

Thanksgiving to Christmas: A Very Special Time of Year

For as long as I can remember, my extended family has celebrated Thanksgiving and Christmas together. We have our own immediate family celebrations to be sure, but we gather each night on Thanksgiving and Christmas to celebrate the holidays together. Many, many special memories were formed in my childhood from these gatherings. Special relatives and grandparents loved me and accepted me and we always shared time with one another. There is just something about being together. I guess it all started when someone thought it was important enough to invite the family together. These originators of the family tradition are gone now, but the next generation felt it important to continue. I am so glad they do!

I gave a sermon a few weeks ago on the importance of saying "thank you." Thanksgiving is a very important holiday for me. I was taught to say please and thank you. It is kind of a shame that we only have one day out of the year to officially give thanks. I am sure you have a lot to be thankful for; don't you?

Advent and Christmas have always been part of my life because my parents raised me in a loving, Christian home. They took me to church and December was always a favorite time of year for me. I fondly remember going to Christmas Eve service at church, then coming home where dad would read the Christmas story from Luke 2. This was always after midnight, on Christmas Day before we went to bed. Dad always read the story from the King James Version and I still recall some of the phrases in the King's English.

I also fondly remember gathering for Christmas dinner around our table at home. Mom and dad prepared the turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, and all the trimmings. Then, after we filled ourselves with the delicious food and shared in conversation, a cake was brought out and we sang happy birthday to Jesus. We still do this every year.

I know I am extremely fortunate to have such a loving and special family. They brought me up right and taught me the importance of family time and Christian traditions. I am grateful for my parents, grandparents, and all my relatives who have gathered each year at this time. We created so many special memories together. I miss many of them now because so many are gone. Sometimes as I play the Christmas carols a tear comes to my eye as I remember them.

But the family tradition continues and for this I am glad. We celebrate the birth of Jesus, who came into the world to save us.

Yes, indeed, this is a very special time of year!



Bob Shank

Daily Scripture Readings

December 1

Luke 1

December 2

Luke 2

December 3

Luke 3

December 4

Luke 4

December 5

Luke 5

December 6

Luke 6

December 7

Luke 7

December 8

Luke 8

December 9

Luke 9

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December 19

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December 21

Luke 21

December 22

Luke 22

December 23

Luke 23

December 24

Luke 24

December 25

Matthew 1

December 26

Matthew 2

December 27

Matthew 3

December 28

Matthew 4

December 29

Matthew 5

December 30

Matthew 6

December 31

Matthew 7

Gather! Grow! Make a Difference!



To Serve You in December

Greeters 8:30

11:00

1 Joyce & Gerald Neil
8 Marti H.
15 Joanne Reed
22 Pam & Mike Hendrix
29 Beth Armitage

Ushers 8:30

DeAnn Harris
Kay Bucci
Carol Decker
Pam Price

11:00

Mike Weaver

Counters

Boyd Butz and Claribel Sebring

Altar Guild

Sue Weitzmann and Joanne Reed

Soup Kitchen

1 Feeding Families - Diane & Group
8 GUMC - Tom Odenwelder
15 West End Food Pantry - Karena Thek
22 Ladles of Love - Nancy Fisch
29



OUR CHURCH STAFF:

Ministers	Everyone
Pastors	Bob Shank & Ted Good
Pastor Emeritus	Tom Anderman
Church Secretary	Jackie Herrero
Choir Director	David Lantz
Organist	Marti Lantz
Youth Leader	
Handbell Director	Lynn Seip
Cherub Choir Director	Kim Kopec
Custodian	Craig Banner

OUR CHURCH LEADERS:

Daniel's Dream Team

Chairperson, Cathy Doane

catdoane9845@gmail.com

Worship

Chairperson, Pastor Bob Shank

bobshank@epix.net

Property & Building

Chairperson, Boyd Butz

Servant Resource Team

Chairperson, Bill Weitzmann

weitzman@uplink.net

Stewardship

Chairperson, Paul Edinger

paul.edinger@stroudsburgumc.com

Missions

Chairpersons, Ruth Weber & Kathy Cook

Membership & Evangelism

Chairperson, Peggy Stewart

bpstewart59@gmail.com

Lay Leader

Beryl Hellgren

bykoh10@yahoo.com

Audio Visual Assistant

Beth Armitage

**Stroudsburg United Methodist
volunteer hours total \$4,806.27**



Stroudsburg United Methodist Church (SUMC) hosted Family Promise's families from Sunday, Nov. 3 through Saturday, Nov. 9, hosting four families totaling 15 individuals, and graciously provided 101 nights of shelter.

The week's visit, under the coordination of Kathy Cook and volunteers, cooked and served 75 meals. Stroudsburg United Methodist also provided 15 volunteers who gave a total of 189 hours of volunteer service.

The Independent Sector places a value of \$25.43 on each volunteer hour. In all, Stroudsburg United Methodist Church saved Family Promise \$4,806.27, which Family Promise would have had to pay if church volunteers were unable to assist.

Family Promise of Monroe County, now in its 12th year, partners with local congregations in order to provide emergency shelter to children and their families. As a host church, SUMC also provides overnight shelter and meals to our families.

We are so grateful for your ongoing generosity and kindness.
Thank you,
Family Promise Staff



The Membership & Evangelism Team would like to thank everyone who completed a Service Opportunity Survey and handed it in last month. If you have not yet had a chance to complete one, they were included in the October and November newsletters and can also be found on the radiators at the back of the sanctuary. Please take a few moments and complete one and put it in the offering plate or mail it in to the church office, attention to M&E.





This year's Mission's Christmas tree will benefit clients of Oasis of Love, the local food pantry here in Stroudsburg. Following is a list of needed items. Please visit the Christmas tree in the Fellowship Room, choose an ornament, bring a gift back to church and place under/near the tree. If you have any questions, please speak with a member of Missions or call the church office.

Gifts for boys:

- Hot wheels or similar cars
- Race track sets
- Action figures such as Star Wars
- Train set
- Art supplies
- Tool play sets
- Baseball play sets

Gifts for girls:

- Barbie dolls
- Girls' games
- Doll house
- Play kitchen toys

Gifts for young boys and girls:

- Board games
- Cologne sets
- Makeup sets

Families:

- Supermarket gift cards - WalMart, Giant, ShopRite
- Shampoo sets
- Scarves/gloves
- Food baskets

Thank you to everyone who donated items to fill the Christmas totes. Filled totes will be distributed to residents in area nursing homes.

**December Events at SUMC -
We would love to have you join us!**

Second Saturday Supper

Christmas Party
Saturday, December 14, 2019
5:30 pm



Choir Christmas Cantata

Sunday, December 15, 2019
10:00 am

Pizza with Santa

Saturday, December 21, 2019
6:00 pm-8:00 pm
(separate flyer with all details in this Courier)



Christmas Eve

Candlelight Services
December 24 @ 7:30 pm &
11:00 pm (with communion)

The holidays are fast
approaching!

Kick off your holiday season here with us
at Stroudsburg UMC

PIZZA WITH SANTA!

Saturday, December 21, 2019

547 Main Street, Stroudsburg, PA

6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

\$5.00 admission (2 slices of pizza and soft drink)

(Children under 5 are free)

Enjoy pizza, caroling, photos with Santa
and other Christmas activities

For more information on this event and upcoming
events, please like our Facebook page:

Facebook.com/StroudsburgUMC

Please RSVP so we have an idea how many to plan for

Church Office - 570-421-6020

Email: jackieherrero@stroudsburgumc.com





On Sunday, December 1, we will have our First Sunday in Advent service; Pastor Margie will be preaching because Pastor Bob will be on vacation. We hope to kick-off with a Bring a Friend Sunday; please invite your friends to join us for worship and a host of other opportunities, throughout the Advent Season. Since it is the first Sunday of the month; we will celebrate with Holy Communion. We will have a flyer that features all of the special chances for our church family and other people to join with us. Research shows that church growth works more fully when people are invited by church members, not necessarily the minister. This year will be another wonderful time to share our faith with one another and others; let us close out 2019 with a banner time together.



The Servant Resource Team invites you to contribute to the annual Staff Christmas Gift Box for our employees here at SUMC to show appreciation to them at this time of year. The box is placed at the back of the sanctuary on Sunday, December 1 (the first Sunday in Advent), and remains in the back of the sanctuary until December 29.
Thank you!

Heart and Hand Ministries



Barbour County, WV

Dear Stradsburg UMC,

Thanks for your work on Earl's home this summer. You covered projects from the roof to the dirt below the house and a lot in between. You guys are willing to take on whatever comes your way and serve with joy. You're much appreciated.

In Peace

Mike Miller

The above acknowledgement comes from Mike Miller at Heart & House in Philippi, West Virginia - the destination of this past July's Mission Trip. Plans are in the works for next year's Mission Trip. If you're interested in attending or have questions, please speak with Pastor Bob, Rick Felch or Peggy Stewart.



Birthdays of the Month

December Birthdays

1	Tim Stewart
5	Carol Romansky
11	Emily Vail
18	Alex Herrero
18	Carole Vuchak
20	Lydia Shank
20	James Shank
20	Scott Sebring
23	Robin Farrow
28	Rose Schwedler
28	Cindy Transue
31	Crista Kopec

If you would like a card
on your special day,
please call the church office -
570-421-6020.

Welcome!

The Servant Resource Team has hired a new
custodian - Craig Banner.

Craig started his duties earlier this month.
If you haven't already done so, please give Craig
a warm welcome when you see him working in
and around the church.



Shoe Drive Fundraiser

Update:

Check Received

We have received a check in the amount of
\$890.40 for the shoe drive we held this past
August - October. Since we were so close to our
goal, Funds2Orgs Group did not withhold the
\$250.00 fee from our total. The money raised
will be put toward the remaining Bell Tower
Repair bill. Thank you again to everyone who
helped in ANY way with the shoe drive
fundraiser!

Membership & Evangelism invites everyone to our December



Second Saturday Supper

*Please join us for a
Christmas Party!
December 14th at 5:30 pm*

Bring a covered dish to share and please come in holiday attire
(festive red or holiday green).

Also, if possible, bring canned or non-perishable foods to
donate to the Oasis of Love food pantry.

The festivities will include a **Cookie Exchange!**
Bring 2 dozen of your favorite cookie and go home
with 2 dozen assorted cookies.



(Don't stress if you don't bake, we'll take store bought cookies also!)

As usual, we'll provide: Plates, utensils, and beverages

Help us plan: Please sign up in the back of the sanctuary or call
the church office (570-421-6020) and let us know how many
will be coming and what type of dish you plan to bring.

Questions?? Contact Peggy Stewart
570-350-8989 or bpstewart59@gmail.com

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH

9 NORTH 9TH STREET
STROUDSBURG, PA 18360
PHONE: 570-460-0307 • E-MAIL: krismont174@gmail.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 14, 2019

A Community Musical Service of Hope and Healing

STROUDSBURG, PA – “The Longest Night – A Light in the Darkness: A Musical Service Offering Hope to Those in Deepest Need,” will be presented Friday, December 20 at 7:30 PM at St. John Lutheran Church, 9 N. 9th Street, Stroudsburg, PA. The service will include a 50-plus voice choir of community singers directed by Bob Riday and accompanied by Judy Munoz, piano, and area instrumentalists. Scriptures, readings and prayers will be led by area clergy.

The choir will perform choral selections by Pepper Choplin, Joel Raney, Heather Sorenson, Robert Sterling and others. During this season of cheerful decorations, sparkling lights and festive music, there are many for whom this time is a tearful reminder of the harshness of life: the heaviness of grief, the challenges of illness and aging, the loss of a treasured relationship, and daily struggles with finances and loneliness. “The Longest Night” is a worship experience that encourages those going through difficult times during the holidays.

“Following the success of the 2018 service, we were overwhelmed by the tremendous a need for a service of healing in the community during the holiday season. Through music, scripture and prayer, we hope to bring light into darkness and offer hope to those who are hurting,” explains Bob Riday.

Parking is available behind St. John Lutheran church, along 9th Street, behind St. Luke’s Catholic Church, and in the Joseph J. Pula Funeral home lot.

Information about the service can be obtained by contacting Krista Montgomery at krismont174@gmail.com or calling 570-460-0307.

#

The Longest Night

A Light in the Darkness:

*A musical service offering hope for those in
deepest need*



Directed by Bob Riday

**With choir, piano, and
instrumental ensemble**

Friday, December 20, 2019 at 7:30 PM

St. John Lutheran Church, 9 N. 9th Street, Stroudsburg

Donations accepted to benefit Monroe Country Hospice House

For more information, call 570-460-3816 or 570-460-0307

Micah 5:2

"But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity."

Merry Christmas from your Property & Building Committee.

SuperHeat has completed the latest repairs of our boiler system at a cost of \$5820. Pastor Bob's office is now a comfortable and controlled temperature room. Our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to Paul Taylor, President of SuperHeat, He graciously directed some parts of the boiler be corrected and modified to operate and be maintained more safely at no cost to the church. Our new custodian will help with the routine monitoring of the boiler function.

The torrential downpours in November resulted in some leaks in the parish hall. Upon investigation, the new roof was fine but these leaks were the result of cracked, decaying and missing mortar in the brick wall in conjunction with 100 year old, deteriorated copper gutters and downspouts. We are seeking bids for new gutters and mortar repair.

In an ongoing effort to provide more efficient security for our building and staff, we have contracted with Select Security to install new external door locks with a computer-controlled keypad entry system. Once installed, all physical keys will be turned in and each person requiring access to the building will have a unique code assigned. The program will allow for times, such as during church services or scheduled functions, where all doors will be unlocked. It will allow remote access so our secretary will not have to leave her office to open the door as well as alerting if there are power outages. To prepare for the door access system, Hartmann Electric has been contracted to install outlets and lighted EXIT signs above the doors on December 4.

After installing LED lights in the sanctuary chandeliers, the older dimmers were not compatible. After the resulting strobe festival and blackout, our thanks to Rick Felch for contacting his electrician friend to come and correct the inherent problem.

We have not forgotten about our goal of a major kitchen and bathroom renovation. The architectural company will draw up the detailed plans required for permits and contractors for \$5800. In the meantime, we are still looking for someone to spearhead a Kitchen Cleaning Party. It definitely needs a deep cleaning, inside and out. If you can adopt just one area or one cabinet, it will go a long way. Let us know if you are interested and what you are going to tackle. Thanks!

As you can see, your Property & Building Committee is working hard to keep your church building healthy. This takes not only sweat equity but also money. If you are able, in addition to your regular giving to the general fund, please consider adding a donation to the right side of your envelope.

As always, we thank you for your patience, your contributions and your support. If you have any suggestions or wish to volunteer on a project, please feel free to reach out to any of us on the team.

HAVE A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Your Property and Building committee

Chairman: Boyd Butz

P&B Finance: Kevin Kopec

Secretary: Mike Seip

Committee Members: John Burrus, Dale Werkheiser, Jeremy Miller, Ray Singer, Dick Everitt

DECEMBER 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 First Sunday in Advent 8:30 AM Worship/Communion-Sanctuary 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:45 AM Sunday School Children Through Adults 11:00 AM Worship/Communion-Sanctuary 4:00 PM Soup Kitchen-Dining Room	2	3 6:30 PM Membership & Evangelism Meeting	4 12:00 PM Prayer and/or Quiet Reflection-Sanctuary 6:00 PM Cub Scouts	5 7:00 PM Scouts	6 Church Office Closed	7
8 Second Sunday in Advent 8:30 AM Worship-Sanctuary 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:45 AM Sunday School Children Through Adults 11:00 AM Worship/Sanctuary 4:00 PM Soup Kitchen-Dining Room	9 7:00 PM Digging Deeper Small Group-Conference Room	10 6:30 PM Property & Building Meeting	11 10:00 AM Bible Study-Lounge 12:00 PM Prayer and/or Quiet Reflection-Sanctuary 6:00 PM Cub Scouts	12 7:00 PM Scouts	13 Church Office Closed Family Promise Christmas Party	14 5:30 PM Second Saturday Supper-Christmas Party
15 Third Sunday in Advent 10:00 AM Worship-Choir Christmas Cantata 4:00 PM Soup Kitchen-Dining Room	16 7:00 PM Digging Deeper Small Group-Conference Room	17	18 10:00 AM Bible Study-Lounge 12:00 PM Prayer and/or Quiet Reflection-Sanctuary 6:00 PM Cub Scouts	19 7:00 PM Scouts	20 Church Office Closed	21 6:00 PM Pizza with Santa
22 Fourth Sunday in Advent 8:30 AM Worship-Sanctuary 9:15 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:45 AM Sunday School Children Through Adults 11:00 AM Worship/Sanctuary 4:00 PM Soup Kitchen-Dining Room	23	24 Church Office Closed 7:30 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 11:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with Communion	25 Merry Christmas!	26	27 Church Office Closed	28
29 8:30 AM Worship-Sanctuary 9:45 AM Sunday School Children Through Adults 11:00 AM Worship/Sanctuary 4:00 PM Soup Kitchen-Dining Room	30	31 Church Office Closed	1 Happy New Year!	2	3	4

STROUDSBURG UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
547 MAIN STREET
STROUDSBURG PA 18360
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT No. 122
Stroudsburg, PA

December 2019

