

December
2021



St. Peter's Reformed Church

320 E. Grandview Avenue

Zelienople, PA 16063

(724) 452-8120

stpzelie.org

A PUBLICATION OF ST. PETER'S REFORMED CHURCH

The Joyful Noiseletter



“All Good Things ...”

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.” Romans 8:28

Dear Family of Faith,

This is a difficult Pastor's Pen to write. Yet, my faith in Christ and my years walking with Him assure me we are safe in His care. After much prayer and soul-searching, Kendra and I have accepted a call to serve as pastor of St. John's Reformed Church in Sinking Spring, Pa. We anticipate beginning ministry there in February, 2022. After 17.5 enriching years with you, I believe God has utilized our time together for His purpose. Our final Sunday with St. Peter's Reformed Church will be January 23, 2022.

Life is filled with choices. Each comes with a benefit as well as a cost. Having an openness to God's larger purpose has helped me to trust Him when it comes time to step beyond the familiar. I chose to pursue God's call on my life, which led me to St. Peter's Reformed Church, in a town that I knew little about, let alone could pronounce. As you all know, Kendra thought Zelienople was a town in Africa! Moving westward was a choice that cost me, having to move away from family and things familiar, yet I was faithful to God's call on my life, even though I could have listed many reasons why I should have stayed in Eastern Pennsylvania.

One of the benefits of that costly choice has been our ministry here in Zelienople. St. Peter's Reformed Church has deepened and blossomed spiritually over these recent decades in many ways. This wonderful church has been a blessing to us in countless ways. Kendra and I raised our girls in this church. Each has come to a saving relationship with Jesus Christ and was confirmed here, alongside your children. You have been our family for these most precious years of our lives. You helped us through medical issues of a brain tumor and open heart surgery. You walked beside us and encouraged us as we welcomed our first grandson, Lucas and then our second grandson, Isaac! You celebrated with us as Kendra and I renewed our vows and as Bridgette married her youth group love, Joshua. You grieved with us at the loss of my dad, a hero of the faith! That's what a family does – it encourages, supports, and loves. Thank you for being our second family!

For us to continue here would be very natural. A long pastorate offers tremendous advantages to a congregation, such as continuity, trust, depth of relationship and the necessity to work through differences.

We have been challenged and stretched in ways that God is using to deepen our trust in Him and will surely open new opportunities for further growth and maturity. The key to a healthy long-term pastorate is to ensure that God is glorified as both pastor and parishioners are growing, challenged and proceeding faithfully in fruitful ministry for God's Kingdom. St. Peter's Reformed Church is a healthy, viable, resilient congregation. Do not shrink back from the influence and leadership position this congregation has in this community.

I thank God for His empowerment for the years I have been privileged to serve as your pastor. Sometimes, we have to let go of our plans to take hold of God's purpose ... and it's always good. The purpose God had for me to serve at St. Peter's Reformed Church has been satisfied ... and it has been very good! But, the time has come for a new pastoral leader. As I reflect on our years of ministry together, I see etched in every memory how faithful is the God we serve. As we each move forward, remember it is our same Heavenly Father who leads us and there is no more secure place to be.

The downside to a long-term pastorate is that no one leader has all the gifts. I trust your next pastor will be someone whose gift-mix compensates for what I lacked. This will stretch the congregation in new ways. It will not be the same, and should not be. Whatever you miss, cherish it for what it was. But please do not miss tomorrow by wishing for yesterday. Embrace this interim period as God's opportunity to do in you what He has been preparing you for all along. The real strength of a church is its resilience during times of transition. Make God proud of what we have accomplished together by coming together in the spirit of unity. St. Peter's Reformed Church is blessed with wonderful leaders. Your support and prayers for them are crucial and profoundly appreciated.

Maintaining an outward focus is being faithful to God's call to disciple all nations until Jesus returns. St. Peter's vision is "to be a community of faith, unified in love, showing Jesus to the world." The fields in this community are ripe for harvest, so go forth 'reaching the least, the lost, and the lonely by reaching up, reaching out, and reaching in!' Thank you for allowing us to serve alongside you!

Because of His love for us
and our love for you,

Pastor Jim & Miss Kendra



December 24, 2021

9:00 P.M.

Candlelight / Communion

*Join us once again as we remember and
celebrate the birth of our Savior,
Jesus Christ!*

Looking forward to seeing you!

From the president...

A few weeks ago, I had the chance to take a drive to north central Pennsylvania and saw some interesting signs along the way. The one that made me almost stop in my tracks (I didn't – it was on a four-lane highway) was the diamond-shaped yellow sign warning of an elk crossing.

In the long-term scheme of things, it hasn't been all that long ago that these majestic animals were extinct in the state. Now the population is large enough to merit warning signs. In my mind, that's pretty strong evidence that no matter how bad the headlines may be – or how many there are – a higher power is in charge and steering the ship.

Here at St. Peter's, we see that all the time. Between Covid, personnel turnover, and the world in general, we've faced our recent challenges and, when the focus is right, we do just fine. Based on Youth Sunday, we're doing some things right. There are always more things we can do better, but we're trying and I thank all who have kept us on track in these trying times.

Not all of the signs I saw on my road trip were as impactful and understandable as the elk crossing signs, but people were definitely trying to communicate. That's been the point of these monthly newsletter articles – I've felt it was important the issues that Consistory faces be brought to the congregation.

I can remember the times when there would be a report at the beginning of church the Sunday after Consistory met. I thought this method would be better and appreciate the feedback I've received. We've tried to work hard as a Consistory to make St. Peter's a better place to be and appreciate everyone's efforts.

This, however, is my final President's note. My term is up and I really do appreciate all the help and support I've received the past two-plus years. I never intended to be in the position this long but so many other things were changing that it happened. Whether my successor will continue the monthly update in the newsletter will be their choice – everyone has their own preferred way of communicating.

As many of you know, I've covered local sports for 32 years and, over the years, I've related some of the things I've learned there. The last story I'd like to relate in this space (anonymously, of course) is this one.

A particular football coach was having some success and, when that happens, long playoff runs tend to run into the Christmas season. In consecutive years, he bought his wife the same piece of jewelry for Christmas. While being given credit for at least knowing what she liked, the gift wasn't a total hit.

The point is – the key is knowing what's most important and focusing on that. Everything else is just details.

Thanks to all for all you do... and bye-bye.

Bill

CONSISTORY UPDATE

- Started a Project for Additional Parking Lot Lighting
- Investigating the Coordination of Purchasing Christmas Gifts for Local Nursing Home Residents

If you have any questions, please contact me at 724/316-0676 or via email at wgrubbs@p-r-i.org.

Thank you,
Wendy Grubbs
Deacon/Consistory Secretary

Women's Ministry News

Thank you to everyone that helped make Christmas cards at our last meeting. We made enough to give Christmas Greetings to the We Care Group, Robin's House, Creek Meadows, Pastor Andrew and members in his troop. A huge thank you to Sue Frankenstein and Nancy Korczynski for helping to supply us with the materials to make these special cards.

Women's Ministry will be helping with Sweet Blessings Cookie Event on **Saturday, December 11th** in the fellowship room. Please bake some of your favorite cookies to donate and support this event. There has been an increase in the number of people to receive these Christmas goodies so please be generous in your cookie donations. This is a great way to spread Christmas Cheer!

We are collecting gift cards for Home Depot, Lowe's, Target, and Wal-Mart for the women at Robin's House in Butler. We will be taking the gifts, gift cards, and cookies to Robin's House in the afternoon of December 11th. We will be leaving the church at 12:30 pm and spending a little time visiting with the women to kick off their holiday season. If you have selected one of the gifts for a specific woman, please have the gift wrapped with her name on the Christmas gift tag. Please let Marla Clouse know if you are planning to go along to Robin's House that day. Marla's cell # is 724-622-2264. Gifts may be given to Marla or dropped off at the Church office if you are not able to attend.

Wishing you blessings as you enjoy this Christmas season with family and friends.

Marla Clouse





Community Fellowship Dinner

Jesus didn't come to be served, HE came to SERVE.

THE GREATEST AMONG YOU MUST BE A SERVANT.

MATTHEW 23:11 NLT

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**Community Dinner Friday, December 10, 2021**

**5:00-6:30 p.m.**

December's Menu is:

Ham, Scalloped Potatoes, Green Beans, Cole Slaw, Desserts and Beverages

**Bakers, start your ovens... it's that time of year again!**

**St. Peter's Cookie collection-  
SWEET BLESSINGS 2021**

Please join us in the Fellowship Hall on **Saturday, December 11<sup>th</sup>**, from 9 a.m. to Noon to bring "**Sweet Blessings**" to others through fellowship and baking.

Participants are asked to donate their favorite cookie to our cookie bank, where we will then distribute them to others who may need a little extra Christmas Cheer!

In an effort to spread St. Peter's love to our neighbors we will be packaging our collected cookies, giving them to local youth and nursing homes, who have been so in need of love this year, as well as our own church family shut ins and other families in need.

Of course, if you know of anyone who could use some Sweet Blessings, please be sure to let us know and we will make certain that they are included.

Volunteers are asked to bake their favorite cookies and donate them to our cookie collection. Several dozen cookies donated by each baker are greatly appreciated. The more cookies we receive, the more people we can reach out to.

We encourage you to invite your children to participate, too. Everyone loves goodies made by the hands of youngsters and who wouldn't love to be paid a visit by them with the delivery of some baked goodness.

If you're not a baker, we are accepting monetary donations to help cover the cost of packaging supplies.

Please see or contact Amy George at 724-816-7534 or [amygeorge@zoominternet.net](mailto:amygeorge@zoominternet.net) or Karen Thomas at 724-368-8474 or [curlycues36@aol.com](mailto:curlycues36@aol.com) for more information.

With Sweet Blessings,  
Amy George and Karen Thomas



## Communion Offering for December

### December 24:

The Hixons are a wonderful family from Renfrew, PA that need our prayers and support this holiday season. Don and Tammy have six children who are all students in the Seneca Valley School District and a part of the Band and Choral Programs - Trey (17), Elizabeth (16), Leta (16), Isaac (14), Quintin (11), and Trenton (8).



Sadly Don, the faithful dad of the Hixon Family, was diagnosed with a rare and aggressive type of cancer in late June. After a summer of treatments and extended hospital stays, heartbreakingly, the cancer has now spread to a new area of his body. Don has not been able to work on the family farm in Renfrew nor return to his job as the choral director at Farrell Area Schools as he is battling this fight for his life. At this time, Don is preparing for a stem cell transplant procedure which comes with its own risks and a year-long recovery period. In short, this local family has had their lives turned upside down.

To lovingly assist in a time of need, our Christmas Eve offering will benefit the Hixon Family as they fight this battle with cancer. In addition, prayers for Don's healing, wisdom for his doctors, and comfort for his family are welcome and needed.

### *Happy December Anniversary to:*

*Ken and Judy Williams ~ December 20 ~ 63 years*

*Larry and Karen Martino ~ December 20 ~ 52 years*



### *Happy December Birthday to:*

*Mary Lou Pietrusinski ~ December 2 ~ 90 years young*

*Betty Lighthiser ~ December 7 ~ 89 years young*

*Ruth Gross ~ December 15 ~ 86 years young*

*Regis Kaelin ~ December 17 ~ 81 years young*

*Flo Gross ~ December 23 ~ 89 years young*



## THANK YOU'S

To All at St. Peter's,

*I would like to thank everyone so very much for the continuing prayers and for all the cards. A very special thank you also to Pastor Jim for his visit. All have meant so much to me.*

*May God Bless,*

*Sharon Wehr*

Dear Pastor Jim & Members of St. Peter's,

*Thank you for the prayers and get well wishes for my recent surgery. I'm getting there, slowly but surely. It really was appreciated!*

*Sincerely,*

*Nancy Meals*

Dear Friends,

*Your generous partnership strengthens our brothers and sisters faith that bring hope in the most oppressed places. Thank you for standing with us to encourage our persecuted family that they are not alone!*

*In His Service Together,*

*Marissa & Your Open Doors Service*

Dear Youth Group,

*What a wonderful program you gave on Youth Sunday, stay true to yourself and God. Bless you all, we are all so proud of you!!*

*With special thanks,*

*Gary & Shirley Knauff*

## UGANDA MISSION TEAM NEWS

Hello St. Peter's,

A couple of notes before our trip to Uganda. Things are looking good for our team this year. We have all the funds for some of the projects we hope to complete this year. We have \$1500 for medical, and \$1500 for finishing the church building. The church has been a 3 year project, however, it has been in use since we left in 2020. The last stages are to put in the floor and finish covering the walls. As always, we should all be proud of what we have accomplished so far. We are really making a difference in the village. I understand that the CCCC is looking into Africa church building and helping villages in Africa. How about that? We are a trend-setter at St. Peter's. We are looking into building a school next and that would require around \$10,000. We are also hoping to raise enough funds through our muzzleloader fund-raiser to set up a working teaching farm this year. I can really feel God working through this church.

Please try to attend our last dinner on Dec. 10th and ask about our trip. We would love to see you there. If you ever have any questions, feel free to give me a call 724-766-1029. I or any team member past or present would be happy to discuss what we do. We are also accepting any monetary donations up until we leave (Dec. 28<sup>th</sup>). The biggest thing you can do for us is PRAY!!! This trip is a tough trip for not just the team, but for our families who will miss us when we are away. If you would like to be on a daily email when we are in Uganda, give us your email at the dinner or see Jim Schulz with the address.

Yours in Christ,  
Randy Herbe and the Uganda Mission Trip Team

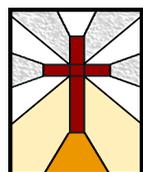


## Jr. Church Rotation for December

|       |                           |
|-------|---------------------------|
| 12/5  | Amber- Helper Sophie      |
| 12/12 | Emily- Helper Taryn       |
| 12/19 | Jessica- Helper Bella     |
| 12/26 | <b>NO SS OR JR CHURCH</b> |

### Preschool Jr. Church Schedule

|       |                           |
|-------|---------------------------|
| 12/5  | Statzer's                 |
| 12/12 | Amy George                |
| 12/19 | Hamilton's                |
| 12/26 | <b>NO SS OR JR CHURCH</b> |



### SOUTHWEST BUTLER FOOD CUPBOARD

557 Perry Highway  
Harmony, PA 16037  
Phone: 724.453.4184

Website: [www.swbfoodcupboard.org](http://www.swbfoodcupboard.org)

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The Southwest Butler Food Cupboard is gearing up for the Holiday season. It is our busiest time of the year. The number of people needing food always increases around this time. Keeping that in mind, below is a list of food needs for December. Please help us get the word out. Thank you.

Canned fruit	Soup	Dessert mixes	Toiletries
Stuffing Mix	Boxed potatoes	Canned chicken	Paper products
Gravy	Sloppy Joe mix	Tuna	
Cereal	Helper meals	Egg noodle	
Canned Vegetables	Rice	Juice	
Pasta	Rice sides	Chef Boyardee	
Pasta sauce	Pasta sides	Peanut Butter/Jelly	

Thank you for your continued support and generosity to the Southwest Butler Food Cupboard.

Blessings,
Erin Makowski, Director

Library Highlights for December - READ All About It!!

In this very busy season of Advent that is now upon us, it is highly unlikely that any of us has much free time, but sometimes it's good and relaxing to just take a break, so why not make your break involve reading one of our new additions to the church library.



We have four new fiction books this month to share with you below:

“Courting Can Be Killer” ~ An Amish Matchmaker Mystery by author Amanda Flower: ‘Some Amish men don’t know what’s good for them. That’s what Millie Fisher told herself when young Ben Baughman set his heart on marrying Tess Lieb. With Tess’s father refusing to give his blessing and Tess’s ex-boyfriend being a wet blanket, the hapless couple was bound to butt heads more than Millie’s Boer goats. But when Ben tragically dies in a mysterious fire, Millie wonders if someone in her hometown of Harvest, Ohio, wanted Ben out of the wedding picture altogether... With the help of her quilting buddies, and her outspoken *Englischer* friend Lois, Millie is determined to patch together all the clues without even dropping a stitch. She only hopes it won’t be the death of her...’

“Everywhere To Hide” by author Siri Mitchell: ‘Law school graduate Whitney Garrison is a survivor. She admirably deals with her mother’s death, mounting student debt, dwindling job opportunities, an abusive boyfriend, and a rare neurological condition that prevents her from recognizing human faces. But witnessing a murder might be the crisis she can’t overcome. The killer has every advantage. Though Whitney saw him, she has no idea what he looks like. He knows where she lives and works. He anticipates her every move. Worst of all, he’s hiding in plain sight and believes she has information he needs. Information worth killing for. Again. As the hunter drives his prey into a net of terror and international intrigue, Whitney’s only ally, Detective Leo Baroni, is taken off the case. Stripped of all semblance of safety, Whitney must suspect everyone and trust on one—and fight to come out alive.’

“A Desperate Hope” by author Elizabeth Camden: ‘Eloise Drake’s prim demeanor hides the turbulent past she believes is finally behind her. A mathematical genius, she’s now a successful accountant for the largest engineering project in 1908 New York. But to her dismay, her new position puts her back in the path of the man responsible for her deepest heartbreak. Alex Duval is the major of a town about to be wiped off the map. The state plans to flood the entire valley where his town sits in order to build a new reservoir, and Alex is stunned to discover the woman he once loved on the team charged with the demolition. With his world crumbling around him, Alex devises a risky plan to save his town—but he needs Eloise’s help to succeed. Alex is determined to win back the woman he thought he’d lost forever, but even their combine ingenuity may not be enough to overcome the odds against them.’

“A Daring Venture” by Elizabeth Camden: ‘As a biochemist in early 1900s New York, Doctor Rosalind Werner has dedicated her life to the crusade against waterborne diseases. She is at the forefront of a groundbreaking technology that will change the way water is delivered to every household in the city—but only if she can get people to believe in her work. Newly appointed Commissioner of Water for New York Nicholas Drake is highly skeptical of Rosalind and her team’s techniques. When a brewing court case throws him into direct confrontation with her, he is surprised by his reaction to the lovely scientist. While Rosalind and Nick wage a private war against their own attraction, they stand firmly on opposite sides of a battle that will impact far more than just their own lives. As the controversy grows more public and inflammatory and Rosalind becomes the target of an unknown enemy, these two rivals will face higher stakes than they ever could have known.’

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!! I hope you all can enjoy a book or two over this joyous season!

Harmony
EMS

2nd Annual

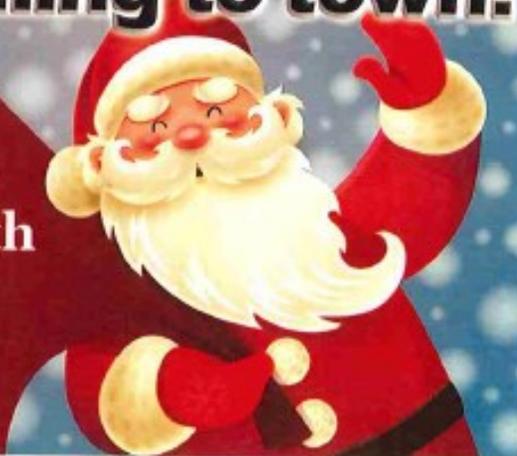
Wreath Sale

Join us again this year for our fresh Fraser Fir wreath sale!
All proceeds benefit Harmony EMS. Harmony EMS is a 501 (c)(3)
non profit organization. We receive no municipal or tax funding.

10am to 5pm daily starting 11-26

Santa Claus is coming to town!

Visit Santa and his elves
on December 11th and 18th
from 10am until 2pm!!



102 Mennonite Lane
(Parallel to Route 19 across from Fanker Road)



December 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Sunday School 9:00am Worship 10:15am	Head Usher For December Jim Schulz		1 9am Prayer Group 7pm Choir practice 7pm The Journey	2 11:30am Ministerium ~ Fellowship Rm.	3	4 9am-1pm Cranberry MOM Christmas Party ~ Fellowship Rm. 1:30-8pm Lisa & Jim Bills using Fellowship Rm.
5 11:30-4pm Dottie Rape Family using Fellowship Room 5-7pm YG Mtg. ~ Youth Rm. 6:30pm The Chosen Season 2 Bible Study ~ Sanctuary	6 5:30pm AA Mtg. ~ Fellowship Rm 6pm Ding-a-Lings bell practice ~ Bell Room 6:30pm Elder's Mtg. ~ Ed. Bldg.	7	8 9am Prayer Group 7pm Choir practice 7pm The Journey	9 6:30-7:30pm TNT Mtg. ~ Youth Rm./ Fellowship Rm.	10 5-6:30pm Community Dinner ~ Fellowship Rm.	11 9-12pm Sweet Blessings Cookie Collection ~ F. Rm
12 6:30pm The Chosen Season 2 Bible Study ~ Sanctuary	13 5:30pm AA Mtg. ~ Fellowship Rm. 6pm Ding-a-Lings bell practice ~ Bell Room	14 6pm Cranberry MOM Group Mtg. ~ Basics Room 7pm Consistory Mtg. (All Welcome) ~ Fellowship Rm.	15 9am Prayer Group 11-4pm 500 Card Club ~ F. R. 7pm Choir Practice 7pm The Journey 7pm AFSP Support Group ~ Ed. Bldg.	16	17 YG Christmas Event	18
19 9am Sunday School Christmas Party ~ Ed. Bldg. 6:30pm The Chosen Season 2 Bible Study ~ Sanctuary	20 5:30pm AA Mtg. ~ Fellowship Rm.	21	22 9am Prayer Group 7pm Choir Practice 7pm The Journey	23	24 Church Office Closed 9pm Christmas Eve Service (Communion)	25 
26 1-7pm Scholl Family using Fellowship Room	27 5:30pm AA Mtg. ~ Fellowship Rm.	28 1pm 500 Card Club ~ F. R.	29 9am Prayer Group 7pm Choir Practice 7pm The Journey	30	31 Church Office Closed	