed on December 26th, 27th, and January 2nd in celebration of the Christmas and New Year’s holidays. Blessings to you and your families at Christmas!



Christmas is coming! A blessed Advent season to all. As we “prepare the way of the Lord” by personal reflection as well as decorating, cooking, and party planning, let’s remember the music of the season too. How can we not?

We hold our sing-a-long caroling program in the sanctuary on December 18 at 3 PM; a festive reception follows. On Thursday, December 22, anyone who wishes may join us in the parlor to go out caroling in the streets of Goshen (we will leave just after 6:15, so please be on time!). On December 23 there is another Live Nativity with singing and scripture lessons. For these, and for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, see announcements in this issue, or the bulletin, or the website.

Some of my earliest experiences of Christmas music came out of the family Philco (a phonograph, if you don’t remember). My parents had several holiday “33’s,” including Mantovani, of course; but my favorites were *Holiday Sing Along with Mitch* (Miller) and, of course, *Merry, Merry, Merry Christmas from Captain Kangaroo*. I’m told I played that last one over and over again till my mother had to hide it...sometime around Easter!

When I was in first grade, I was given a Magnus Chord Organ for Christmas. Twenty-two keys and twelve chord buttons—six white for major, and six black for minor—and made with pride in Linden, New Jersey. I was already hooked because pipe organs abounded in my neighborhood and I was already a fan of Calvin Hampton at nearby Calvary Episcopal Church. I still own that Magnus, and still remember Hampton.

Christmas music spoke to me, directly and at the earliest age, of something old, wonderful, and enduring; an heirloom that I had already inherited, yet could share with parents and grandparents as well as siblings. Christmas is the “old, old story,” but not of “unseen things above” but rather *seen things right here*. Emmanuel, God With Us, causes us to sing our carols of Christmas, our tidings of comfort and joy, year after year, ever fresh and delightful.

Join us in singing the joy of the season.

Jonathan



ANYONE WHO ENJOYS CAROLING

The First Presbyterian Church in Goshen

Sunday, December 18, 2022

Christmas Carol Sing-Along at 3:00 PM

Reception following in Fellowship Hall

Bring your voice and sing along or just sit and enjoy the break from your hectic holiday preparations.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

**Bring Your Friends and Family
Grab Your Hat & Gloves and Get into the Holiday Spirit!**



LIVE OUTDOOR CHRISTMAS NATIVITY With Animals

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2022 from 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

This is a great event for the entire family!

Please join us in front of the First Presbyterian Church in Goshen

Be your own Magi and support your community- donate a scarf or glove

FYI...

Congregational Forum

On Sunday, December 11th, following our Morning Worship, the Session will hold a Town Hall-style Congregational Forum to discuss the Transition Team's Report following 9 months of work on the church's behalf. We are awaiting the approval of this Report and the Corresponding Session Summary of the Congregational Assessment Tool (CAT Report) by the Committee on Ministry (COM) of the Presbytery of Hudson River. Once that approval is in hand, we can proceed with the election of a Pastor Nominating Committee. We hope you will plan to join us for this Forum as your input is valuable to our efforts.

The Giving Tree

Sunday, December 4th is the last day to take a tag from the Giving Tree. Bring joy to the heart of a needy child this Christmas and offer a gift given in love. You might add a hat and gloves. Please return the gifts by next Sunday, December 11th.

Pastor Nominating Committee

A Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) is soon to be elected by the congregation. The Nominating Committee will be tasked with presenting you with a slate of prospective members of a PNC that will be representative of the congregation. The PNC will begin their work with a thorough review of the Transition Team Report and will be assigned a liaison from the Presbytery of Hudson River to help them prepare a Ministry Information Form (MIF), develop a strategy for reviewing the MIF's submitted to them, and interviewing potential candidates for the position of installed Pastor. If you know of someone in active membership who you believe would make an excellent candidate for the PNC, please contact our congregational nominating committee chairperson, BA Long, at bette.anne.long@gmail.com

TIDBITS FROM THE TOWER

HAPPY DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS TO:

2	Joy Kissane	18	Jason Stewart
3	Fiona Keahon	19	William Person
4	Greg Sitler	23	Barbara Schust
6	Lisa Montalbano	25	Jennifer Serkes
9	Beryl Yungman		Wesley Sproul
12	Sadie Hankins		Mal Stewart
14	Rob Dickover	27	Kevan Ottochian
	Jeanette McDowell		Kayla Farley
	Ken Skyer	29	Geri Corey
15	Rachael Quick	30	Graham Glasse
16	Linda Boardman		
	Marilyn Velzey		



HAPPY DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES TO:

12	Logan and Rachael Quick
17	Robert and Rebecca Boardman
23	Bill and Gina Gruber
28	Jon and Deb Hourahan

*If you are also celebrating a special day, we wish you much happiness.
If you would like your birthday and/or anniversary included, please give your
dates to Pat in the church office.*

Mission Event: Midnite Run- January 14, 2023 (Breakfast Run to NYC)

**Mark your calendar to volunteer
Donations of Clothing Needed**

Once again the Mission Committee will be gathering food and clothing to take to the homeless in New York City. Kindly volunteer to drive/ride to the city or to prepare food and coffee the morning of the Run. Please contact Wendy Bynum-Wade via text (845-629-4324) or by email wendybynumwade@gmail.com if you can help.

There are bins located in the narthex and by the church office for donations of **clean, ready to wear, winter clothing**. We are in need of women's small, medium and large warm sweaters/tops as well as small, medium and large heavy slacks or pants, winter coats and gloves. For the men we need heavy slacks and sweats in all sizes, heavy tops/sweaters especially medium and XL, winter coats, hats and gloves. Boots and serviceable shoes for both sexes appreciated.

We will need food donations; we will post a list later in December. Monetary donations towards purchase of underwear, contractor bags and paper goods etc. are appreciated. For more information you may contact the coordinators Wendy Bynum-Wade or Arlete Schaeffer (arlete.schaeffer@gmail.com), or Carol Gabella @ church or phone 845-342-4367.

Thank you, Mission Committee

Prayer Chain

It is vital for any congregation to be in prayer for the church and for individuals affiliated with the church who have a need for God's intervention in some way. This is why churches such as ours have prayer chains. But the prayer requests must stay current if individuals are to be asked to pray for everyone on the list. So, as of March 1st, we will be changing the way we update the prayer chain. Once a request has been made for a member of the church, a friend, a neighbor, a family member, etc. to be met with prayer, that name will remain on the prayer chain list for 2 months. If you want continued prayers for another 2 months, please contact the church office to make that request. Use the church email address fpgoshen@gmail.com or phone the office with your request at 845-294-7991.



PRAYER CHAIN

The following members or friends are going through a time in which they have asked for prayer by the church. Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Landon Schust and Family
The Family of Colin Alevras
Kathy and Ron Alevras
Ron Alevras' brother
The Family of Makenzie Bergen
Linda Clark's nephew, Andrew DeBlock and his family
Orra Wood
Alan Thompson
The Family of Ashley Wade

Maney-Hawkins Meditation Garden



DECEMBER UPDATE

The Christmas season is a wonderful time to visit your Meditation Garden.

Memorial Pavers

To order a memorial paver to honor or remember your loved ones, please see Pat in the church office. The cost of each paver is only \$100. We will place an order when we have 10 requests (as of now we have **FIVE** orders).

The Memorial Columbarium

The **LAST** niche has been purchased in the Memorial Columbarium wall.

The congregation will need to consider if constructing a second/third wall is desired and/or financially possible. If it is, a new, current estimate for the work will need to be created, considered, approved and work coordinated.

“Stewards of Our Garden”

Special thanks to our dedicated Stewards who continue to keep our garden beautiful!

The DECEMBER/EARLY JANUARY Steward's Schedule:

Nancy Buckley	December 1 – December 15
George and Barbara Hankins	December 16 – December 31
Bill Eustance	January 1 – January 15

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!

If you'd like to help maintain our garden, just see Pat in the church office to sign-up and be added to our Steward's schedule.

Call the church office (845-294-7991) for any information you need about
The Maney-Hawkins Meditation Garden.

A GUIDELINE FOR CHURCH MEMBERS ATTENDING SESSION MEETINGS

All members of the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church in Goshen are welcome to attend general meetings of the Session which are currently held in Fellowship Hall on the third Wednesday of each month beginning at 7 p.m.

If you attend a Session meeting to express concern for a topic that is before the Session, please let both the Clerk and the Moderator know of your desire to speak prior to the start of the meeting. The Moderator will inform the Session at the appropriate time that you would like to address the Session and that request must be moved/seconded and passed before you may speak. Please limit the time you use being as brief as possible. If, following your comment, any Session member wishes more information concerning what you have offered, they will ask.

The only portion of a meeting where you might be asked to step out is during discussion of sensitive matters concerning the church and/or where there is a concern for confidentiality. This should not be seen as an affront in any manner but is there for the best interest of the Session and congregation.

Church members should not interrupt the proceedings of the Session with personal questions or concerns. After the adjournment of the Session, the Moderator and Clerk will be happy to address your questions.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Confessing Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we shall seek to use our gifts through worship, ministry, and mission, to gather the Church in from the world, to continue to nurture one another, to serve a world still broken, and to exemplify through common values and purposes Christian discipleship to the greater glory of God.

BOARD OF ELDERS

Class of 2023

Linda Boardman
Geri Corey
Jennifer Ellis
BA Long
Kevan Ottochian
Sue Varden

Class of 2024

Marlene Gaynor
Bill Powers
Mal Stewart
Anne Wood

Class of 2025

Diane Church
Mark Glassé
Jody Kopec
Scott Roper

Clerk of Session: Sue Varden

BOARD OF DEACONS

Class of 2023

Diana Bowe
Gina Gruber
Carolyn Keller
Mary Kopec
Jonathan Laskoski
Cheryl Zis

Class of 2024

Allison Csernai
Patrick Ellis
Bill Keller
Barbara Schust
George Schust

Class of 2025

Cecile Ayres
Michael Csernai
Carol Gabella
Jennifer Serkes

Moderator of Deacons: Carolyn Keller

STAFF

Jonathan B. Hall, Minister of Music
Patricia Schwetje, Office Administrator
Deborah Hourahan, Church Treasurer
William Kozireski, Church Sexton
Matt Kopec, Church Sexton

THE KID'S PAGE

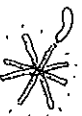
Make Shining Stars



Hang some shining stars on your Christmas tree!

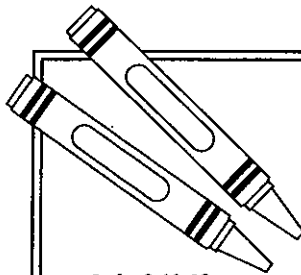
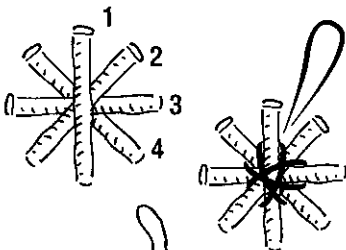
You will need:

- ★ 2 plastic drinking straws for each star
- ★ glitter
- ★ string or yarn
- ★ scissors
- ★ white glue



How to make:

- ★ Cut each straw in half.
- ★ Cut a piece of yarn 18" long.
- ★ Lay the 4 straw pieces in a star shape.
- ★ Wrap the yarn around the center of the straws.
- ★ Tie securely, leaving some yarn to use as a hanger.
- ★ Spread glue on the star and sprinkle with glitter.
- ★ Shake off excess glitter.



Just for KIDS

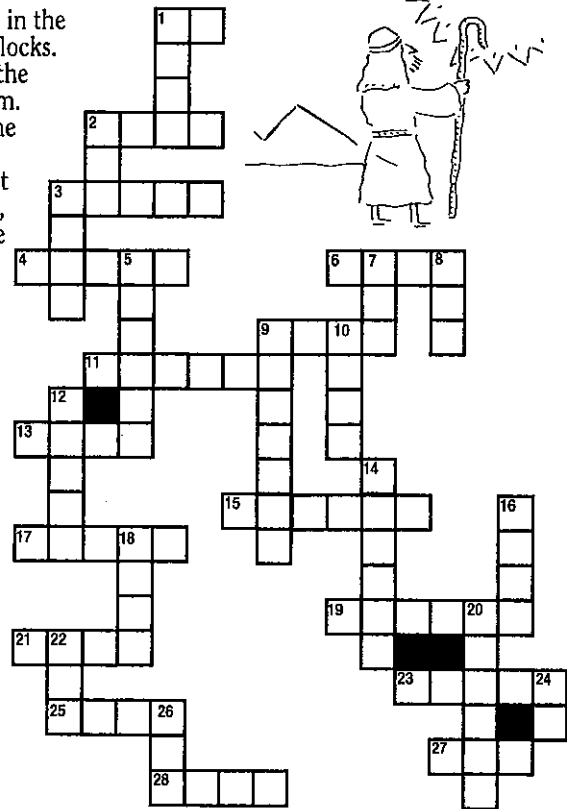
The Angel Appeared

Luke 2:10-12

There were shepherds in the fields watching their flocks. Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared to them. Find the words that the angel spoke. First fit the words from the list into the squares. Next, write the words on the correct lines.



Do	This
be	sign
has	find
all	baby
for	lying
not	bring
you	great
joy	Today
town	David
that	afraid
good	people
news	Savior
will	Christ
been	cloths
born	manger
Lord	wrapped



" 24 26 1A 5 . I 3A 8 13 18 of
the 15 12
4 27 16 9A 1A 2D 7
in the 28 of 23 a 20 22 1D 3D
to 8 ; he is 19 the 10 . "

Answer: "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord."

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
9:30am - Worship Service @ 10:30am - Potluck	12:30pm - NA @ FH	9:30am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - NA @ FH		6:30pm - Bell Choir 7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal @ 7:30pm - NA @ FH	12:30pm - NA @ FH	9am - Breakfast With Santa
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9:30am - Church School 9:30am - Worship Service @ 10:30am - Coffee Hour @ FH	12:30pm - NA @ FH	9:30am - Food Pantry 6pm - Fellowship Committee 6:30pm - NA @ FH	4:30pm - Mission Committee 6:30pm - NA @ B 7:10pm - Worship and Music	6:30pm - Bell Choir 7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal @	12:30pm - NA @ FH 6pm - Friday Night Friends @	9am - Food Pantry @ Parking 11am - Memorial Service @ 1pm - Diva Dance @ FH
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
9:30am - Church School 9:30am - Worship Service @ 10:30am - Coffee Hour @ FH 10:30am - Deacon's Mtg. @ 10:30am - Transition Team	12:30pm - NA @ FH	9:30am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - NA @ FH	7:30pm - Finance Committee	6:30pm - Bell Choir 7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal @	12:30pm - NA @ FH	1pm - Diva Dance @ FH
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Tower Tie Articles Due 9:30am - Children's Pageant 9:30am - Worship Service @ 10:30am - Coffee Hour @ FH 3pm - Carol Singalong @ S,	12:30pm - NA @ FH	9:30am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - NA @ FH	7pm - Session @ Zoom	6pm - Food Pantry @ FH 6:15pm - Caroling Caravan	12:30pm - NA @ FH 5:30pm - Living Nativity	Christmas Eve 7:30pm - Christmas Eve
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Christmas Day 9:30am - Worship Service @ 10:30am - Coffee Hour @ FH	Christmas Day (substitute) Office Closed 12:30pm - NA @ FH	Office Closed 9:30am - Food Pantry 6:30pm - NA @ FH		6:30pm - Bell Choir 7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal @	12:30pm - NA @ FH	New Year's Eve 10am - Kopec Party @ FH, K