



THE PROCLAIMER

January - February 2024

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DOC) – MONONGAHELA, PA

Message From Your Pastor:

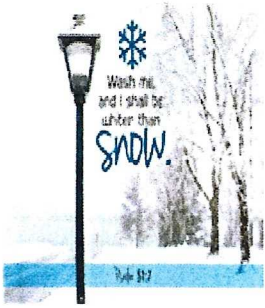
My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Once again, we are ringing in the New Year of 2024. Why do we say we are ringing in the New Year? Because, “ring in the new year” is one notion of doing something to celebrate the new year, it employs the religious concept of Christianity, that ringing a bell can ward off bad things. (**American University Alumni Association** formed in 1921 to promote further mutual understanding between the people of Thailand and the United States through instruction in their respective languages, customs and traditions.)

Another New Year notion is to make a list of resolutions. I sit down every January 1st and make a list of goals for the New Year. Then the following New Year's Day, I see how many I was able to accomplish. I haven't looked at 2023's list yet, but I usually only accomplish about 50%! The other 50% are things yet to be done! Maybe in 2024!!!!

But what kind of resolutions would be helpful for Christians? I found a few online (<https://proverbsmomma.wordpress.com/2015/01/01/5-new-years-resolutions-for-christians-and-10-bonus-resolutions-from-christianpost.com>) that can help us ring in the new year and strengthen our relationship with God:

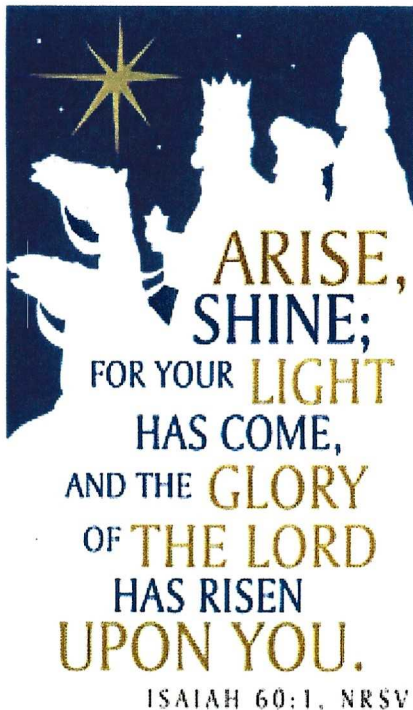
1. **Read your Bible daily (Psalm 119:105, Psalm 119:11, Romans 15:4, 2 Timothy 3:16-17)** - Don't get overwhelmed. You don't have to read the entire Bible at once (because then you would never comprehend all that you have read), but take it one verse at a time.
2. **Go to church more often (Hebrews 10:24-25, Psalm 150:1-6)** It is so important to go to church regularly so you can be spiritually fed through the word of the Lord. It doesn't matter if you have read the Bible several times and heard a lot of different takes on the same verse, the word of the Lord is a living, breathing thing and changes as different people read it and new context is brought to it (Hebrews 4:12). It is also important to surround yourself with other believers to help uplift and support you and encourage you along the correct path.
3. **Pray for wisdom (James 1:5)** Wisdom is something most people do not think to ask for in today's society, but it is so important. If we have the wisdom of God within us, we will make the right choices and follow God wholeheartedly.
4. **Find an accountability partner/friend who will help you grow in Christ and motivate and encourage you in the Lord.** Having a peer who is strong in the Lord, has the same beliefs as you, and can encourage you along the right path is such a



Our source of Light

January 6 marks the day of Epiphany, when the wise men (who were Gentiles) came to worship Jesus and bring him gifts. During the church-year season of Epiphany, we remember that God's Son is the Light of the whole world.

Ponder the gifts of Epiphany with these two reflections, written centuries apart:



Your light, dear God, surpasses all other light, because all light comes from you. Your fire surpasses all fire, because your fire alone burns without destroying. The flames of your fire reach into the soul, consuming the sin and selfishness that lie there. But far from damaging the soul, your fire sets it ablaze with love. What moved you to enlighten me with your truth? The fire of your love was the reason. You loved me so much that you could not bear to see me confused and perplexed. Can I ever repay the burning love which you have given me? No, because I have nothing of my own to give. Yet you assure me that the love which you put into my soul is repayment enough. You desire only the joy of seeing me receiving your gift. What more perfect Father could there be!

—Catherine of Siena (c. 1347-1380)

Epiphany beckons us to come to the light of Jesus Christ. Epiphany calls us to stare into that light until our inner darkness is fully expunged. Epiphany then sends us out into a dark and weary world as women and men with shining faces, until we say with the apostle Paul, "It is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" [see 2 Corinthians 4:6].

—Jason Gaboury, campus minister in New York City



HOT MEAL MONDAY

Time for Reflection

The start of a new year is a time for new beginnings. It's also a time of reflection. Let's take time to reflect on the things that made Monday Night Meals so special in 2023:

- the program continues to thrive after 2 years of outreach
 - the number of meals distributed has increased dramatically – reaching over 100 on some Monday nights
 - the donations of money and food items to the program have increased – even extending FROM others outside our church walls
 - more personal connections have been made with those who enter our doors each week (We shared joy with those who have found work and celebrated the birth of a new baby boy with one of our families. We grieved the loss of a recipient's loved one and mourned the loss of one of our own recipients.)
 - fellowship continues with those who volunteer each week
- (We take time to eat together and reflect on the events of the evening.)

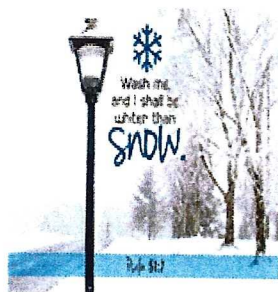
The past year was certainly one for the books! But, the New Year gives us the opportunity to add a new chapter to this book. We pray that the Lord will guide us to do great things in 2024.

Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you, 'declares the Lord,' plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Let us embrace the New Year with an open heart and a fierce spirit.

God bless you and your loved ones as you head into 2024.

Audrey and the Monday Night Meal Crew



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JANUARY

Anniversaries

21 Arthur & Donna Hruby



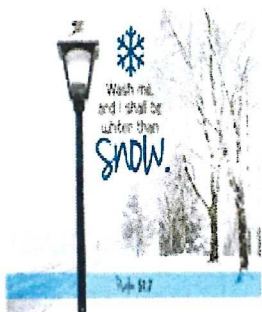
happy
BIRTHDAY

JANUARY

5 Barbara Henderson
5 Cathy Young
9 Nathan Petrosky
10 Peggy McLaughlin
13 Eileen Dipaola
13 Audrey Minjock
18 Dennis Petrosky
24 Rodger Young
26 Tom Kahl
29 Carol Coulter
29 Joyce Halechko
30 Bill Hess

FEBRUARY

1 Arthur Hruby, Sr.
2 Patty Gamble
4 Dorothy Cowan
4 David L. Petrosky
11 Paul Hochendonner
16 Marsha Davis
21 Donna Hochendonner
24 DJ Fogiato
27 Katie Minjock
28 Irene Leyda



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2024 Approved Budget

Category	2024 Approved Budget
Pastor	\$ 57,000.00
Administration	22,200.00
Property	48,280.00
Evangelism/Membership	2,200.00
Worship	2,025.00
Stewardship/Finance	4,625.00
Christian Education	1,950.00
World Outreach	17,800.00
Total Annual Budget	\$156,080.00



2024 ELECTED OFFICERS

Elder (4 Year Term) 2024-2027

Barbara Henderson

Deacons (3 Year Term) 2024-2027

Domenick Fogiato

Donna Hochendonner

Paul Hochendonner

Audrey Minjock

Kay Norris

Sandy Wentzell

Church Officers (1 Year Term)

Treasurer Nikki Mazza-Fredley (yr . 3)

Asst. Treasurer Patty Miller (yr. 1)

Financial Secretary Audrey Minjock (yr. 1)

Asst. Financial Secretary

Joe Mancinelli (yr. 3)

Church Clerk Audrey Minjock

Historian Audrey Minjock

Junior Deacon (1 Year Term)

Trustees (3 Year Term) 2024-2026



WORLD OUTREACH

Sock and Mitten Tree

Each November, a small Christmas tree is set up in the Narthex. It started as an outreach by the Christian Women's Fellowship. The items that were collected were delivered to the Washington County Children and Youth Services. When children are placed in emergency care through the foster program, they often are moved with only the clothes that can be placed in a garbage bag. This year through the generosity of the congregation, the following items were donated:

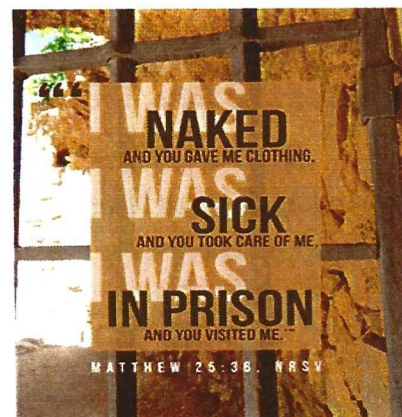
2 newborn sets
 6 children's coats
 6 individual gifts in a suitcase
 Assortment of children's books, toys and dolls
 20 pairs of gloves
 1 pair of mittens
 21 pairs of socks
 2 pajama tops
 1 fleece top
 3 pairs of mukluks/slippers
 12 toddler hats
 20 tousle caps and glove sets

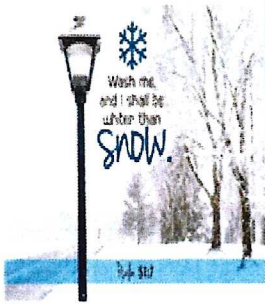
Thank you, Kathleen Mancinelli, for purchasing and delivering the items to Washington County Children and Youth Services so the children of Washington County could have a Merry Christmas.

The World Outreach committee gave \$800 to purchase the following at the Emporium in Charleroi, PA:

18 Steeler hoodies (Watt & Picket)
 3 Andrew McCutcheon Hoodies
 12 Sweatshirts (Steelers, Penguins and Pirates)
 10 Steeler/Penguins Tousle caps
 6 pairs of Steeler socks
 6 pairs of brown pants

And a \$100 cash donation was made towards the purchase of these items





ELDER'S PRAYER

Almighty Father,

We look forward for the New Year of 2024. Help us to abide by your words and help us focus on you. Bless our resolutions for the coming year.

As the New Year begins, we look to you for Hope, Joy, and Peace. We pray for hearts filled with kindness and compassion. Teach us to be mindful of the needs of others and to extend a helping hand.

We pray the New Year is blessed with your presence in all we do and we pray and ask in the name of Jesus, Our Lord and Savior. Amen

Elder Joe Mancinelli

DATES TO REMEMBER

JANUARY

- 1 New Year's Day
- 2 Prayer Meeting
- 6 Epiphany
- 8 Hot Meals
- 8 Board Meeting
- 9 Prayer Meeting
- 11 Praise & Worship
- 15 Hot Meals
- 16 Prayer Meeting
- 22 Hot Meals
- 23 Prayer Meeting
- 24 Elders Meeting
- 25 Praise & Worship
- 29 Hot Meals
- 30 Prayer Meeting

FEBRUARY

- 5 Hot Meals
- 6 Prayer Meeting
- 8 Praise & Worship
- 12 Hot Meals
- 12 Team Ministry Meeting
- 13 Prayer Meeting
- 14 Ash Wednesday
- 19 Hot Meals
- 20 Prayer Meeting
- 22 Praise & Worship
- 26 Hot Meals
- 27 Prayer Meeting
- 28 Elders Meeting



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strong asset to your life.

5. **Commit yourself fully to the Lord to do His will and live for Him (Psalm 37:5-6)**
When you live for the Lord and do His will in your Life, God will bless you and will allow His light to shine through you to help others come to see Him through your words and actions.

And here are ten bonus resolutions:

- **Resolve to stay faithful to Jesus Christ.** He is the one Truth, Way and Life. There's no reason to look elsewhere.
- **Resolve to not let anything**—a career, a significant other, social media, a house—**become an object of worship.**
- **Resolve to watch your language** and not speak any destructive talk, especially involving the name of God.
- **Resolve to prevent burnout** by putting aside work one day a week. Trust God to provide for your needs that day and just enjoy the time He's given you.
- **If your parents are living, resolve to talk to your parents** on a regular basis, and show them love and respect.
- **Resolve to be angry less.** Channel any feelings of rage, **which Jesus said are as severe as murder, into worshiping God and serving others. (Matthew 5:21-26)**
- **If married, resolve to honor your commitment to your spouse.** Whether in thought or in deed, stay pure and loyal in the union God made.
- **Resolve to not take anything that's not yours,** including stuff you can hold and put in your pocket, and plenty that you can't, **like music downloads, streaming movies and hours on your timecard.**
- **Resolve to be content with what you have,** and not worry about what others are amassing.

Let's all resolve to be the best Christians that we can be this year!

Happy New Year!

In His service,

Pastor Janet

New Year

fresh start