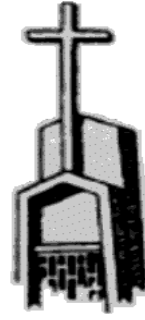


Church of the Brethren
301 Gale Street
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
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The DECEMBER 2025
C A R I L L O N

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**Volume 25
Number 12**



December Worship Themes

An Advent Sermon Series Based on Luke 1-2

December 7: *Second Sunday of Advent* "Partnering with God"

Worship Theme: The story of the virginal conception reminds us that God works with us to do great things in the world.

Scripture: Luke 1:26-38

December 14: *Third Sunday of Advent* "Get Ready to Be Amazed!"

Worship Theme: The people's amazement in the naming of John the Baptist invites us to be amazed at what God is doing in the world.

Scripture: Luke 1:57-66

December 21: *Fourth Sunday of Advent* "Pathways to Praise"

Worship Theme: Zechariah's prophetic words remind us of many reasons we have to praise God.

Scripture: Luke 1:67-80

December 28: Rev. Dr. John Yeatts (guest speaker)

Be still, and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations; I am exalted in the earth.

-Psalm 46:10 (NRSVue)

The Christmas season is a very busy time of year. There are presents to buy, cards to send, cookies to bake, church services to attend, and travel plans to make. For many people, this is at the same time both exciting and exhausting. In the hustle and bustle of all there is to *do*, it is sometimes difficult to find space to just *be*.

Let me encourage you during this season of Advent to be intentional about finding ways to slow down and reflect on the meaning of Christmas. Consider reading the first two chapters of the Gospel of Luke. What part of the Christmas story resonates most deeply with you? What new insights emerge? What might God be saying to you this holiday season through the Scriptures you read, the songs you hear, and the silence you cultivate?

Whether you find the holidays difficult or delightful, they provide each of us with special opportunities to lean into God and to listen as we celebrate the birth of Jesus. God has done great things for us, and God continues to do great things in our world, in our church, and in our lives.

I look forward to worshipping with you in the coming weeks as we encounter God in many and various ways on our journey toward Christmas. May we all have eyes to see the goodness of God this holiday season.

Pastor Eric

Puzzle!

The Christmas Story

Unscramble each set of letters to form a word from the Christmas story. One letter in each set doesn't belong. Write each extra letter below, on the line above the correct number. Then answer the question: What did we all receive at Christmas?

- (1) TGLBEHHEME _____
- (2) NEAGLO _____
- (3) NRMEDAG _____
- (4) ODEKSNY _____
- (5) AMGYZ _____
- (6) OHESJIP _____
- (7) EFJSUS _____
- (8) ITEENMSW _____
- (9) SPHHDSREEO _____
- (10) EMCFAL _____
- (11) TLSRA _____
- (12) CSSNUEO _____
- (13) HEVSPE _____
- (14) ENIN _____



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
9 10 11 12 13 14

Answers: Bethlehem (G), Angel (O), Manger (D), Donkey (S), Mary (G), Joseph (I), Jesus (F), Wise men (T), Shepherds (O), Camel (F), Star (L), Census (O), Sheep (V), Inn (E), God's gift of love



On **Wednesday evening, December 17th at 7:00 p.m.**, we will hold a Blue Christmas Service (sometimes also referred to as a Longest Night service). This service will include songs, readings, special music, silence, and candle lighting. As described on the Small Church Ministry website:

"For many, Christmas is not 'The Most Wonderful Time of the Year' (as the song goes). A Blue Christmas service can offer some healing and hope.

The idea behind the Blue Christmas service is to create space for the acknowledgment of the heaviness often carried during this season, as well as offering the hope that Jesus gives.

Our society has become one of masking emotions that are sometimes considered negative. The Bible clearly acknowledges, celebrates, and makes space for pain, struggle, hardship, and tears—and so should we. . . .

This Blue service is a beautiful way to make space during the Advent season for those suffering any kind of loss—whether the loss of a person, a dream, finances, stability, health, or more."



On **Wednesday evening, December 24th at 7:00 p.m.**, we will hold a Christmas Eve Candlelight Service.

"Sometimes the Best Gift Comes in the Smallest Package"

This evening will include lessons and carols, providing an opportunity to experience the Christmas story through Scripture and song and a special candlelight service.

CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING

Because local food banks are struggling more than ever to meet the needs of clients, due to cuts in Medicaid and SNAP benefits, the Witness Team has chosen Central Penn Food Bank to be our **Christmas Eve Offering** recipient.

Winter Weather Cancellation Policy

In the event that weather conditions require a cancellation of services or activities at the church, an effort will be made to communicate that to members and friends through the email list, on the church's Facebook page, and through local media (television and radio). If you do not receive information from any of those sources and still have questions, you may contact Pastor Eric by email at pastor@mechanicsburgcob.org or call 717-585-5994. Of course, even if services or activities are not cancelled, please do not attempt to come if you do not feel safe.



**The Church Office will be CLOSED
on**

Thursday, December 25th

Friday, December 26th

Wednesday, January 1st



8/24

56 Erford Road
Camp Hill, PA 17011
(717) 737-1100
www.familypromisehcr.org

"A community response for homeless families"

Day Center Needs

Printer Paper
Trash Bags(not Good Sense)

Swiffer Mop Pads

Swiffer Wet Jet Solution

Febreze
Dish soap
Baby Wipes
Shampoo
Shaving Cream
AA and AAA Batteries
Zip Loc Bags, Foil, Plastic wrap
Queen Inflatable Mattress
Clorox Wipes

Gift cards to Sheetz, Giant, Walmart- These help families with gas to go to work, food beyond what we provide here, and medicine.

*For our updated immediate
needs go to our
Amazon Wish List.*



Thank you to our Family Promise Volunteers!

**Our next Family Promise Host Week is
January 25 – 31, 2026**

How We Help

Family Promise of Harrisburg Capital Region helps families experiencing homelessness or in danger of becoming homeless.

Families stay together!

Rotational Shelter

A network of congregations which provide overnight lodging, hospitality, and van transportation for families. (For families with at least one child under 18 yr.)

Day Center

Our house in Camp Hill, where families in the shelter receive help with daily needs and work on goals.

Road to Success*

A United Way of the Capital Region program which assists with employment, childcare, uniforms, training and more. *Certain Zip Codes

Heads Up

Mental health services provided for those who have experienced homelessness.

Catch Up

Financial assistance for families facing eviction to stay in their housing (For families with children under 18 yr)

Diaper Program

Provide diapers through the Health Steps Diaper Bank twice a month.

Family Promise of Harrisburg Capital Region
56 Erford Rd., Camp Hill
717-737-1100

To apply for these programs or for more information:

---www.familypromisehcr.org, "need help" tab--
www.familypromise.org, "need help" tab.

POINSETTIA ORDERS DUE DECEMBER 3rd.

It's time to think about ordering your poinsettia plants for Advent. **Poinsettia Sunday is December 21st**, when the flowers will be displayed as we honor and/or to remember our loved ones. Pick up arrangements will be announced.



If you would like to order one or more poinsettias, place your completed order form in a brown envelope **w/ payment** in the box provided in the **NARTHEX** by the office window.

CONTACT Drinda Hock with any questions.

POINSETTIA ORDER FORM

(Order Deadline: **Wednesday, DECEMBER 3rd**)

The Poinsettias are **RED** or **WHITE** – 6 ½" pots – 5+ blooms
Cost is \$10.00 each (Circle Color Choice below)

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

Your Name _____

Please use the Envelopes provided for payment and mark "For Poinsettias" on it. Place your order form With Payment in the basket provided.

Number ordered _____ **RED** or **WHITE** Amount Paid _____
(Circle One)



The Mechanicsburg congregation will kick off its **100th Anniversary (1926-2026) Celebration on Sunday, December 7, 2025**, with carol singing at the Union Church building, 51 East Main Street,

Mechanicsburg. This small structure was erected in 1827 and accommodated the worship services of several denominations at various times during the 19th and early 20th century. Brethren in the Mechanicsburg area worshiped at this site before separating from the Lower Cumberland congregation in 1926. Since the building seats only about 40 people, folks are invited to drop in over a 90-minute period between 2:00-3:30 p.m. on December 7. Steve Vinson, Warren Eshbach and other MCOB instrumentalists will accompany the singing.



Looking for the Perfect Gifts?

This advent season, Dec. 1-24, the Witness Team is once again inviting the congregation to support a worthy charity. New Community Project

(www.newcommunityproject.info) is the nonprofit

designated this year. Launched in August 2003 by David

Radcliff, formerly of the Church of the Brethren's World Programs Office, NCP is all about giving people good options — from girls wanting to go to school rather than a sweatshop, to women looking for skills training to help them reach their potential, to planting trees and protecting forests to give nature — and us — a chance to thrive.

HOW DO I DONATE?


Please place checks written to "New Community Project" in the wooden box beside the Christmas tree near the coat rack in the narthex.

Cash may also be placed in the box. To donate online, go to

www.newcommunityproject.info/donate-funds.

Donations will be accepted until Dec. 31, then sent to NCP. Any gifts received after Dec. 31 will go to the Mechanicsburg Church of the Brethren General Fund.

Carlisle Truck Stop Ministry Cookie Collection



**Please use the signup sheet
near the office window.**


Bakers should wear gloves (masks are optional) while preparing and packaging cookies, and we ask that you **seal** the bags with staples, bows, etc. Place **5 or 6 cookies** in a plastic 'zip-lock' bag and then into a paper lunch bag, which may be decorated. (Christmas card fronts stapled to the bags are great!) We encourage you to enclose a friendly note, Bible verse, or tract.

Each bag should have either your church information or the Truck Stop Ministry contact information attached.

Pre-printed labels are available in the church office.

Cookies should be at the church by December 7 and then will be delivered to Carlisle.

Questions to Sherri Kimmel or Janet Zeiters.




CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL **CAMP** *Eder*

DECEMBER 12TH & 13TH 5-9PM

COME JOIN US FOR AN EVENING OF FAMILY FESTIVE FUN! THE WOODS WILL BE ILLUMINATED WITH LOTS AND LOTS OF CHRISTMAS LIGHTS, WARM FIRES, HOT COCOA AND CHILDREN ACTIVITIES WILL BE HAPPENING EACH NIGHT. THIS IS A BEAUTIFUL FESTIVAL YOU MOST CERTAINLY WILL NOT WANT TO MISS!

- CHRISTMAS LIGHTS & MUSIC
- HAY RIDES FRIDAY AND SATURDAY NIGHT 5-9PM
- TREE DECORATING CONTEST
- DELICIOUS TURKEY DINNER & SOUP (PER DONATION)
- LUMINARY GARDEN (HONORING OUR LOVED ONES)
 - DECORATED TREES
- WARM DRINKS AND LOTS OF COOKIES (FREE)
 - BAKE SALE
 - KID'S ACTIVITIES
- COZY FIRES & S'MORES
- LIVE MUSIC

"AND THIS IS THE TESTIMONY: GOD HAS GIVEN US ETERNAL LIFE, AND THIS LIFE IS IN HIS SON." – JOHN 1:5-11

WWW.CAMPEDER.ORG 717-642-8256
914 MT HOPE RD. FAIRFIELD, PA 17320



Please join us after worship on **Sunday, December 14th**, for our **Annual Christmas Luncheon**.

If attending, please sign the sheet in the Narthex as we need an accurate count, because due to popular demand, we are bringing back the spiral cut hams.

We ask attendees to consider bringing a side dish and/or Christmas cookies. Cookies will be served for dessert and also bagged to distribute during our neighborhood caroling following the meal.

We hope many of you can stay after the meal to sing Christmas carols along with the MCOB Ensemble in the neighborhood around our church. This event, and the cookies we deliver each year are a well-received part of our outreach efforts.



Third Annual MCOB Neighborhood Christmas Caroling
(weather permitting)

Lunch & Learn Fellowship
Wednesday,
December 17th at
11:30 a.m.

J. Pierpoint

Dash-ing through the snow, In a one-horse o - pen sleigh; While

way; Bells on bob-tail ring;

Kirk Wise, a talented musician, will return to sing us into the holidays.

Oh! what fun it is to ride in a

one-horse o - pen sleigh... Jin-gle bells! Jin-gle bells! Jin-gle all the way,

Oh! what fun it is to ride in a one-horse o - pen sleigh!

2

"Faithful Feet" raise nearly \$41,000 to feed the poor!

Nearly **400** neighbors let their feet witness to their compassion for the needy as they walked and jogged in the **2025 Mechanicsburg/West Shore 5K CROP Hunger Walk**, held October 19th at Memorial Park in Mechanicsburg.

Together they raised **\$40,706** with every penny serving the poor locally through **New Hope Ministries** and **Mechanicsburg Area Meals on Wheels** and globally through **Church World Service**.

CONGRATULATIONS walkers & sponsors!

Mechanicsburg Church of the Brethren raised \$1,815!
A special Thank You to our Team Captain, Peggy Brechbiel, and to our walkers/runners: Oceana, Sherri, Peggy, Elisa, Lois, Margie, Harvey, Pastor Eric, and Nathan.

Well Done!!



Mechanicsburg Church of the Brethren



Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Church World Service (CWS) Emergency Clean Up Buckets!



Thank you for your generous contributions to New Hope Ministries over the past several months.

MCOB has donated the following:

DATE	DESCRIPTION	PANTRY WEIGHT
Sept. 9	Food	58 lbs.
Oct. 7	Food	45 lbs.
Oct. 18	Food	142 lbs.
Oct. 21	Thanksgiving Food	50 lbs.
Oct. 27	Thanksgiving Food	36 lbs.
Nov. 4	Food	121 lbs.
Nov. 6	Thanksgiving Food	81 lbs.
	TOTAL	533 lbs.

December

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
	1 Fellowship Hall Reserved 5/9 p.m. (SJS Basketball)	2 Fellowship Hall Reserved 6/8 p.m. (John) CE Team Meeting 7:30 p.m. (Zoom)	3 Quilting 9 a.m. Bible Study 9 a.m. (Zoom) Fellowship Hall Reserved 5/9 p.m. (SJS Basketball)	4 Grief Support Group 1 p.m. (Library) Youth Rooms Reserved 5:30/9 p.m. (Thrive)	5	6
7 2nd Sunday of Advent Food for New Hope Sunday School 9 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m. Carol Sing at Union Church 2/3:30 p.m.	8 Knitting Group 1 p.m. (Library) Fellowship Hall Reserved 5/9 p.m. (SJS Basketball)	8 Men's Breakfast 9 a.m. (Brothers Rest.) Executive Meeting 7 p.m. Fellowship Hall Reserved 6/8 p.m. (John)	10 Quilting 9 a.m. Bible Study 9 a.m. (Zoom) Fellowship Hall Reserved 5/9 p.m. (SJS Basketball)	11	12 Camp Eder Christmas Tree Festival 	13 Camp Eder Christmas Tree Festival 
14 3rd Sunday of Advent COB Advent Offering Sunday School 9 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m. Christmas Luncheon & Caroling after worship	15 January Newsletter Deadline Fellowship Hall Reserved 5/9 p.m. (SJS Basketball)	16 Caregivers Support Group 1 p.m. (Library) Fellowship Hall Reserved 6/8 p.m. (John)	17 Quilting 9 a.m. Lunch & Learn Fellowship 11:30 a.m. Blue Christmas Service 7 p.m.	18	19	20
21 4th Sunday of Advent Donations for Family Promise Sunday School 9 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m.	22	23 Fellowship Hall Reserved 6/8 p.m. (John)	24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7 p.m. 	25 Church Office Closed 	26 Church Office Closed	27
28 My 2 Cents Worth Collection Sunday School 9 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m.	29	30 Fellowship Hall Reserved 6/8 p.m. (John)	31 Quilting 9 a.m. Fellowship Hall Reserved 5/9 p.m. (SJS Basketball)			

2025