

# *The Simeon Spirit*

*SIMEON UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH*

*Gratz, PA*

## *December 2023*

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### **The Precious Gift of Hope**

John Jewell tells about a young woman named Virginia, 19 years old and pregnant when she went to live with her 15th set of foster parents. “Her case file read like a textbook example of neglect, abuse, and bureaucratic failure. She sat silently in a chair, hands neatly clasped, staring into her lap. The foster parents, whose three children were in school, had been apprised of Virginia’s story and promised that this placement would be ‘temporary.’ (Temporary was the story of Virginia’s life.)

“Finally, the foster mother said, ‘Are you frightened, Virginia?’

“‘Kinda,’ she replied without looking up. ‘I’ve been in lots of homes.’”

“‘Well,’ the sympathetic woman tried to reassure the bewildered young mother-to-be, ‘Let’s hope this time turns out for the best.’”

“Virginia’s reply is one of those statements that sticks to your soul,” says John Jewell. “It was flat, without change of tone and without Virginia even looking up. ‘Hurts too much to hope.’”

Like the word Love, Hope is one of those words we often use quite casually.

"I hope it will be a nice day."

"I hope the bus will be on time."

"I hope mom won't have spinach for dinner tonight."

There is nothing wrong with this. The word fits nicely into a variety of contexts. But when we speak about hope in the biblical and life events context, we are using a word packed with power and meaning. Hope is a two-edged sword. Hope can give a person the courage and endurance to fight against seemingly insurmountable odds. A person with hope can withstand the coldest and darkest nights and the hottest days.

Yet unfulfilled hope can break the spirit and leave a person desolate and empty. This is the place the young woman in our story seems to be. With sadness, we think back to the day a little girl who found joy in living and had hopes and dreams for the future. Someone stole those hopes and dreams from Virginia. She was told she was worthless. She learned that her only purpose was to be used by others and tossed away like a dirty towel.

Surely one of the greatest of evils is the abuse and neglect of a child which snuffs out that inner light that gives hope. Jesus said such people should have a millstone hung around their neck and be tossed into the sea. I couldn't agree more.

During this season of hope and joy, let us remember the Virginias of this world for whom the holidays only bring more pain and loneliness. The real message of hope is that Virginia is loved by a God who never forgets that she is suffering and will never let her go no matter how deep she falls into the darkness of despair.

Every one just wants to be loved. Needs to be loved.

Find someone this season, every season, who needs to know that they are loved. So much suffering in this world could be abated if the lost, lonely, and hurting could only experience sincere and enduring love. Hope will be rekindled, and waning spirits will find new life. What greater and more precious gift can we give anytime of the of the year? From our loving Father we receive our hope. Let's share it.

*Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Greg.*

**SIMEON UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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ELCA Website: [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org)

Lower Susquehanna Synod: [www.lss-elca.org](http://www.lss-elca.org)

**CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS FROM, OCTOBER 2023**

**OLD BUSINESS:** The Koppenhaver family will purchase a copier for the church. Church will be responsible for paying the service contract. Motion made by Tracy Bixler to accept this purchase and pay the service contract, seconded by Dave Strohecker. Approved. The Synod has approved the constitution changes. Have to take to congregation for approval.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

1. **Worship and Music-** Still waiting on organ proposal update. Music Sunday was a great service. Want more of the older hymns incorporated into the service at times. November 5<sup>th</sup> is All Saints Sunday and First Communion, November 19<sup>th</sup> will be a Healing service, November 22<sup>nd</sup> is Thanksgiving Eve service, November 26<sup>th</sup> is Christ the King Sunday w/ Holy Communion. Bulletin price has increased so the new bulletin sponsor Price will be increased to \$18.00 for all & \$9.00 for half.

2. **Parish Education-** Jean says attendance is better for her class. Susan suggested trying to get another teacher so we could split up the class so there is not such a large age difference between them. Currently the class is Nursery thru 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Anyone who would like to teach please let the office know or let a council member know. Going to put in next newsletter and Sunday bulletins asking for anyone who would be willing to help teach.

3. **Stewardship & Evangelism-** Talking about having a float in the holiday parade thru town on November 25<sup>th</sup> at 12, noon. If you would like to help with this please talk to Tracy Bixler or Jean Perkins.

4. **Social Ministry-** Bread giveaway was well received. Need help for the Food Bank for November & December. If you can help please see Lisa Perkins.

5. **Youth-** Doing Haunted House for trick or treat night in Gratz at the Park. Set up on Monday for Tuesday night. Some have said they will help with the parade on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November. Helping with the House tour in December. Several have expressed interest in going to the National Youth Gathering next year. Making cookies for the homebound. Pastor Greg

expressed that he is going to talk to confirmation class parents about a more regular attendance for the students.

6. **Church Property**– Working on removing the curtains in the basement. Saturday November 11<sup>th</sup> will be a work day starting at 8 a.m. to get the rest of them down. Anyone who can help it would be greatly appreciated. The more help the faster it will go. Getting a dumpster to put the vinyl outside in and taking the metal over to One Stop to be recycled. Waiting to hear back from the insurance company to see if the repairs will be covered or not, for the furnace.

7. **Budget & Finance**– Gave the 2024 proposed budget to look at till November meeting for approval.

8. **Fellowship**- Magic show was a hit. It was not done as a fundraiser but as a community outreach. Despite it not being a fundraiser we had \$400.00 profit. About 90 people attended. Had some lasagna left and froze it for the reorganization meeting for the committee's in January. The Church picnic in 2024 will be on June 16<sup>th</sup> which is Father's Day.

9. **Mutual Ministry**– Met on Tuesday night the 24<sup>th</sup>. had a good meeting and discussed several things. Concerned that a number of congregation members have expressed their inability to hear dialog from the lectern, particularly in the rear corners of the sanctuary. Going to work on increasing the volume to see if that helps. Also that the lighting at the lectern makes it difficult to read the small print of the readings. Tim will enlarge the readings each week and place it on the lectern for the person reading if they want to use it to read from.

10. **Nominating**– Has several yes's and a couple maybe's. will have names for November.

**New Business**– Looking into possibly changing internet supplier to Frontier, from Xfinity. Going to talk with Bruce Koppenhaver about it and get more information from companies. Tabled till November Meeting. Matthew mentioned about the hymns for music Sunday were not clear but blurry. Everyone else said there's were fine. Noted to have Tim check copies before folding and putting in bulletins.

**The Pastor's Time**– Pastor Greg will be on vacation November 6<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> to visit his family in Virginia. No Sunday's will be missed so no supply pastor needed.

### **CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS FROM, NOVEMBER 2023**

**OLD BUSINESS:** Internet- waiting to hear back from Frontier about switching and hooking up to them. Lynn Schadle expressed a thank you to the new church secretary, Tim Ferster, for doing an excellent job, everyone agreed.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

1. **Worship and Music**- Healing Service November 19, Thanksgiving Eve Service November 22, Christ the King Sunday November 26, Decorating the church on Saturday December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 9am for advent and Christmas.

2. **Parish Education**- Don't need another teacher to split up Jean's class. She does not want to split the class. Sunday School Christmas program Sunday December 17<sup>th</sup> during the 10:15 service.

3. **Stewardship & Evangelism**- Meeting in January to plan the events for throughout the year.

4. **Social Ministry**- Having issues with the bread deliverer and getting deliveries for giving out.

5. **Youth**- 5 youth and 2 adults along with pastor Greg going to the national youth gathering next year. Helping with the parade on November 25<sup>th</sup>, had a great turnout for the haunted house at the park for the Gratz trick or treat night. About 120 people came to it.

6.**Church Property**- The Basement curtains are down. Got \$198.00 for the recycling of the metal to help cover the cost of the dumpster cost for the disposal of the vinyl. The check from the Insurance company came to cover the cost of the furnace repair, minus the deductible. Coming Friday or next week to fix it. Need to replace tin over the entrance to the kitchen to the basement in spring. Flagstone has been removed and taken away.

7.**Budget and Finance**- The proposed budget for 2024 was looked over and voted on. Motion to accept the 2024 proposed budget was made by Susan Krause and seconded by Matt Fester. Approved.

8.**Fellowship**- Was suggested about having the church service at the park in June when the picnic is. Asked for opinions? Going to do a survey to the congregation to see what they would like to do. Suggested instead of having the committee reorganization meeting for doing their report for the year. Instead having each committee tell what the committees do, so everyone will know what each committee does. And hopefully get more people to join the committees.

9.**Mutual Ministry**- None

10. **Nominating**- Has 4 yes's and 3 maybe's. The maybe's will let them know this week.

**New Business**- Pastor Greg gave out the confirmation covenant that was approved in 2021 for the council to look at till December meeting for any questions and any updates to it for better attendance.

**The Pastor's Time** – Pastor Greg said he had a good time visiting his family last week. Had a cabinet meeting earlier in the week. They voted at an earlier meeting to cancel the Sing For Joy program on the Radio.

**2023 GIVING**

\$112,160.51

**2023 EXPENSES**

\$126,926.17

**Difference between YTD Giving & YTD Expenses \$ -14,765.66**  
**{For General Operating Fund}**

**“VOICE OF SIMEON” RADIO MINISTRY SPONSORS**

**DECEMBER 2023**

**December 3** – Buffington/Reed Funeral Home

**December 10** – Willing Workers

**December 17** -

**December 24** – Hoffman’s Hatchery

**December 31** –

We want to thank our faithful sponsors in continuing to help with this important ministry of our church especially during these trying times. God bless you and be safe.

**A HUGE THANK YOU**

We want to give a HUGE THANK YOU to Matt Ferster, John Novinger, Keith Klinger, David Ferster, Ryan Matter, & Andrew Romberger for the “HARD” work they did in taking down the curtains in the basement. It really opened the basement up and looks wonderful. THANK YOU

**ITEMS NEEDED FOR THE FOOD BANK**

Stove top stuffing, instant mashed potato, canned soup, canned fruit, and canned pasta

**DAILY DEVOTIONALS**

The Daily Devotionals for October - December, 2023 are available in the narthex. Pick yours up or have someone get them for you.

## **CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE**

**Please Join us on Dec. 24 for our Christmas Eve Worship Service and Holy Communion 7:00 PM w/ Special Music will begin at 6:30 PM**

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP**

Simeon's Constitution defines active members as those who receive Holy Communion **and** make a contribution of record **at least once every two years**. If you have not yet communed in 2023, please join us for worship in December, and sign a communion card if you have not done so this year. It can't be recorded in the church register if you have not signed a card to let the secretary know you were there. Also, please use a 2023 envelope with your name and number on it so that your contribution may be recorded. Thanks for your help.

### **OFFICIAL NOTICE**

The annual meeting of Simeon United Lutheran Church will take place immediately following worship on Sunday, December 10. All confirmed members are encouraged to be present. The agenda will include:

- **Changes to the Constitution for election of Council Members**
- **Consideration of the 2024 budget**
- **Election of Church Council and Cemetery Board members**
- **Any other matters that might be brought up**

### **A SPEACIAL THANKYOU!!!!**

**Thank you all** for the wonderful birthday party and many gifts. I really was surprised and delighted. It is my honor to serve and to share in friendship with each of you. *Pastor Greg.*

### **2024 CALENDARS ARE AVAILABLE**

The 2024 calendars are here and in the narthex. Please pick some up and give them to your neighbors and friends!!!

### **THE 2024 FLOWER & BULLETIN SPONSOR CHARTS**

The 2024 flower and bulletin sponsor charts are in the narthex. Please help by sponsoring flowers or bulletins. *If no one sponsors them, the money comes out of the general fund which is not budgeted.*

### **THANK YOU**

We continue to thank **all**, of our church members who keep sending their offering envelopes through the postal system as well as coming to church in person to worship and donate that way.

God be with you all!!

### **ADVENT DEVOTIONALS**

Advent Devotionals are available in the narthex, regular and large print. Please pick up a copy for yourself, neighbors, friends, or anyone else.

**SERVING IN DECEMBER 2023 & JANUARY 2024**

**DECEMBER 3, 2023**  
**1<sup>st</sup> SUNDAY OF**  
**ADVENT w/**  
**HOLY COMMUNION**

Greeter: Susan Krause  
Reader: Dennis Barge  
Usher: Dave Strohecker  
Glasses: Brenda Flynn                      Altar: Dennis Barge

**DECEMBER 10, 2023**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> SUNDAY OF**  
**ADVENT**

Greeter: Jenny Sracic  
Reader: John Novinger

**DECEMBER 17, 2023**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY OF**  
**ADVENT**

Greeter: Anna Coleman  
Reader: Virginia Moore

**DECEMBER 24, 2023 A.M.**  
**4<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF**  
**ADVENT**

Greeter: Darlene Novinger  
Reader: Tracy Bixler

**DECEMBER 24, 2023 P.M.**  
**CHRISTMAS EVE**  
**SERVICE w/**  
**HOLY COMMUNION**

Greeter: Dave Strohecker  
Reader: Becky Hoover  
Usher: Lynn Schadle                      Altar: John Novinger &  
Glasses: Linda Koppenhaver                      Doris Flynn

**DECEMBER 31, 2023**  
**1<sup>st</sup> SUNDAY OF**  
**CHRISTMAS**

Greeter: Lynn Schadle  
Reader: Jean Perkins

**JANUARY 7, 2024**  
**BAPTISM OF**  
**OUR LORD w/**  
**HOLY COMMUNION**

Greeter: Dennis Barge  
Reader: Barbara & Keith Klinger  
Usher: Mike Hartman  
Glasses: Sharon Erdman                      Altar: Lynn Shadle

**JANUARY 14, 2024**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> SUNDAY**  
**AFTER EPIPHANY**

Greeter: Deb Trautman  
Reader: Cameron Smeltz

**JANUARY 21, 2024**  
**3<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY**  
**AFTER EPIPHANY**

Greeter: Barbara & Keith Klinger  
Reader: Lynn Schadle

**JANUARY 28, 2024**  
**4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY**  
**AFTER EPIPHANY / Youth Sunday**

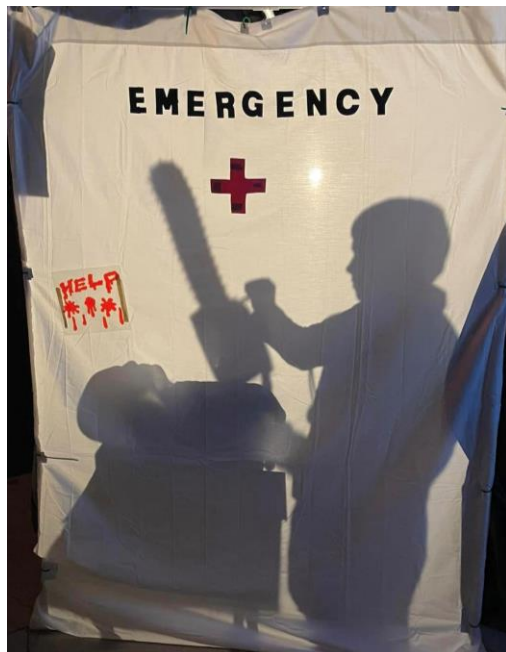
Greeter: Becky, Max, & Lincoln Hoover  
Reader: Youth

**\*\*\*ATTENTION READERS\*\*\***

There is now an enlarged copy of the readings on the lectern to read from each week. Since the print is small and sometimes it is noticeably light in print color.

## YOUTH NEWS

The youth, their leaders, and families created an awesome haunted house for the community trick or treat night on October 31, 2023. It was a challenge to create a haunted house suitable for all ages, but they really did an excellent job. Special Thanks To Christy Barge & Debbie Herb for their expertise & vision to pull it off. Here are some photos. See if you can figure out who is all there.



## UPCOMING EVENTS:

### DECEMBER

**Saturday, December 2** – *Decorate the Church 9a.m.*

**Sunday, December 3** – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent Worship Service w/Holy Communion 10:15a.m.  
& Christmas Tea 2pm

**Thursday, December 7** – Pearl Harbor Day

**Saturday, December 9** - Food Bank Open 9-11 a.m. /Christmas House Tours 1-6pm

Sunday, December 10 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent Worship Service 10:15a.m. /**Congregational meeting following worship**

Sunday, December 17 – Third Sunday of Advent Worship Service 10:15a.m. /Sunday School Program & Fellowship with cookies after worship

*Monday & Tuesday, December 18 & 19 – Little Hands Christmas Parties*

**Thursday, December 21** - Council Meeting 7 p.m. /First day of Winter

**Friday, December 22** - Newsletter Deadline For January Newsletter!!!!

Sunday, December 24 A.M. - Fourth Sunday of Advent Worship Service 10:15a.m.

**Sunday, December 24 P.M.** – Christmas Eve Worship Service w/Holy Communion 7pm.

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 25 – MERRY CHRISTMAS-CHRIST THE LORD IS BORN!!**

Sunday, December 31 - Worship Service 10:15 a.m. / Happy New Years Eve

### JANUARY 2024

**Monday January 1** – Happy New Year

Wednesday January 3 – Little Hands School first day back

**Sunday January 7** - Worship Service w/Holy Communion 10:15a.m. /Food Collection

Saturday January 13 - Food Bank Open 9-11 a.m.

Sunday January 14 - Worship Service 10:15a.m. /Fellowship Time with a covered dish after worship in Social Hall; Committee Reorganization.

Monday January 15 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day

**Thursday, January 18** - Council Meeting 7 p.m.

**Friday, January 19** - Newsletter Deadline For February Newsletter!!!!

Sunday January 21 - Worship Service 10:15a.m.

Sunday January 28 – Youth Sunday Worship Service 10:15a.m.

### PRAYER LIST

**Members** - Julie Ferster, Celine Lenker, Sandra Matter, Sharon Hartman, Cindy Wolfgang, Janet Rumfelt, Barbara Klinger, Clair Engle, David Hartman, Jim Neiswender

**Northern Dauphin Nursing & Rehab. (Millersburg)** - Vivian Engle, Kenneth Mace

**Polk Apartments** - John Kissinger, Martha Koppenhaver, *Charles Schoffstall*

**Friends & Family** - *Randy Rebuck, Blair Deitrich, Bruce Nace, Kathie Dresel, Dorothy Lettich Martin, Steve Dagen, Rahn Erdman, Marie Lahr, Christy Warfel, Jeff Latsha, Jim Troutman*

**Gratz Historical Society Concert and Tea** will be on December 10, at 2p.m. The concert is by the musical group Men In Harmony. Admission is a free will offering. Tea will follow concert downstairs in the fellowship hall. Come and enjoy the sounds of the season!



## PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2024

**NOTE:**

When developing the proposed budget for 2023, the Budget and Finance committee set out to show realistic numbers for both Income and expenses. The unbalanced budget shows a projected shortfall in income that must be overcome with increased giving and/or use of fund reserves to meet the actual expenses.

**2024 ANTICIPATED INCOME**

Regular, Benevolence & Initial Envelopes	\$114,900
Special Envelopes	\$4,800
Plate Offering	\$1,900
Sunday School Offering	\$1,900
Designated Giving	\$3,000
Miscellaneous Income	\$11,350
Earned Income	\$500
<b>TOTAL ANTICIPATED INCOME</b>	<b>\$138,350</b>

	<u>ANTICIPATED EXPENSES 2023</u>	<u>PROPOSED 2024 BUDGET</u>
<b><u>BENEVOLENCES</u></b>		
Synod Benevolence	\$3,057	\$ 2,500.00
World Hunger	\$255	\$ 100.00
Haiti Mission School	\$180	\$ 150.00
Helping Hand Fund	\$0	\$ 200.00
	<b>\$3,492</b>	<b>\$2,950</b>

<b><u>PASTORAL MINISTRY</u></b>		
Salary & Housing Allowance (% Increase For 2024)	\$57,535	\$59,184
Social Security Allowance (Simeon paying 100%)	\$8,700	\$9,055
Pension	\$11,217	\$7,950
Medical/Dental Insurance (See Note 1 Below)	\$13,541	\$14,241
Disability/Group Life Ins./Retiree Support	\$1,171	\$662
Mileage Reimbursement	\$249	\$500
Book/Periodical Allowance	\$90	\$300
Continuing Ed. Allowance	\$0	\$0
	<b>\$92,503</b>	<b>\$91,892</b>

**Note 1: For the Year 2024 the Pastor will be using the Medical/Dental Insurance provided by the Church.**

<b><u>ADMINISTRATION</u></b>		
Secretary/Employee Taxes	\$5,936	\$6,300
Office Supplies	\$1,242	\$750
Office Equipment & Maintenance	\$2,040	\$1,850
Postage	\$1,054	\$1,000
Telephone/Internet	\$4,325	\$4,000
Employer Taxes	\$452	\$500
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$1,049	\$500
Synod Assembly Expense	\$175	\$350
	<b>\$16,273</b>	<b>\$15,250</b>

	<b><u>ANTICIPATED EXPENSES 2023</u></b>	<b><u>PROPOSED 2024 BUDGET</u></b>
<b><u>CHRISTIAN EDUCATION</u></b>		
Sunday School	\$595	\$500
Vacation Bible School	\$381	\$400
Bible Study & Other Courses	\$19	\$50
Affirmation of Baptism	\$0	\$0
	<u>\$995</u>	<u>\$950</u>
<b><u>PROPERTY</u></b>		
Heating Oil	\$8,654	\$12,500
Electricity	\$4,129	\$4,200
Water	\$310	\$200
Sewer	\$764	\$750
Trash	\$1,125	\$1,100
General Maintenance	\$5,146	\$5,000
Janitorial Supplies	\$0	\$200
Inspections/Certifications	\$0	\$500
Insurance	\$6,227	\$6,250
	<u>\$26,355</u>	<u>\$30,700</u>
<b><u>FELLOWSHIP</u></b>		
Grocery & Paper Supplies	\$0	\$100
	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$100</u>
<b><u>STEWARDSHIP &amp; EVANGELISM</u></b>		
Offering Envelopes	\$825	\$825
Radio Ministry	\$2,600	\$2,900
Programs & Supplies	\$0	\$500
Website	\$600	\$700
	<u>\$4,025</u>	<u>\$4,925</u>
<b><u>WORSHIP &amp; MUSIC</u></b>		
Organist	\$3,660	\$3,800
Choir Director	\$650	\$600
Music	\$0	\$200
Supply Pastor	\$0	\$500
Worship Supplies	\$2,178	\$2,000
Organ & Piano Maintenance	\$883	\$900
Altar Flowers/Special Flowers	\$3,008	\$3,200
	<u>\$10,379</u>	<u>\$11,200</u>
<b><u>YOUTH MINISTRY</u></b>		
Programs & Materials	\$0	\$300
National Youth Gathering		\$2,000
	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$2,300</u>
<b><u>SOCIAL MINISTRY</u></b>		
Programs & Supplies	\$0	\$200
	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$200</u>
<b>TOTAL BUDGETED EXPENSES</b>	<b><u>\$154,022</u></b>	<b><u>\$160,467</u></b>



# Fellowship

We would like to thank the Fellowship Committee for putting together a great Lasagna Dinner/Magic Show community outreach project. The committee felt that by not focusing on fundraising but still covering expenses more families with children could attend. Worker bees included --Darlene & John Novinger, Doris Flynn, Brenda Flynn, Ginny Moore, Sharon Erdman, Denise Spradling, Tracy Bixler, Dennis & Susan Krause, and our cashier Jean Perkins. Our heartfelt thanks to all our talented bakers who gave so generously and of course our cleanup crew. We think the Amazing Carson was a hit and in spite of it not being a fundraiser we still cleared \$400. Overall – a total success!!!!



Our heartfelt thanks to all our talented bakers who gave so generously and of course our cleanup crew. We think the Amazing Carson was a hit and in spite of it not being a fundraiser we still cleared \$400. Overall – a total success!!!!





Please bring a plate of cookies and join us in the social hall after church on December 17. We'll make merry and spread the calories! Seriously, you don't have to bring cookies to participate – all are welcome. Hope you plan to spend a few minutes spreading the cheer.

On another note, the committee is always looking for members to join. Duties include planning the Fellowship get togethers, set up, clean up, etc. and we can always use help. The committees reorganize in the new year so stay tuned for details. Hope you will consider joining us. Sandra Matter and Susan Krause are co-chairs so just contact us. Thanks for considering it.

# Chefs Corner



Do to this recipe missing some ingredients last month.

Here is the corrected recipe.

## Pumpkin Dessert

1(16oz.) can pumpkin	½ tsp. cinnamon
1 cup sugar	1 tsp. vanilla
1 can sweetened condensed milk	4 beaten eggs
<u>Topping</u>	
1 box carrot cake mix	1 cup chopped pecans
1¾ sticks butter (melted)	

Preheat oven to 350\*. Mix together pumpkin, sugar, eggs, cinnamon, and milk. Pour into a 9x13 inch greased pan. Sprinkle dry cake mix over pumpkin mix, then drizzle butter over dry mix. Bake at 350\* for 45 minutes. Sprinkle chopped pecans over top and press lightly into cake. Bake for 15 minutes more. Serve with whipped cream.

## Christmas Shortbread Drops

1 cup butter	2 cup flour
½ cup sugar	1 cup raisins
1 egg yolk	1 cup chopped walnuts
¼ tsp. salt	2 tsp. vanilla

Cream butter and sugar well. Blend in egg yolk, vanilla, flour, and salt. Mix well. Stir in raisins and walnuts. Drop by teaspoon on to greased cookie sheets and bake at 350\* for 12-15 minutes or till delicately browned.

## Easy Chicken Pie

2 cups diced potatoes	1 lb. pkg. mixed veggies
1½ cups chicken broth	½ cup heavy cream
Cornstarch to thicken	2 cups diced chicken
½ loaf of frozen bread dough or 6 dough balls	

Thaw dough and cut into bite size pieces. Cook potatoes and veggies till soft and then drain well. Heat broth and cream till hot and thicken with cornstarch to make a thick gravy. Pour gravy over potatoes and veggies then add chicken and mix carefully not to over mix, that it becomes mushy. Pour into a 9x13 inch baking dish. Place dough pieces on top and bake at 350\* for about 30 minutes or till dough is golden brown.

## Cheese Spread

1 block cream cheese	1½ cup shredded coppers Cheese
2 oz. pimento's chopped	¼ cup pickled relish
½ cup mayonnaise	

Mix all ingredients together and let chill for 24 hours. Serve with crackers.

# Music Notes



## O Little Town of Bethlehem

1. O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!  
2. For Christ is born of Ma - ry; And gath - ered all a - bove,  
3. How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, The won - drous gift is given!  
4. O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, De - scend to us, we pray;

A - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep The si - lent stars go by.  
While mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep Their watch of won - dering love.  
So God im - parts to hu - man hearts The bless - ings of His heav - en.  
Cast out our sin and en - ter in, Be born in us to - day.

Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth The ev - er - last - ing light;  
O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er Pro - claim the ho - ly birth!  
No ear may hear His com - ing, But in this world of sin,  
We hear the Christ - mas an - gels The great glad tid - ings tell;

The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to - night.  
And prais - es sing to God the King, And peace to all on earth.  
Where meek souls will re - ceive Him, still The dear Christ en - ters in.  
O come to us, a - bid with us, Our Lord Em - man - u - el!

of five stanzas and handed the words to his organist, Lewis Redner, saying, "Lewis, why not write a new tune for my poem. If it is a good tune, I will name it 'St. Lewis' after you."

Lewis struggled with his assignment, complaining of no inspiration. Finally, on the night before the Christmas program, he awoke with the music ringing in his soul. He jotted down the melody, then went back to sleep. The next day, a group of six Sunday school teachers and thirty-six children sang "O Little Town of Bethlehem."

Brooks was so pleased with the tune that he did indeed name it for his organist, changing the spelling to *St. Louis*, so as not to embarrass him. The fourth stanza, usually omitted from our hymnbooks, says:

*Where children pure and happy pray to the blessed Child,  
Where misery cries out to Thee, Son of the mother mild;  
Where charity stands watching and faith holds wide the door,  
The dark night wakes, the glory breaks, and Christmas comes once more.*

**Taken from the book "Then Sings My Soul" By Robert J. Morgan**

## O Little Town of Bethlehem 1868

At nearly six feet six, weighing three hundred pounds, Phillips Brooks cast a long shadow. He was a native Bostonian, the ninth generation of distinguished Puritan stock, who entered the Episcopalian ministry and pastored with great power in Philadelphia and in Boston. His sermons were topical rather than expositional, and he has been criticized for thinness of doctrine. Nonetheless he is considered one of America's greatest preachers. His delivery came in lightning bursts; he felt he had more to say than time in which to say it.

While at Philadelphia's Holy Trinity Church, Phillips, 30, visited the Holy Land. On December 24, 1865, traveling by horseback from Jerusalem, he attended a five-hour Christmas Eve service at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. He was deeply moved. "I remember standing in the old church in Bethlehem," he later said, "close to the spot where Jesus was born, when the whole church was ringing hour after hour with splendid hymns of praise to God, how again and again it seemed as if I could hear voices I knew well, telling each other of the *Wonderful Night* of the Savior's birth. "

Three years later, as he prepared for the Christmas season of 1867, he wanted to compose an original Christmas hymn for the children to sing during their annual program. Recalling his magical night in Bethlehem, he wrote a little hymn

## The Story Behind the “12 Days of Christmas”

The song was written by Catholics in England as a catechism song to teach their children about the Christian Faith. The song’s “gifts” help remember the teachings of the faith. “True Love” refers to God. “Me” refers to every Christian.

The other symbols mean the following:

- 1 Partridge in a Pear Tree—Jesus Christ.
- 2 Turtle Doves—the Old and New Testaments.
- 3 French Hens—Faith, hope, and Charity or the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Trinity.
- 4 Calling Birds—The Four Gospels.
- 5 Golden Rings—First Five Books of the Old Testament.
- 6 Geese-A-Laying—The Six Days of Creation.
- 7 Swans-A-Swimming—The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:8-10).
- 8 Maids-A-Milking—The Eight Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-10).
- 9 Ladies Dancing—The Nine Fruits of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)
- 10 Lords-A-Leaping—The Ten Commandments.
- 11 Pipers Piping—The Eleven Faithful Apostles, (Not Judas).
- 12 Drummers Drumming—The Twelve Points of Doctrine or Belief in the Apostle’s Creed.

