



First Church of the Brethren
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Pastor: Rev. Dr. David A. Crumrine dcrumrine@rsfirstchurch.org
December 2024

Living out our faith

Being the hands and feet of Jesus, serving with open minds and hearts.

We exist to be a community of welcome and worship where people find peace, purpose, and power through Jesus Christ.

As I write this for the December newsletter, we are less than 24 hours removed from 68 degree weather.

That fact alone might make it hard to believe that Christmas is upon us this month. At least the official yearly celebration of the birth of our Lord and Savior is almost here -- if the decorations and lights popping up everywhere are to be taken as a sign of the times.

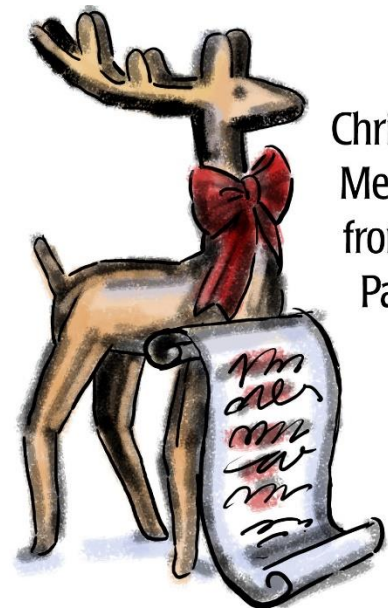
Today, however, is a different story. The decorations and lights are still there. In fact, they seem to multiply every day. But the temperature is closer to freezing, with rumors and reports of a potential snowstorm arriving later today.

All of that is just further reason that we need to celebrate Him, and live according to His teachings, each and every day, not just one season a year.

Life has a way of tossing us curve balls on a regular basis. One day, things seem to be going along unseasonably well, and the next day, the storms of life have returned with a vengeance. We can paste a bright light of a smile on our face, and we can adorn ourselves with all the baubles and decorations we want. But in the end, the joy we really crave can't be forced. It has to come from within, from our spirits and souls.

And that is just the reason that we need to celebrate Him, and live according to His teachings, each and every day, not just one season a year.

This Christmas, may Christ be more who you are, than just what you do for one short season a year.



Christmas
Message
from the
Pastor

Pastor Dave

LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORT

Submitted by Kaye Russell, LT Chair

- The Leadership Team met on 11-5-2024. The next meeting will be held on 12-3-2024.

CHRISTIAN ED TEAM

LT Exec Team met with the 3 Coordinators. Annual contracts were reviewed and updated. There will be no SS on 12-29-24.

HOSPITALITY & COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

75 children attended the recent parking lot Trunk or Treat. There will be no 5th Sunday meal on 12-29-24. A new Gifts & Talents Survey will be available to the congregation beginning 11-10-24.

WORSHIP TEAM

The two artificial Christmas trees will be put in place before Advent. The new choir loft chairs are in transit. Blue Christmas service will be part of worship on 12-22-24.

MISSIONS & SERVICE TEAM

2024 White Gift Offering will be divided as follows: 1/3 to local outreach; 1/3 to district support; 1/3 to the denominational emergency support fund. The Giving Tree during Advent will be used to collect food donations for the local food banks. \$1000 of M&S Team 2024 budgeted money was used for the RS Ministerium's "Seed Program" that took place earlier this year.

FINANCE & FACILITY TEAM

All the building's exterior doors are rekeyed to the same key now. An elevator emergency phone number listing should be in place soon inside the elevator. The Daycare is reviewing their current contract renewal. Discussion held on the importance of the congregation being reminded periodically of the value of consistent and intentional financial giving and tithing.

DEACON'S REPORT

Deacon calling in process. The church office has been updated with a new church membership list so it should be more accurate for the 2025 Church Directory. January will hold a new deacon's installation and recognitions for deacon emeritus.

PASTOR'S REPORT

Pastor Dave's laptop recently crashed; he thanked Bryce Nooyen and F&F for the new replacement!

Both Bible studies continue to grow in number. Discussion was held on the importance of the pastor's weekly day off and vacation time.

- A kitchen and supply room cleanout has been completed. Special thanks to those ladies who volunteered their time!
- The pastor is looking for a person who would be interested in operating the elevator and the sound system for funerals held in the church. If you have an interest in volunteering, please speak with Pastor Dave or Terry Hershberger.
- Those groups who host 2nd Sunday Fellowships are reminded that when the sermon talk-back begins at 11am, they are to join with the others in the FH. The remainder of clean up can occur at 11:30am.
- When the church secretary is going to be out of the office, she will be asked to notify the congregation through bulletins and weekly emails.
- It was agreed that with the current low number of Jr. Youth, the Jr. Youth checking account will hold a zero balance but will remain open for future use. Any income or expenditures will become part of the Sr. Youth checking.
- The 11-24-24 Forum slate, budget, Estate gifting, & agenda were all approved by the LT.



HELPING HANDS IN DECEMBER

Greeter Carol Emerick
Deacon Greeter Linda Steele

Fellowship Time Youth

December	1	8	15	22	29
CandleLighter	Children	Savannah Thompson	Skye Thompson	Thea Thompson	
Organist	Cathy Petre		Terry Hershberger		Cathy
Pianist	Cathy Neal	Brenda Fluke Garber	Cathy Neal	Brenda Fluke-Garber	Marcia Fleck
Worship Leader	Linda Steele	Pattie Conlon	Bobbi Beers		
Storyteller	Sandy Norris	Pastor Dave	Traci Totillo	Betsy Garach	Gary Wineland
Children's Church	Jodie & Terry Dellinger	Tammy Carter	Angie Russell	Terra Gartmann Melinda Green	TBD
Nursery					
Welcome Center	Darlene Wyland	Darlene Wyland	Darlene Wyland	Darlene Wyland	
Parking Lot Greeters	Rick Carrier	Don Myers Jaden Myers	Rick Carrier		
Flowers	Memory of Sarah Hoover	5 th Wedding Ann. John & Brandi Stranford			
Bulletins		Memory of Duane Snyder	Memory of Chuck Piper		



Candlelight Service
7 pm



December 1, 2024
During Worship





Tuesday, December 17th

6 pm

Manor house at
Henry Pond
in Martinsburg

Catered meal
cost of \$ 20.00.

Reservations and money due by 12/5 to Valerie
Smith or Chris Wagner.

If you'd like to participate in a gift exchange,
please bring a 10.00 gift.

Any questions see Valerie Smith or Chris Wagner

ALL LADIES WELCOME

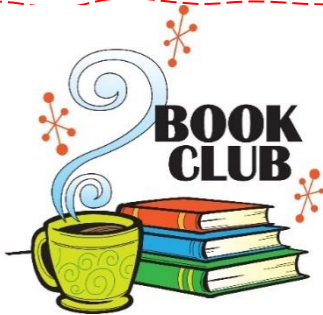


MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

December 21st

8 am

Breakfast at
The Dream,
Hollidaysburg
All men invited!



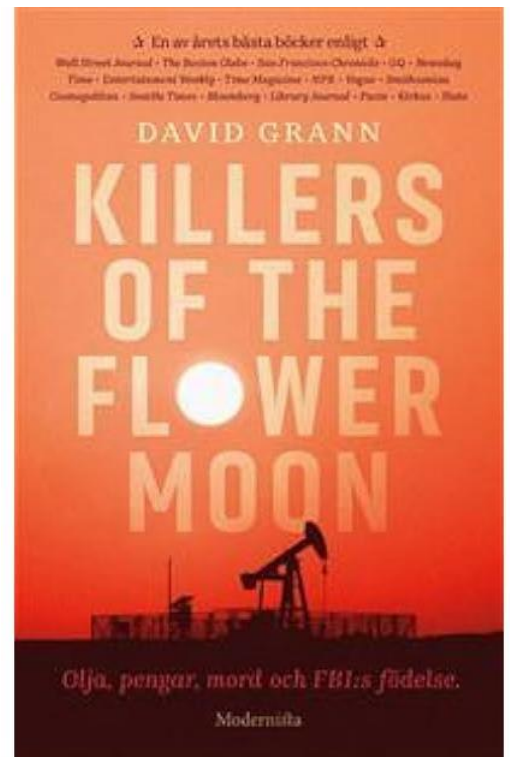
Meetings are the third Monday of each month at 10 am in the Parlor.
Join us as we discuss the monthly selection on December 16, 2024.

Killers of the Flower Moon by David Grann

In the 1920s, the richest people per capita in the world were members of the Osage Nation in Oklahoma. After oil was discovered beneath their land, the Osage rode in chauffeured automobiles, built mansions, and sent their children to study in Europe.

Then, one by one, the Osage began to be killed off. The family of an Osage woman, Mollie Burkhart, became a prime target. One of her relatives was shot. Another was poisoned. And this was just the beginning, as more and more Osage were dying under mysterious circumstances, and many of those who dared to investigate the killings were themselves murdered.

As the death toll rose, the newly created FBI took up the case, and the young director, J. Edgar Hoover, turned to a former Texas Ranger named Tom White to try to unravel the mystery. White put together an undercover team, including a Native American agent who infiltrated the region, and together with the Osage began to expose one of the most chilling conspiracies in American history.



DECEMBER Birthdays

- 12/1 Hunter Keith
Jim Butler
- 12/2 Mindy Wagner
- 12/6 Tammy Fluke
- 12/7 Megan Croft
- 12/8 Don Bookhammer
Gary Speck
Pattie Conlon
- 12/9 Ezra Croft
- 12/10 Mandy Keith
Emily Mingle-
Hershberger
- 12/11 Valerie Smith
- 12/12 Destiny Wagner
- 12/13 Dawn Crumrine
Charles Smith Jr.
- 12/14 Jaden Myers
- 12/18 Dan Brumbaugh
- 12/19 Maureen Detwiler
Marcia Fleck
Brandi Walter
- 12/23 Cathy Neal
- 12/24 Kristen Hall
Caleb Keith
- 12/26 Dave Crumrine
Marlys Hershberger
- 12/27 Julie Witkovsky
- 12/28 Diana Walls
- 12/29 Bethann Frederick
- 12/30 Janis Loucks
Pat Brumbaugh
- 12/31 Tom Holsinger

OFFICE CLOSED

December 23 – 27, 2024



If you are 55+ we invite you to join us in the Fellowship Hall from 10 am to noon on Thursday, December 12th for our annual Christmas Party. We gather to fellowship and to share wonderful food. Please sign up at the Welcome Center so we know how many to plan for.

Dear First Church, thank you so much for remembering me on Pastor Appreciation Sunday. I love The Vault! What a thoughtful gift! Thank you also for all the love and support you have all shown Dave and me and our family! We appreciate you! - Fondly, Dawn Crumrine

Dear members & leaders of your youth group, We, at the Martinsburg Food Pantry, appreciate your kindness in sharing bags of food from your Food Drive! This means so much in this time of rising food costs, and it helps give relief to needy families in our community. God bless & thank you! Linda K. Smith

DECEMBER Anniversaries

- 12/12 Tom & Cindy Shaw
- 12/17 Justin & Mandy Croft
- 12/24 Tommy & Sandy Smith
Bill & Carolyn Grubb
- 12/26 Terry & Marlys
Hershberger



The White Gift Christmas Offering will aid local, district and world ministries. Financial gifts will be divided among: 1) Family Services, Inc. in Blair County, 2) Mid PA District ministries, and 3) the Emergency Disaster Fund, the financial part of our national and global Brethren Disaster Ministries. Envelopes may be found at the Welcome Center and from the rack near the rear door entrance and may be turned in anytime in December.



The Giving Tree is located in the overflow room, next to the sanctuary. We are collecting **food and hygiene items for our local food banks**. Please place your donations under the tree December 1-December 24. If you prefer to donate money, please give your financial gift to a Missions & Service Team member and a paper ornament will be placed on the tree with the amount given (without names). Thank you for sharing. ~ **Missions & Service Team:** Don Bookhammer, Bobbi Beers, Sandy Burket, Tammy Carter, Cindy Estep, Marlys Hershberger, John Holsinger, Julie Witkovsky, Darlene Wyland.

We extend our Christian sympathies to the family and friends of John Coates who entered the gates of heaven November 13, 2024, and to the family and loved ones of Nancy Mobley who entered the Church Triumphant on November 16, 2024. Please keep these families in your prayers.

"You can never truly enjoy Christmas until you can look up into the Father's face and tell him you have received his Christmas gift." ~**John R. Rice**

Sunday School will not be held on December 29th.

"He was created of a mother whom He created. He was carried by hands that He formed. He cried in the manger in wordless infancy. He, the Word, without whom all human eloquence is mute." ~**Augustine**



CHRISTMAS CARDS - the youth will help you "mail" cards to your church family. We will collect and deliver cards on the

following dates: December 1, 8 and 15. Please remember to put a return address on each card. Also, this is for those persons who regularly attend. Please put a stamp on the cards for persons who don't attend church and mail them with your other cards. Thank you!

A Prayer for a Season of Joy

Holy Father, Thank you so much for the gift of your Son Jesus Christ, my Savior. Lord, it is easy to be stressed during the Christmas season, and I need help remaining focused on You. While this earth promises temporary happiness and distractions, true joy comes from You. Lord, help me to remember what the Bible says, "I will take joy in the God of my salvation" (Habakkuk 3:18b). Fill me up with the true joy of knowing You, and having a relationship with Your Son, and the purpose of His birth, which was my redemption. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.



2024 Poinsettia Order Form

The Generation Hope Sunday School Class is offering the congregation the opportunity to help decorate our sanctuary with poinsettias this Advent season. *Please leave them in place until after the Christmas Eve Service.* Return this form with payment to Travis or Angie Russell, or any Generation Hope class member no later than *December 8th*.

Cost is \$12.00 each.

Number of poinsettias: _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

Make checks payable to: Generation Hope Sunday School Class

Poinsettia #1 Red White Jingle Bell
_____ In memory of _____ In honor of

From (optional): _____

Poinsettia #2 Red White Jingle Bell
_____ In memory of _____ In honor of

From (optional): _____

Poinsettia #3 Red White Jingle Bell
_____ In memory of _____ In honor of

From (optional): _____

Payment made payable to
Generation Hope Sunday School Class
Payment must accompany order

Poinsettias are \$12 each



The
Season
of

Advent

READING PLAN

Hope

- ◇ Day 1: Jeremiah 29:10-14
- ◇ Day 2: Romans 15:8-13
- ◇ Day 3: 1 Peter 1:3-12
- ◇ Day 4: Hebrews 10:19-39
- ◇ Day 5: Psalm 33
- ◇ Day 6: Titus 2:11– 3:8

Joy

- ◇ Day 13: Philippians 4:4-9
- ◇ Day 14: Psalm 16
- ◇ Day 15: James 1:2-18
- ◇ Day 16: Psalm 30
- ◇ Day 17: Luke 2:8-20
- ◇ Day 18: John 15:1-11

Peace

- ◇ Day 7: Isaiah 9:1-7
- ◇ Day 8: John 14:1-7, 25-31
- ◇ Day 9: John 16:25-33
- ◇ Day 10: Romans 5:1-11
- ◇ Day 11: Ephesians 2:11-22
- ◇ Day 12: Colossians 3:1-17

Love

- ◇ Day 19: Micah 7:18-20
- ◇ Day 20: Romans 8:31-39
- ◇ Day 21: John 3:16-21
- ◇ Day 22: 1 John 4:7-21
- ◇ Day 23: Philippians 2:1-11
- ◇ Day 24: 2 Thessalonians 2:13 – 3:5
- ◇ Day 25: Ephesians 2:1-10



December 2024

SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

<p>1</p> <p>8:45 am Children's Christmas Skit Practice</p> <p>9:25 am Worship</p> <p>10:30 am Sunday School</p> <p>11:45 am Deacon Prayer Gathering</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>9:30 am Bible Study</p> <p>6:00 pm Leadership Meeting</p>	<p>4</p> <p>9:00 am Ladies Aid Quilting</p> <p>1:00 pm Prayer Shawl Ministry</p> <p>5:45 pm - 7:30 pm ReCharge</p> <p>6:15 pm Virtual Bible Study</p> <p>6:30 pm Chancel Choir</p>	<p>5</p> <p>9:00 am Bulletin Submission Deadline</p> <p>9:00 am Breakfast Fellowship</p> <p>6:30 pm - 8:30 pm Knitting Group in Parlor</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8</p> <p>Food Bank Collection </p> <p>9:25 am Worship</p> <p>10:30 am Fellowship Time</p> <p>11:00 am Sunday School</p> <p>6:00 pm MUM Activity</p>	<p>9</p> <p>3:30 pm - 9:00 pm BDM Christmas Party in FH</p>	<p>10</p> <p>9:30 am Bible Study</p> <p>6:30 pm Good Grief</p>	<p>11</p> <p>9:00 am Ladies Aid Quilting</p> <p>1:00 pm Prayer Shawl Ministry</p> <p>5:45 pm - 7:30 pm ReCharge</p> <p>6:15 pm Virtual Bible Study</p> <p>6:30 pm Chancel Choir</p>	<p>12</p> <p>9:00 am Bulletin Submission Deadline</p> <p>9:00 am Breakfast Fellowship</p> <p>10:00 am - 12:00 pm J O Y Christmas Party</p> <p>6:00 pm Fellowship Hall Reserved</p> <p>6:30 pm - 8:30 pm Knitting Group in Parlor</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>15</p> <p>9:25 am Worship</p> <p>10:30 am Sunday School</p> <p>11:45 am Deacon Prayer Gathering</p> <p>1:00 pm Newsletter Submission Deadline</p>	<p>16</p> <p>10:00 am Book Group</p>	<p>17</p> <p>9:30 am Bible Study</p> <p>6:00 pm Sisters of Faith</p>	<p>18</p> <p>9:00 am Ladies Aid Quilting</p> <p>1:00 pm Prayer Shawl Ministry</p> <p>6:15 pm Virtual Bible Study</p> <p>6:30 pm Chancel Choir</p>	<p>19</p> <p>9:00 am Bulletin Submission Deadline</p> <p>9:00 am Breakfast Fellowship</p> <p>6:30 pm - 8:30 pm Knitting Group in Parlor</p>	<p>20</p> <p>5:00 pm - 8:00 pm Rogers Wedding Rehearsal</p>	<p>21</p> <p>6:00 am Men's Fellowship Breakfast</p> <p>3:00 pm Rogers Wedding</p>
<p>22</p> <p>9:25 am Worship</p> <p>10:30 am Sunday School</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Office Closed</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Office Closed</p> <p>9:30 am Bible Study</p> <p>7:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Office Closed</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Office Closed</p> <p>9:00 am Breakfast Fellowship</p> <p>6:30 pm - 8:30 pm Knitting Group in Parlor</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Office Closed</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29</p> <p>9:25 am Worship</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>9:30 am Bible Study</p>	<p>1</p> <p>Office Closed</p> <p>9:00 am Ladies Aid Quilting</p> <p>1:00 pm Prayer Shawl Ministry</p> <p>6:15 pm Virtual Bible Study</p> <p>6:30 pm Chancel Choir</p>	<p>2</p> <p>9:00 am Bulletin Submission Deadline</p> <p>9:00 am Breakfast Fellowship</p> <p>6:30 pm - 8:30 pm Knitting Group in Parlor</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>

"The world can't save itself. That's the message of Christmas."
—Timothy Keller

"So sing! The song of rejoicing softens hard hearts."
—Hildegard of Bingen (12th century)


"It is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a child himself."
—Charles Dickens

"Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love."
—Hamilton Wright Mabie



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