



**Conyngham United Methodist Church**  
**PO Box AB, 411 Main Street,**  
**Conyngham, PA 18219**  
**570-788-3960**  
**conynghamumc@ptd.net**  
**www.conynghamumc.org**  
**December 2023**

### **Pastor's Pen**

Dear Church Family,

As we break into the Advent and Christmas season, I want you to hear this scripture: "Because of our God's deep compassion, the dawn from heaven will break upon us, to give light to those who are sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide us on the path of peace."  
(Luke 1:78-79)

(Luke 1:78-79)

I remember one night as a child when the power went out in the whole neighborhood. Being only seven at the time I was quite scared. So scared, in fact, that when my older brother made fun of me for being so frightened I simply punched him, not out of anger but out of fear. Then our mother came into the room to comfort us. She told us that we were going to light some candles and enjoy ourselves. She brought out an enormous pillar candle, which to my seven-year-old self seemed like it was two feet tall. She lit it and had all of us gather around it on the floor like a campfire. Then she put a few smaller candles around the room. We spent the rest of the night telling jokes and silly stories by candlelight, until we were rolling on the floor with giggles. It was then I regretted punching my brother and apologized. The light in that darkness just made everything better, and I finally felt peace again.

We have entered into a time of year when the days are very short. And if you're anything like me, that extra darkness isn't very enjoyable. This time with less light seems to bring out the darker or quieter things in people's hearts. This is a time of year where people feel depressed, lonely, and sad. This is a time of year where sometimes we are too busy or stressed to think. This is a time of year when self-esteem tends to plummet. It feels much like I did when the lights first went out in my neighborhood as a child.

But God has given us all our candlelight. He is our "light to those who are sitting in darkness." In this season when the nights seem so long, or darkness seems so deep, God has given us the light of Jesus Christ. He is God with us, right beside us. He is God having walked in your shoes. He is God's love here to lead you on the path to peace. Our walk with Jesus in dark times is a lot like that candle my mother lit for me. Even in the middle of a blackout, it makes things better and brings us to peace. Peace with God, peace with our neighbors, peace within ourselves.

So this Advent, as we are longing for light and peace, let us focus on our walk with Jesus. Doing that will be akin to having the candle with you as you walk around the dark house, instead of trying to just feel your way around in complete darkness. Take time this advent to keep your focus on Jesus, who is God with you. You might do that through a devotion like the one our church is handing out, or our breathing room, or some daily prayer. You might do that through volunteering, giving to a good cause, or helping those in need. You might do that through reading your Bible or talking about your faith with others. However you keep the candle of Jesus with you in the darkness, may Christ lead you on the path of peace this Advent season. Amen.

Peace,  
Pastor Graham

# Lectioary

**03—December**

**1st Sunday of Advent**

Isaiah 64:1-9

Psalms 80:1-7m 17-19 (UMH 801)

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Mark 13:24-37

**10—December**

**2nd Sunday of Advent**

Isaiah 40:1-11

Psalms 85:1-2, 8-13 (UMH 806)

2 Peter 3:8-15a

Mark 1:1-8

**17—December**

**3rd Sunday of Advent**

Isaiah 51:1-4, 8-11

Psalms 126 (UMH 847)

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

John 1:6-8, 19-28

**18—December**

**Charles Wesley's Birthday**

**24—December**

**4th Sunday of Advent**

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Luke 1:47-55 (UMH 199)

Romans 16:25-27

Luke 1:26-38

**Christmas Eve**

Isaiah 9:2-7

Psalms 96 (UMH815)

Titus 2:11-14

Luke 2:1-20

**25—December**

**Christmas Day**

Isaiah 52:7-10

Psalms 98 (UMH 818)

Hebrews 1:1-4 (5-12)

John 1:1-14

**31—December**

**1st Sunday after Christmas Day**

**Night Watch**

**New Year's Eve**

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

Psalms 148 (UMH 861)

Galatians 4:4-7

Luke 2:22-40

## Valley Interfaith Council Prayer List

Please pray for the following in your daily devotions.

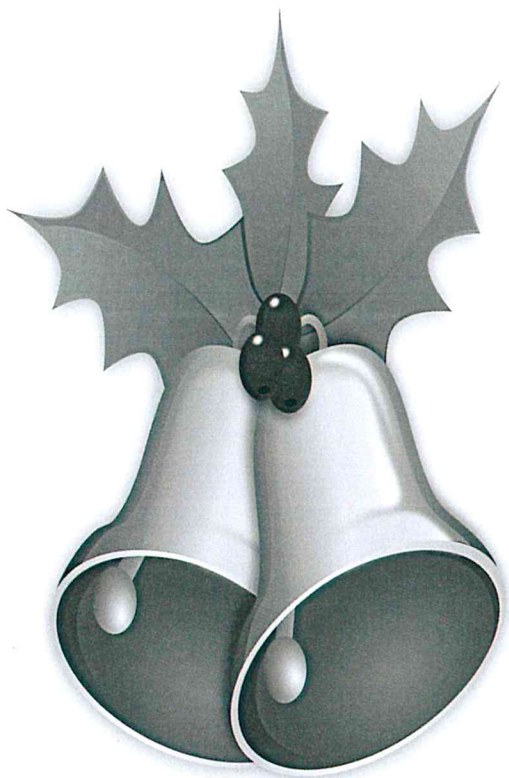
**Cheryl Pecora, Jean Ann Weiches, Kayla Baucum, Edee Boyer, Kaylee Barbush, June Blamey, Joanne Mumie, Irene and Robert Burger Family, Pastor Tom Cvammen, Arty Deis, Ron Eckrote, Collette Eskin, Mike Fellin, Jennifer Flores, Food Pantry Families, Barbara Gavel, Irene Healey, Ron Hofmann, Theresa Howley, Mary and Robert Kisansky, Aggie Kisenweather, Rose Luethy, Mark and Theresa Marinock, Cristina and David Matthey, Kim Murphy, Carl Roberts, Danny Sampson, Carol Siewell, Maureen Susa, Valerie Sutton, Jacqueline Walker, all cancer and COVID patients, our military personnel, as well as leaders of our country, the Russia/Ukraine situation, families of addicts, Pat Ferrari, June McCauley, War in Isreal/Gaza, Mary Nora Wallace, Melody, a 9 year old, Jay Wetzel, Edie Larsen, Madelyn Lawson, Fred Polmounter, Larry Generose, Kyle, Don Zufall, and the Kelly Family.**

**Please pray daily for your church, its leaders and staff, Pastor Graham Truscott, the Red Bird Mission Clinic, the Red Bird Mission School, the Salvation Army, United Children's Homes, Hazleton Enlarged Ministry, Heartwood Center, Emmaus Road Travelers and Drivers and the Hazleton/Valley Mission Connection.**



## *December Birthdays*

03 Dec	<i>Fran Phillips</i>
05 Dec	<i>Marlee Cundro</i>
05 Dec	<i>Ian Racho</i>
06 Dec	<i>Cindy Howe</i>
07 Dec	<i>Caleb Skuba</i>
09 Dec	<i>Conner Wetzel</i>
10 Dec	<i>Myles Bicking</i>
11 Dec	<i>Jennifer Flores</i>
13 Dec	<i>Gavin Huey</i>
16 Dec	<i>Chris Gogola</i>
17 Dec	<i>Melissa Gebhart</i>
19 Dec	<i>Carol Seiwell</i>
19 Dec	<i>Alma Joan Dretzel</i>
20 Dec	<i>Sidra Gogola</i>
29 Dec	<i>Miwa Dretzel</i>



## **JANUARY BIRTHDAYS**

02-Jan	Ivy Huey
07-Jan	Emily Flaim
07-Jan	Joey Dretzel
08-Jan	Kirk Wetzel
08-Jan	Jennifer Quinn
10-Jan	Jenson Huey
12-Jan	Denise Earley
12-Jan	Araceli Gogola
15-Jan	Hallie Cara
19-Jan	Jeremy Rossi
21-Jan	Loisann Earley
25-Jan	James Bannon

## **January Anniversaries**

14 Jan	Scott and Jean Luchi
30 Jan	Gary & Millini Skuba



# NEWS FROM THE PEWS

## Toys for Tots:

December 10th will be the last day for collecting Toys for Tots. Please place an unwrapped toy in the box; all toys are distributed locally. Thank you for participating.



When sending out your Christmas Cards this year please consider sending one to Logan Wetzel. **Cards and Letters Only Please**

His address is as follows:  
MMN 3 Wetzel, Logan H.  
2305-8 101 NNPTC Circle  
Goose Creek, SC 29445

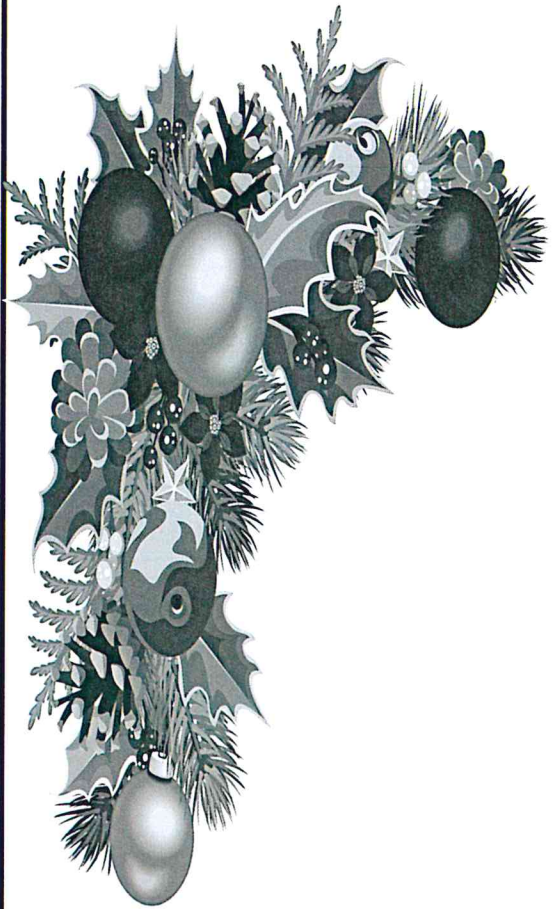
## Cookie Exchange

Our cookie exchange will take place on Wednesday, December 6, at 4:00-5:30 pm. All participants are required to bring 3 dozen homemade cookies per person attending. The container you bring your cookies in will be placed on our display table for selection by our attendees. You are asked to bring a second container to fill with your own selections to take home. Each person will receive at least 2 dozen cookies of a varied assortment for their holiday hosting.

Any questions, please contact Karen Lingenfelter @ 570-788-3499.



## Bazaar Report



We want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who took any part in the Bazaar. I thought that it was a great success and a special time for fellowship. Several individuals stand out and deserve a special Thank you—Jean Luchi, Sharon Kalinchok, Heidi Klein, and Nancy Stark.

The following is a report on the monies made in each area:

Kitchen	\$ 1,264.00
Auction	\$ 1,325.00
Silent Auction	\$ 270.00
Bake Sale	\$ 247.75
Vendors	\$ 120.00

Total \$ 3,226.75

Thank you once again for your assistance.

Mary Lou

**Living Nativity: Christ Lutheran Church invites everyone to join them on December 2nd and 3rd from 5:00-7:00 pm each evening. They will present a 12-scene living nativity with live animals.**



## Advent Worship at CUMC

This **Sunday, December 3** is the beginning of Advent. We will be having communion like normal. I will also be asking everybody to share times when you have seen or felt "God with you," which is what Jesus' title "Emmanuel" means. Think back and bring any stories you have to share!

**Sunday December 10** is a normal advent worship Sunday.

**Sunday December 17** we will be having our Sunday School Christmas pageant instead of our sermon and children's Sermon.

Also on **Sunday December 17**, we will host the valley interfaith blue Christmas service at **3pm** here in our church. Pastor Scott Kunhle from Black Creek will be preaching. Logan Buglio will be playing music.

This service is for people who are feeling blue in the Christmas season and is designed to help us to come to God with our grief, loneliness, or tears. All are welcome.

On **Sunday December 24, Christmas Eve**, we are having two worship services:

During our normal **Sunday morning worship time of 10:30am** we are having a carol hymn sing and we hope everybody can attend.

Then at **6pm on Dec 24** we are having our normal candlelight Christmas Eve service with communion. This will be followed by silent communion starting at 7pm.



## Advent Devotions at CUMC

This year we have two options for Advent devotions. The first is our "Resting Room", available on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 3-6 starting December 4 and ending December 22. It is also available upon request. The resting room is a room designed to help you rest, slow down, take a little time for your mental health, and focus on Jesus. There will be snacks, relaxing music, some mindfulness activities, and a daily Advent devotion available. On Wednesdays Pastor Graham will be available to practice the devotion together with anybody interested.

There is also a take home devotion available for everybody. This daily Advent devotion keeps our eyes focused on Jesus as we wait for the coming of Christ, God with us. It comes with instructions on how to set up a restful space inside your home as well. They are available on the desk in the social hall and at the church office. If you need more please contact Heidi or Pastor Graham.

## Heartwood Center

Thank you to everybody who has helped to make our ministry at the Heartwood center a great success. God continues to work with us and our friends there! And it is not possible with you saying yes. Thank you for saying yes to God.

We normally take lunch and a Bible study to our friends at the center on the 4th Sunday of every month. Given that Sunday is Christmas Eve this year we will instead be doing our normal monthly ministry on the 17th of December. All are welcome to join us!





The Freeland Community Choir  
*presents*

# Love!

*A Gospel Christmas Celebration Cantata*

**Sunday December 3, 2023 3pm**  
*Faith UCC Church, Hazle Twp, PA*

**Sunday December 10, 2023 3pm**  
*St John's Reformed UCC, Freeland, PA*





## December Worship Leaders

### December 3

Greeter: Rodney Hawk  
Head Usher: Rosemary Mandrick  
Liturgist: Barry Jones  
Singer: Joe Racho  
Children's Message: Carrie Joy Wiley  
Sound Board: Wiley Family  
Acolyte: Freddy Jacob

### December 10

Greeter: Rodney Hawk  
Head Usher: Rosemary Mandrick  
Liturgist: Jean Luchi  
Singer: Rena Bicking  
Children's Message: Kate Flaim  
Sound Board: Wiley Family  
Acolyte: Hazel DeBalko

### December 17

Greeter: Rodney Hawk  
Head Usher: Rosemary Mandrick  
Liturgist: Rosemary Mandrick  
Singer: Carrie Wiley  
Children's Message: Pastor Graham  
Sound Board: Nancy Stark/Jay Morgan  
Acolyte: Joey Dretzel

### December 24 (Morning)

Greeter: Rodney Hawk  
Head Usher: Rosemary Mandrick  
Liturgist: Tammy McCauley  
Singer: Carrie Joy Wiley and Joe Racho  
Sound Board: Wiley Family  
Acolyte: Eamon Wiley

### December 24 (Evening)

Greeter: Rodney Hawk  
Head Usher: Barry Jones  
Liturgist: Kate Flaim  
Singer: Carrie Joy Wiley and Joe Racho  
Sound Board: Wiley Family  
Acolyte: Malcolm Wiley

### December 31

Greeter: Rodney Hawk  
Head Usher: Rosemary Mandrick  
Liturgist: Billie Shaffer  
Singer: Joe Racho  
Children's Message:  
Sound Board: Nancy Stark/Heidi Klein/Jay Morgan  
Acolyte: Freddy Jacob

## December Altar Flowers

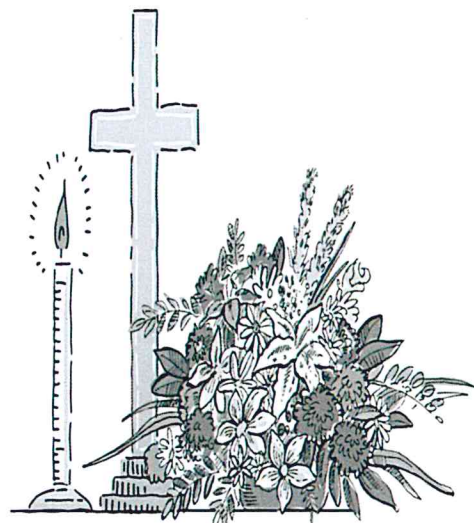
12/03—Heidi Klein will give a donation to the Building Fund in memory of son, Cody John

12/10—John and Debbie Cara have given a donation to the General Fund.

12/17—John and Debbie Cara have given a donation to the General Fund.

12/24—John and Debbie Cara have given a donation to the General Fund.

12/31—Bruce and Beverly Hilliard will give a donation to the General Fund in memory of Blanche and Foster Hilliard and Betty and Leon Buffington.



## Altar Flowers



Conyngham United Methodist Church  
411 Main Street  
PO Box AB  
Conyngham, PA 18219

Change Service Requested

# The Conyngham United Methodist Church

**Inspiring People to Love and Serve God**

Pastor  
Lay Leader  
Sunday School Superintendent:  
Administrative Assistant  
Graham Truscott  
Kate Flaim  
Sunday School Worship Team  
Heidi Klein

## *Vision Statement*

*Conyngham United Methodist Church is a Christ centered, warm and caring congregation which welcomes, nurtures, and equips people to follow Jesus Christ. As servants of the Gospel, we value the essentials of Holy Scripture, joyful praise, prayer and worship and developing personal faith in Jesus Christ. We accomplish this through a dynamic musical ministry, exciting youth programs, inspiring young adult and adult programs, fellowship of small groups, outreach to the community, strength through personal support, and the shared ministry of our laity and its pastor. We realize all this by being a church where God's Holy Word is a source of nourishment and strength.*

You are cordially invited to worship with us.  
Sunday School for all ages begins at 9:15 am  
Our Worship Service begins at 10:30 am.

conynghamumc@ptd.net  
www.conynghamumc.org  
570-788-3960, 570-788-4887



# December 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>3</b> 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service	<b>4</b> 3:00pm Resting Room 6:00pm Zumba Class 6:30pm Trustees Meeting	<b>5</b> 10:00am Sisters 6:00pm Zumba Class 6:30pm Church Council Meeting	<b>6</b> 10:00am Religious Studies 3:00pm Resting Room 6:30pm Christian Conversations	<b>7</b> 9:30am Prayer Shawl Ministry 5:30pm Dinner and Devotions	<b>8</b> 3:00pm Resting Room	<b>9</b>
<b>10</b> 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service	<b>11</b> 3:00pm Resting Room 6:00pm Zumba Class	<b>12</b> 10:00am Sisters 6:00pm Zumba Class	<b>13</b> 10:00am Religious Studies 3:00pm Resting Room 6:30pm Book Group for Church Health	<b>14</b> 9:30am Plastic Mat Ministry	<b>15</b> 3:00pm Resting Room	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b> 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service 10:30am Children's Christmas Play 12:00pm Heartwood Center	<b>18</b> 3:00pm Resting Room 6:00pm Zumba Class	<b>19</b> 10:00am Sisters 6:00pm Zumba Class	<b>20</b> 10:00am Religious Studies 3:00pm Resting Room 6:30pm Christian Conversations	<b>21</b> 9:30am Prayer Shawl Ministry 5:30pm Dinner and Devotions	<b>22</b> 3:00pm Resting Room	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service 6:00pm Christmas Eve Service followed by Silent Communion	<b>25</b> 3:00pm Resting Room 6:00pm Zumba Class	<b>26</b> 10:00am Sisters 6:00pm Zumba Class	<b>27</b> 10:00am Religious Studies 3:00pm Resting Room 6:30pm Book Group for Church Health	<b>28</b> 9:30am Plastic Mat Ministry	<b>29</b> 3:00pm Resting Room	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b> 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service						

**2**  
Christmas in Conyngham  
10:00am Christmas in Conyngham  
1:30pm Hanging of the Greens