

THE BROTHER'S KEEPER
FIRST CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN—LIGONIER
December 2021—January



“THANKS GIVING IN DECEMBER!”

Before you say “He is a month behind,” hear me out! There is a very good reason the Thanksgiving celebration is near the end of November—and it isn’t just giving thanks for the harvest of the past growing season. I’m sure as we gobbled the gobbler, we shared many ways in which we are thankful. Family. Friends. Health. A nice home. A good Church family. A great neighborhood. Food on the table. A car in the garage. Your pet hamster ... The list could go on and on.



But, I would like to think that Thanksgiving is celebrated about a month before Christmas because it gives us time to reflect on the many ways we are thankful for the most precious Christmas gift one could imagine. The celebration of the birth of our Lord and Savior. True, we don’t know the exact day of the year in which Jesus was born, but that doesn’t matter nearly as much as knowing and celebrating the eternal nature of Jesus and His willingness to join us in the flesh. There has never been a birthday celebration that compares with December 25th.

And that celebration becomes even more precious as the years pass by. Why? Throughout His life and earthly ministry, we know of the goodness of Jesus. His perfect nature. His masterful teachings. And near the end of His earthly ministry, His willingness to give His all for us. And while that earthly ministry came to an end about 2,000 years ago, we are **THANKFUL TODAY AND EVERY DAY**, because of what that ministry means to us. Sure, we have the great teachings and the perfect example of Jesus, but we have a whole lot more. Because Jesus, that Baby in the manger, proved that He was who He said He was and He did what He said He would do—we have an eternal Christmas Blessing and Gift. God so loved the world and us! Nothing in this world is eternal except our life with Jesus—not the car in the garage, not the food on the table, not the pet hamster!



Can you think of a Christmas gift other than Jesus that you can celebrate 24/7 for all eternity? **MERRY CHRISTMAS!**



ADVENT ... By definition is the first “Season” of the Christian Calendar leading up to Christmas, including the four preceding Sundays. This year, the first Sunday of Advent is November 28th. But, let’s go beyond counting Sundays and days and remember that Advent is all about Jesus. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God ... :The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us.” (John 1:1, 14). This year, join us as we take “The Journey to Bethlehem.” And along with that journey, the children will share a play with us on Sunday,, December 19 during our time of worship.

MID-WEEK ADULT BIBLE STUDY meets Wednesday evening at 6:30pm in the Fellowship Room. We just completed our study of the Book of Revelation, and moved on to the Book of Acts. It’s a very informal group and we’re all learning, so please feel free to join us. You’ll be warmly welcomed. PS: We also have snacks, coffee, and tea!!

“All the Christmas presents in the world are worth nothing without the presence of Christ.”
Dr. David Jeremiah

TALKING ABOUT CHRISTMAS—We hope to have a beautiful display of flowers on the altar again this year. If you would like to place an order for flowers, please see or call Michelle Black.



THE MEN’S PRAYER BREAKFAST is **Saturday, December 11 at 9:00am**, and guess what—they’re inviting the women to join them. How exciting! Samantha and Susan always wanted to sit on the steps outside the Fellowship Room and just listen to the men at the breakfast — and joy of joys—the women are invited to join them for a homemade breakfast. How exciting! Thank you guys! We’ll see you there!

THE WOMEN’S FELLOWSHIP CHRISTMAS PARTY is **Sunday, December 5** immediately following the Worship Service. Men and women are invited. Please bring a covered dish and two dozen Christmas Cookies. And if you would like to participate in the gift exchange, please bring a \$10 gift. See the sign-up sheet in the Narthex. Any questions: See Cathy McMaster.

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” JOHN 3::16



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ... NEWS AND NOTES

A REMIND TO EVERYONE that we have Sunday School classes for children and adults.

PRE-SCHOOL CLASS TAUGHT BY SUSAN, SHERI AND

MICHELLE ... When the preschool children are dropped off, we wish you could see them and hear their enthusiasm. They come in to the classroom so happy and excited and full of energy. They play a little, we have a snack (maybe their favorite time!), we teaching them songs and we have our Bible Lesson. We also work on take home activity sheets. They like to color and paint, so we have craft time also. We just have a fun learning about God and the children are happy and excited ! Ivery Ella decorated our classroom windows with cling-on snowflakes, and they brighten up the room. Be watching our windows as the children will be decorating them for Christmas.

IN THE CLASS TAUGHT BY STACEY AND DARLENE WITH HELPERS

BILLY, LORI AND BREANA... The children are learning about King Solomon and how he ruled Israel for 40 years. We learned he was famous for the first holy temple. We went over how he was a wise king and how we should live by his rules and that God should be our first love. Stacey shared: During the Holidays, we always like to teach the kids about giving back, and every year our outreach is to support someone or an organization. This year we decided to give to one of our very own. Matthew Rummel (Matt) is attending college at the University of Hawaii and is not coming home for every holiday. So we decided to send him a care package full of his favorite sweets and snacks. The treats were all wrapped and each child wrote a nice card to place in the box. The box was mailed the beginning of November—we hope he has a great Holiday.” Bree, Lori & Billy also help in this class.

THE CHILDREN WILL BE PERFORMING A

CHRISTMAS PLAY during the Worship Service on Sunday, December 19. Be watching and listening for more information. We look forward to seeing the children share with us.



AND ONE MORE THING. There is an Adult Sunday School class. They're studying "Celebrating God" and will begin "Justice, Law, and History" on December 5. It's a great way to prepare for the Worship Service. This class, led Ed Wedge meets in the Fellowship Room. Please feel free to join them.

DID WE MENTION WE HAVE LOVING, CARING TEACHERS who take the time to read God's Word and prepare the lessons for Sunday morning.?

JOIN US SUNDAY MORNING FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL AT 9:30AM.

THERE IS A CLASS FOR ALL AGES!

SUNSHINE STITCHERS continue to meet on Thursday morning from 9:30am—noon. The ladies keep busy making prayer shawls and cancer caps. Feel free to join us—and if you or anyone you know would be comforted by a prayer shawl please see one of the stitchers. We received a note from Laurel Area Faith in Action for the chair caddies we made. We also received a note for a prayer shawl given to Pastor John’s daughter for her boss’s father. He wrote “...his Dad insists that ‘God is holding me in His arms when it’s wrapped around me’”.

BEST WISHES TO DOUG KWAK AND CASEY ZELENAK who were recently engaged to be married. We’re so happy for them and pray God will bless them as they



make plans to become Mr. & Mrs. and we pray God will bless their marriage. A March wedding is planned. Please keep Doug, Casey and their families in prayer.

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

CHALLENGE—Bible verses are stars that light our path and help keep us on course.” Here is a Memory Verse for the month of December: “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” Acts 20:35



“SWITCHING THE PRICE TAGS”

Did you hear the true story about the characters who broke into a local downtown department store (not in Ligonier!) during the Christmas shopping

season? They didn’t steal a thing, but must have had a blast switching price tags on the merchandise! The next morning when the customers arrived they were puzzled to find fur coats selling for \$5.98, while a jar of cold cream was tagged for \$375! In the jewelry department there were silver service sets tagged for \$1.99, while umbrellas were tagged at \$1,400! Diamond rings were tagged at \$2.59 and head scarves were going for \$9,995!

Perhaps you along with many others have been planning, shopping, decorating, baking and more shopping as you are getting ready to celebrate Christmas. Before the final rush, let’s pause a moment and ask ourselves: “Has something come into my life and switched the price tags? What really is important this Christmas? Have material things become more important than the gifts of the soul? Will I somehow misplace my priorities and love things while using people, or will it be that I love people and use things? And the bottom line question might be, ‘Where will Jesus Christ fit into your celebration of His coming this year.’”

OCTOBER 30TH FALL FESTIVAL UPDATE

Planned and Organized by: Darlene Rummell



I want to thank each and every one who came out to the Church for the Fall Festival. I deeply appreciate the volunteers who helped in the kitchen and with making the Festival a big success. The 14 vendors all expressed how well they did in sales and how they enjoyed our Church's hospitality. Like Dennis from New Florence who made leather belts, wallets and purses. Ron, who made unique wooden bird feeders and wooden framed pictures (that was a big seller!). And Dona from Whitney who had beautiful jewelry and wreaths said she never sold so much at a show before. Our Samantha did well also with her beautiful works of art. And Linda, who made jams and jellies was happy with her outcome.

We have a profit of \$369.72 from the kitchen and the Sunday School's lemonade and donut stand. \$184.86 will be donated to the ElHogarDeNinesEnmanuel in Honduras. \$184.86 will be donated to Corby, Ashley and their two children, who are planting a Church in Jastrzebie-Zdroj, Poland.

The \$10 from each vendor for a table at the event bought \$140 worth of new socks, T-shirts, and underwear for Rita's Closet Christmas Tree. Thank You. Darlene

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP UPDATE—NOVEMBER 2021 ... What a beautiful season to see God's creation of colorful flowers and trees. Just puts a happy smile on your face.



Our "Autumn Chat" (formerly the "Fireside Chat" was attended by 14 ladies. Pastor John gave a nice talk, followed by discussion by all. We did our Silent Auction" and made \$267.50 . We were served pumpkin roll and punch for refreshments. A big "thank You" to the committee of Cass Shadron, Mary Boyd, and Colleen Zimmerman. On October 23rd, 141 jars of Apple Butter was made with great attendance. A big thank you to all who helped. Our Christmas Party will be held on Sunday, December 5 in the Social Hall after Church. And ... Just a reminder: We have RADA items for sale. Check out the shelf at the mailboxes and/or see Pam Zimmerman for information. God Bless. Cathy McMaster. (They make great Christmas gifts!



“LET THE JOY OF ADVENT SUSTAIN YOU AS YOU PREPARE FOR THE COMING MESSIAH. BE A VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS OF THE MESSIAH'S COMING. SHARE THE GOOD NEWS THAT CHRIST THE SAVIOR IS BORN.”

BEHIND THE SCENES ...

* The **new sidewalks** in the front of the Church look amazing, thanks to the hard work of more than a ton of men. That's ten men averaging 200 pounds each! Actually, it was well over a ton of men!

* The **chairs** in two of our Sunday School rooms have been reupholstered thanks to the hard work of several of our Church women. (No, I am not going to describe the women in terms of tonnage! Do you think I'm stupid or something???)

* The **Supply Closet** has been organized (or re-organized) thanks to the work of the Women's Fellowship—you guessed it, women!

* The **Church grounds** continue to look amazingly great thanks to you-know-who!

* **Prayer shawls, caps, blankets** continue to be produced for those going through difficulties within our congregation and beyond!

*The “unofficial” men's group agreed to take ten names for the **Angel Tree Ministry**, just to make Christmas a little brighter for some less-fortunate children.

*The **inside of the church** remains “spic ‘n span”. Again, thanks to you-know-who!

* The **Church sign** is changed to contain varied messages of personal and spiritual relevance and inspiration.

* **ROMAN**: I'm thankful for Sports * **PARKER**: I'm thankful for my new house

* **AVA**: I'm thankful for Mommy & Daddy * **QUINN**: I'm thankful for family and everything

* **BROCK**: I'm thankful for being a Ligonier Valley football waterboy.

* **Rita's Closet** continues to help those in our community with needed clothing at absolutely no cost! A labor of love for several in our congregation and beyond.

* Did we mention **Apple Butter** making day? Lots of helpful hands not only on that special day but loads of work beforehand. And who doesn't like Apple Butter?

* Those in our congregation providing meals for those in our congregation going through difficult times.

* **WHAT** did we miss? A lot? But you get the point. Many hands by many unsung heroes make for a positive ministry for Jesus. Who **DID** we miss? Virtually everybody. We decided not to list names for several reasons: First, I was bound to miss someone inadvertently. And, second, it isn't about any of us—It's about all of us giving God the Glory! (Besides, we just had a Sermon on humility!!)



— Pastor John

THE CHURCH SIDEWALKS at the front of the Church were replaced in November.

There was a great turnout for each day that we worked on this project with an average of 10—12 workers each day. First of all we would like to apologize to the Women’s Fellowship for having to cancel the lunch they were going to prepare for us on Saturday. As the week progressed, the weather forecasts made it clear by Thursday that a Saturday pour was going to be “ifly” at best. So some calls were made to move the pour to Friday afternoon, which is when the pour was done. Actually, as it turned out, the heaviest rain did take place on Saturday morning which would not have worked out too well.

We first would like to thank all of those who donated their time during this project. Those who helped were: Pastor John, Paul Knupp, Andy Knupp, Lucas Knupp, Tracy Black, David Fish, Lee Rummel, Shane Smith, Bob Pniewski, Bob Lanz, Joe Ometz, Aaron Ometz, Scott Boyd, Dick Jones and Mike Lach. We would also like to give a special thanks to the following individuals—without their donations of material, knowledge, and equipment this project would have been unattainable by us. In otherwords, we would have had to contract it out. First Joe Ometz for the help in planning, donation of material, and running the job site. Second, for the donation of the heavy equipment from Andy and Lucas Knupp, without which the removal of the old sidewalk would have been next to impossible to accomplish by hand. Third to McInchok Sanitation for accepting the old materials for disposal and fourth for Ligonier Stone & Lime Concrete for reducing the price per yard and being flexible enough for us to change when we poured the concrete. I’m very proud of the way people in this church step up and help when needed. I am also sure that God is looking down on us and saying, “Now that’s the way I planned it—job well done.” Thank you all!



— Ed Wedge, Trustees

“GOD’S LOVE IS THE TRUE GIFT OF CHRISTMAS”

“There are many gifts of Christmas that are purchased with silver and gold,
Sizzling in their splendor and breathtaking to behold.
But the one true Gift of Christmas is a Gift from God above,
Assuring every mortal man of God’s enduring love.
For with this Christmas Gift of love our spirit is redeemed
And man at last possesses the peace of which he dreamed.”

By: Helen Steiner Rice

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16

APPLE BUTTER MAKING DAY AT LIGONIER FIRST CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

was held on Saturday October 23, 2021. It was a cool and rainy day but as usual, at this Church, we had as much help as was needed to complete the task.



It all started on September 30 with about eight people who gathered to make the applesauce needed to make the apple butter. We made approximately 16 gallons with about four bushels of apples that were donated by the Blacks and Tom Clark. Michelle and Tom even picked them up and delivered them to the Church! We also had apples donated by Jack and Elaine Boyd and possibly some others. We had much help from many unknown apple butter fairies as well and there were numerous containers of applesauce that just showed up in the Church freezer! Jack and Elaine and Cass graciously allowed us to store most of the applesauce in their freezers and David and Jack delivered them to the freezers and back to the Church again.

David Fish and Cass Shadron washed and prepared all of the jars which was a great help. All of the 150 jars or so were donated by those great apple butter fairies! The kettle was loaned to us by Sherry Boyd so our dear Lyle still had a hand in this even after he went to be with our wonderful Lord and Savior.

At around 8am, the fire was ready (thanks to Jeremy and Jack) and we had the applesauce in the kettle. We had many stirrers and this progressed fairly quickly. The sugars were added (donated by Cass) and then the spices. Last the boiled down cider that Cathy McMaster obtained for us (thanks Cathy!) was added toward the end.

We started jarring the apple butter around noon and by 1:00pm, all the apple butter was in the jars and everything was cleaned up and done! Many hands make light work, and this was a perfect example of that! The day went well and everybody involved had a good time. For lunch Stacey Knupp made wonderful soup from our leftover Communion meat and Cass did hot dogs and sauerkraut which hit the spot!

We made 148 pints of apple butter and the proceeds from the sale will go to Women's Fellowship. I apologize if I missed anybody, but I want to thank each and every person who helped in any way. And by the way, no penny bonus this year! We found the penny so there will be no suspense about where it ended up this year! Overall, the apple butter day was again a big and fun success.



**WE STILL HAVE APPLE BUTTER FOR SALE. TEXT OR CALL SAMANTHA IF YOU'RE INTERESTED—
\$6.00 FOR PINTS * \$3.00 FOR HALF PINTS.**

THINGS ARE HAPPENING AT CAMP HARMONY!



DECEMBER 3, 4, 10, 11, 17 and 18—From 6:00pm—9pm the camp will host its annual Harmony Light Fest. What exactly is a Light Fest? Basically, it is a drive-thru celebration of Christmas. Enjoy the lights and judge your favorite display. Also available are drive-up concessions including Hot Chocolate, Hot Cider and Cookies. Wave to Santa and enjoy the festive atmosphere. If you wish, bring your gently used—or new—shoes to donate to the “**Shoes for Good**” fundraiser. Pack your car or van with family and friends and enjoy the evening.

ARE YOU HUNGRY? Enjoy the Camp’s annual **CELEBRATION DINNER on Sunday, December 12, 2021 from 5:00pm—7:00pm.** Enjoy an **ALL YOU CAN EAT** Pasta Bar and celebrate the awesome things God has done at Camp in 2021 and hear the vision moving forward—including a new pool! The cost is \$10 per adult (12+) and \$5 per child. Kids’ activities will be available during the presentation. RSVP by December 6. Call 814-798-5885.

And, don’t forget the **Camp’s Christmas Cookie Fundraiser.** The cookies are sold for \$25 a platter. Each platter will contain a mixture of four dozen cookies including: Chocolate Chip, M & M Cookies, Sugar, Oatmeal,, Snicker Doodles, Peanut Butter Meltaways, Peanut Butter Blossoms, Thumbprints, and Chocolate with Peppermint Kisses. Order your platter (s) by December 15, 2021 at 814-798-5885, and pick-up your cookies at Camp on December 20 and 21, 9:00am—4:00pm each day.

Oh, and by the way, the Camp is located at 1414 Plank Road, Hooversville, Pa. 15936. Their email address is **harmony@campharmony.org**. And again, the phone number is 814-798-5885. Check out their website as well at www.campharmony.org.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

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EMAIL: lcob1888@gmail.com
CHURCH WEB SITE: ligonierfirstcob.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE—7:00PM
& BREAD & CUP COMMUNION

LIGONIER FIRST CHURCH OF
THE BRETHREN is a community of
believers who seek to walk passionately
with Christ by reaching out in His
name—preaching and sharing His
Gospel—and teaching all to love Him.

PLEASE JOIN US ...
SUNDAY SCHOOL—9:30AM
(CLASSES FOR ALL AGES -
PRE-SCHOOL THROUGH
ADULT STUDY CLASSES

WORSHIP—10:30AM

ADULT BIBLE STUDY

