



SOUNDINGS

December 2022

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Dec. 3

Hanging of the Greens

Dec. 4

Second Sunday in Advent

Advent Workshop: Make your own
Christmas Cards

Advent Bible Study, session 2

Last day for Giving Tree gifts

Dec. 10

Easton Municipal Band concert, 2pm

Dec. 11

Third Sunday in Advent

Christmas Pageant in worship

Brunch Bunch after worship

Dec. 13

Property Team meeting, 7pm

Dec. 18

Fourth Sunday in Advent

Christmas Joy offering received

Cookie Exchange Coffee Hour

Advent Bible Study, session 3

Dec. 20

Session, 7pm

Dec. 24

Christmas Eve service, 7pm

Dec. 25

Christmas Day service



HANGING OF THE GREENS

Everyone is invited to help with the Hanging of the Greens on **Saturday, December 3, from 9:30 am to 12 noon**. Come help beautify our church for the Advent and Christmas season!

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF EASTON

333 Spring Garden St.

Easton, PA 18042

610-253-3579

www.eastonfpc.org

A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

MEET THE CHRIST CHILD, AGAIN!

Won't you come to the manger again to meet the Christ child?

Open yourself to the light and joy of God-With-Us!

In the northern hemisphere this is the darkest time of the year. Is anyone happy to look outside at 5pm and feel like it's midnight? The lack of natural light is draining. As we observe the natural world, long have we compared this gloomy season with all that is lacking in our society. So on deary days and days when winter is wonderful, we long for more hope, peace, joy and love. We want more of the life and light-giving goodness of God, which was made so strikingly recognizable in Jesus. The season of Advent is about watching and waiting for more light. Jesus the Christ is after all the light of the world. So, as we remember Jesus as a teacher and guide to all that is good— we light candles, we sing carols, we draw together to commemorate and celebrate even in the darkest and coldest month of the year.

Our congregation is facing a difficult time. Finances are concerning. Our numbers in worship are low. And yet the faithful who remain are joyfully worshipping, serving our neighbors, caring for one another, and listening carefully to what God has in store for our congregation next. Even in deary days, our faith shines brightly.

Advent is the perfect season to reacquaint ourselves with the Jesus we meet in scripture - a healer and teacher of compassion, a bold truth teller denouncing injustice, and the love of God born to bring light to the world. We gather together to experience the holy mystery and beauty of this season in worship, fellowship and service to neighbors!

I wish for you warmth and light, hope and peace, joy and love—these are the gifts of our good and gracious God every season.

Merry Christmas!

Pastor Stefanie

LEHR FUND

The Barbara and John Lehr Fund is a designated fund is only distributed to members. Are you a member going through a financial crisis? Please speak with our pastor Stefanie Muntzel or contact her at revstefaniefpce@gmail.com to see if the Lehr Fund could be a support to you.

SOME HOUSEKEEPING

- The church office will be closed on **Monday, December 26** in observance of Christmas.
- If you are the chair of a team or group, please let Jonathan, our office administrator, know when you are holding a meeting.

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

No-rehearsal! All Ages! Everyone Welcome!

Our spontaneous Christmas pageant will take place in worship on Dec 11th.

Please join us in worship, choose a costume, and come to the manger!

RSVP if you would like your child to have a specific costume set aside.



"We found our donkey!"

CONCERT SERIES

Our sanctuary was built in 1872. Consider all the prayers, both said and sung, lifted in our sacred place of worship. To celebrate our sanctuary and our congregation's love of community and music, we are hosting a concert series. Guest performers will offer their gifts of music. All concerts are free and open to the public. Invite your friends and neighbors!



***Join us for a concert of holiday music
performed by the Easton Municipal Band***

Saturday, December 10, 2:00pm

Admission is free!



CHOIR REHEARSALS

Chancel Choir rehearses on Wednesdays, 5:30-6:30pm.

The **Handbell Choir** rehearses on Wednesdays, 6:30-7:15pm.

No rehearsals on December 21 and December 28; have a blessed Christmas!

ONLINE WORSHIP CONTINUES

Our services are streamed live on our Facebook page - [EastonFPC](#) - at 10:30am Sunday. The recording of the live worship is posted each Sunday by 12:30pm- on our website: <https://eastonfpc.org/online-worship> and YouTube channel is [Easton First Presbyterian Church](#).

MISSION

GIVING TREE

The Deacons and Shawl Ministry are joining forces to help the County of Northampton Children, Youth and Families Division make wishes come true.

1. Please have any gifts you agreed to purchase for the families at church by **Sunday, December 4**.
2. DO NOT WRAP GIFTS, JUST TAG!

Questions? Call or email Susan Charlton, 610-253-5658, char4susan@rcn.com, Nancy Udut, 610-253-5455, naomiudut@yahoo.com

PASTA FOR PROJECT

Sunday, December 4 is Pasta Sunday!

On the first Sunday of each month, we collect pasta for ProJeCt of Easton's food pantry, and we welcome your donations of boxed, canned and microwaveable pasta. Peanut butter is also greatly appreciated. If you cannot make it to church on Sunday, you may drop off your donations at our church up until noon on Tuesday, December 6. Our thanks goes out to all who helped contribute 74 pounds in November. "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat." (Matt 25:35).

BLESSING BOX

The congregation has embraced this outreach mission 100%. We are so blessed to have the ability to share our blessings with others in Easton and neighboring areas. Every week has been covered by someone in the congregation or friend of the congregation over the past months. You may sign up to sponsor a week, filling the box on Sunday and Wednesday (or as needed). If you can't sponsor a full week, donations may be put in the Blessing Baskets in the Narthex and by back entrance door. You might ask, "Is it being used?" and the answer is "YES!" Easton is considered a "food desert" as there are no chain grocery stores within a mile or two. The Mission Team thanks everyone and please continue to prayer for the givers and the receivers.

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING



When we give to the Christmas Joy Offering, we share our love with the leaders of the Church – past, present and future.

50% of your gift provides assistance to current and retired church workers and their families in their time of need.

50% of your gift develops future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

The Christmas Joy Offering will be taken from November 27 through December 18. Envelopes will be by the offering box at the front of the sanctuary, or you can just write "Christmas Joy" in the memo line of your check. Thank you!



JOIN HANDS TO
SUPPORT CHILDREN
2022-23 FPCE MISSION FOCUS

**A.M.E.N. UPDATE ACTION – MEDITATION – EDUCATION – NEW HABITS
MISSION 22-23, JOINING HANDS TO SUPPORT CHILDREN**

The season of Advent and Christmas remind us that the hope of the world rested in a child. There can be no great endorsement for Christians to care about the well-being of children than this. God came into the world AS a child.

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government will be upon His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6

“While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” Luke 2:6-20

Action: Many of you have already taken a step to help a child this season. Our Deacons and Mission Team (Shawl Ministry) invited us to support children through the County of Northampton Children, Youth and Families Division through the Giving Tree.

Meditation: What does it mean to you that God would choose to come into the world as a vulnerable child? How does God invite you into an open-hearted relationship with the Christ-child this year?

Education: This division, **Children, Youth and Families (CYF)**, is responsible for planning and providing State mandated social services to dependent and abused children and youth in Northampton County. These services include activities designed to prevent neglect, abuse and exploitation and help overcome problems that result in dependency and abuse; provide services to families in their own homes which protect children from continued harm; provide temporary care in foster family homes or residential (24 hour) child care facilities for any child in need; reunite children and their families; provide a permanent, legally assured family for any child in temporary, substitute care who cannot be returned to his/her home; and provide court ordered care or supervision to alleged or adjudicated dependent or abused children.

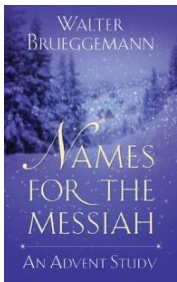
New Habit: How can you capture and experience the wonder of this season as if seeing it through the eyes of a child? What is a thoughtful practice you could do each week this season? Visit <https://www.crosswalk.com/special-coverage/christmas-and-advent/15-fun-advent-practices-your-family-can-adopt-this-season> for some ideas.

CALLING ALL CROCHETERS AND KNITTERS!

We are up and running once again! Although we will not be meeting formally, we will continue to create items for those in need at our own convenience and disperse via the church. We hope to have enough children's items for the holidays and adult hats and scarves for the cold weather. Needles, patterns and yarn are available at church, contact Lois Shoemaker (loisshoe@gmail.com) or Nancy Udut (naomiudut@yahoo.com) for pickup or any questions. Get those needles and hooks clicking!

FAITH FORMATION AND FELLOWSHIP

ADVENT BIBLE STUDY



Our Advent Bible Study will use *Names for the Messiah* by Walter Brueggemann as our guide. In Isaiah 9:6, a divine utterance is given to us using four royal titles - Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace. *Names for the Messiah* ponders each title and how the people understood it then, how Jesus did or did not fulfill the title, and how Christians interpret Jesus as representative of that title. We will meet after special events or coffee hour on **December 4 and 18, January 1 and 8**. All are welcome!

BRUNCH BUNCH

The Brunch Bunch will be going to the Olive Garden, 50 Kunkel Drive in Easton, on **December 11**. Please let Ruthann Arras know by Friday, December 9 if you plan to attend. All are welcome!

COOKIE EXCHANGE



Would you be willing to bring a dozen (or two) cookies to share at coffee hour on Dec 18?

Everyone is asked to bring a box of cookies for our blessing box. We will wrap them and put them in the Blessing Box each day as we approach Christmas.

Bakers, please rsvp to office@eastonfpc.org by December 16th at noon. Email the office a copy of the recipe if you'd like to share an especially good recipe.

MEETINGS

The **Property Team** will meet on **Tuesday, December 13 at 7:00pm**.

Session will meet at the church and by zoom on **Tuesday, December 20 at 7:00pm**.

If you are unable to attend a meeting, please contact the church office to let us know. Thank you!

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Ruthann Arras
Sherri Moki
- 2 Connie Cain
Donna Van Norman
- 6 Jim Van Norman
- 9 Ella Campbell-Becker
Natalie Hoff
- 10 Elizabeth Campbell
- 11 Sybil Akpor-Mensah
Cathy Burnet
- 15 Nick Cordaro
- 19 Amy Hilliard
- 25 RoseMarie Leone
- 27 Dave Foster



PRAYERS

We pray for...

Members addressing ongoing medical concerns: especially Barry Fugere; Ella Campbell-Becker; Peg and Larry Opthof; and Michelle Dicker.

The family and friends of Loretta "Lori" Young who passed away on Saturday, November 19.

Fran and Joel Dean. Fran has moved to a memory care facility and is doing well.

Tom Finnimore Jr., friend of Larry and Peg Opthof, who is in need of a liver transplant.

The family and friends of George Wesley Skinner, a dear friend of Darcel Hayes-Bridges, who passed away in October.

Susan Mackay's brother, Richard Barranger, who is in the hospital in Tom's River.

Robin Mathias at the Lehigh Presbytery who is home from the hospital.

All those who live with dementia and their care givers.

For neighbors near and far recovering from natural disasters and extreme weather.

Peace in our world, especially places of war and conflict.

Victims of gun violence and acts of hate.

Those who suffer from mental illness.

For injustice in our nation and world, that people of goodwill might work together for the greater good.

All who grieve for the loss of loved ones.

Prayers can be sent to office@eastonfpc.org, please include "prayer list" in the subject line.



ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS 2022

ADVENT 2022: MEET THE CHRIST CHILD, AGAIN!

Won't you come to the manger and open your heart once again to the Christ child? Who Jesus was and is has been misrepresented by many voices in our society. Advent is the perfect season to reacquaint ourselves with the Jesus we meet in scripture - a healer and teacher of compassion, a bold truth teller denouncing injustice, and the love of God born to bring light to the world. Experience the holy mystery and beauty of this season in worship, fellowship and service.

Saturday, December 3 – Hanging of the Greens

Helpers are needed to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas. We'll meet at 9:30 and work until 12:00pm; come for an hour or for the morning!

Sunday, December 4 – Second Sunday in Advent, Communion Sunday

Coffee hour and Advent Workshop: Christmas card making!
Deadline for donating gifts for our Giving Tree Gift Project!

Saturday, December 10 – Christmas Concert

Invite your friends, family, and neighbors for this FREE concert in our sanctuary. The Easton Municipal Band will play seasonal favorites starting at 2:00pm!

Sunday, December 11 – Third Sunday in Advent

Spontaneous and interactive pageant in worship. All are invited to participate!

Sunday, December 18 – Fourth Sunday in Advent

Joyful service with bells and special music!
We will receive the Christmas Joy Offering.
Cookie Exchange Coffee Hour- bring your best Christmas cookies, favorite recipes and a few boxes of store bought cookies which we will wrap and leave in the Blessing Box.

Saturday, December 24 – Christmas Eve

A Service of Lessons and Carols at 7:00pm. Special music begins at 6:45pm.
We will be blessed with a quartet of flutes for this holy service of carols and candlelight.

Sunday, December 25 – Christmas Day

A Cozy Christmas service at 10:30am, with many Christmas carols.



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

Each year, our sanctuary is beautifully decorated for Advent and Christmas. If you would like to sponsor a poinsettia, please fill out the form below and turn it into the church office by Friday, December 16. The suggested donation is \$10.00; if you would like to take the poinsettia home after Christmas Eve, please indicate that below.

Name: _____

Phone/Email: _____

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

Amount enclosed: _____

Yes, I'd like to take the poinsettia home: _____



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