



The New Vision

Vol. 40, No. 12

www.office@mountvillecob.org

December 2022

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All are invited to participate in our adult and Children's Sunday School Classes at 9:00 a.m. Sunday Worship Service is in house or live stream Sunday mornings at 10:15 a.m.

<https://www.youtube.com/user/MountvilleCOB>

Nursery is available for younger children.

Our Staff:

Angela Finet – Pastor
John Hess – Director of Music
Gloria Hess – Organist
Jackie Sands – Office Administrator
Mary Rudy – Custodian

Mountville Church of the Brethren is located at the corner of College, Hoover, & Clay Streets in Mountville, PA. If you have further questions regarding the Mountville Church, please feel free to call the church office at 717-285-5122 or 717-285-7424 or email : Office@Mountvillecob.org

Love Notes from Pastor Angela

Make a joyful noise to the Beloved all the earth; break forth into grateful song and sing praises! Yes, sing songs of praise extolling Love's way; lift up your hearts with gratitude and joy!
- Psalm 98

If those words have a familiar ring to them this time of year, there's a reason for that. This Psalm was the basis for the beloved hymn *Joy to the World* by Isaac Watt. Perhaps you've never noticed, but this song is not included in the "Jesus' birth" section of our hymnal. In fact, it's in the section called "Kingdom." He rules the world with truth and grace!

As we think about the kingdoms of the world right now, perhaps joy is not the first word that comes to mind. But God's is an upside-down kingdom. It's counter-cultural... revolutionary. In God's kingdom, we find that "joy" is not another word for "happiness." Joy can be found especially in the midst of suffering, the work of justice, and the presence of compassion because Christ is there. God IS with us – Immanuel. This message of hope is one the world still so desperately needs.

So, this Advent, make it a priority to be here. As the days get shorter, we'll light another candle to brighten our neighborhood and our world. We'll be aided in this by the Live Advent Candles – each one sharing their unique perspective on joy. You won't want to miss this worshipful experience during this season of Advent - a time of waiting, a time of preparation, a time of joy!

With anticipation,
Pastor Angela



CHRISTMAS IS THE CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS, THE SAVIOUR OF MANKIND

Spotlight on New Members



In November, MCOB was blessed to welcome 5 new members. Here are a few highlights about them. There's so much more to learn about each member of our church family, so I hope you'll look for ways to "go deeper" and build great faith friendships!

Dave and Beth Serfass had experienced MCOB hospitality through lawn concerts in the past. But, at a recent library book sale in the church, Charlie Worrall's warm welcome and invitation to worship helped them to find a church home.

A native of Saylorsburg, PA, Dave spent 52 years serving as a pastor in the United Church of Christ in NY, HI, and PA. His 3 children and grandchildren are scattered from PA to Hawaii. Beth loved every day of the more than 33 years she spent teaching 1st grade. She was born and raised in Lancaster and moved to Landisville as a youngster. While Dave enjoys wood working and Beth enjoys reading and knitting, both of them enjoy a good movie, traveling, and attending musicals and the Fulton theatre.

Dave and Beth give thanks for the beautiful music and inspiring worship services, as well as the warm welcome they have received.

Harold and Janice Ulmer found their way to MCOB through the suggestion of Bill Kepner's mother. While Janice grew up in nearby Ironville, Harold made it to Ironville by the time he was a youth. Their teenage romance took a break until their marriage in 2013.

The Ulmers both spent decades in the United Methodist Church. While Janice spent her formative years in the Washington Boro Church of God, Harold was a "preacher's kid". Ask him about the great connection with Dave Serfass sometime!

When they're not enjoying travel or time with the families of Janice's son and Harold's two daughters, all out of state, you'll find Janice using her Elizabethtown College degree handling accounts payable work for the HVAC industry. She also enjoys square dancing (including at the Farm Show!), genealogy, and church history. Harold used his Lebanon Valley College degree in college administration and then as a pipe organ builder. Harold also enjoys cooking, woodworking, metalworking, and now serves as our church photographer.

The worship and the warm welcome have made the Ulmers feel at home at MCOB. They are grateful to join their new church family at being "Jesus in the Neighborhood"!

Joy Meley is a Mountville resident and a Mountville native, living in the house where she and many relatives grew up with her husband and 4 teenage children. Her parents still live next door.

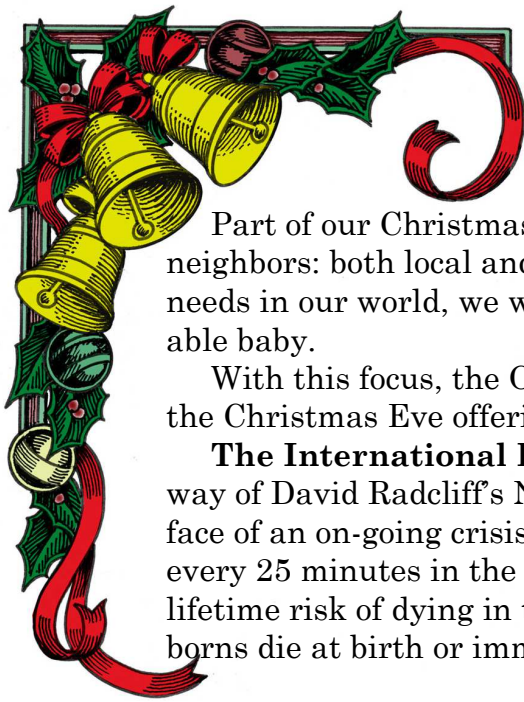
Joy's early experiences with MCOB came through her attendance at Girl Scout meetings, lawn concerts, and even her wedding 22 years ago.

Joy serves as a Penn Manor School social worker. In her free time, she enjoys family vacations, visiting national parks, taking walks, enjoying friends, and following the busy schedules of her children.

Joy, too, appreciates the warm, welcoming, and community-minded church that is MCOB!

Welcome to all! May you find a way to share your gifts, grow your faith, and enjoy many friendships in this place!





Christmas Eve Offering Designations

Part of our Christmas Eve tradition is to celebrate God's gift to us through gifts to our neighbors: both local and global. This year, as the Outreach Team considered the many needs in our world, we were reminded of the majesty of God, made flesh in a tiny, vulnerable baby.

With this focus, the Outreach Team selected these projects to receive equal shares of the Christmas Eve offering.

The International Half will go to the DRC (Democratic Republic of the Congo), by way of David Radcliff's New Community Project, for help in training 50 midwives in the face of an on-going crisis in maternal/newborn care. Indeed, a woman dies in childbirth every 25 minutes in the DRC, according to the World Health Organization, and women's lifetime risk of dying in the birthing process is 1 in 24. Almost 5% of the country's newborns die at birth or immediately after.

A two month training for 50 women costs \$1,500; Practitioner's Kits containing disinfectant, gloves and other essentials are \$40 per midwife.

The Local Half of the offerings will go to the Parish Resource Center for Baby Kits. The Parish Resource Center has been working with Union Community Care, the medical provider for many low-income folks in Lancaster and Lebanon Counties. They have requested Baby Kits to provide new moms with essentials to start them out right. The Outreach Team has decided to contribute money to help them provide as many gifts as possible. The current need is 25 Kits per month with pending requests to expand the program to provide even more. When a new mother and baby are released from the hospital, they can be sent home with a diaper bag full of basics to get them started.

Thank you for your generosity as we anticipate together the birth of the Christ child.

Advent Calendars & Advent Devotionals

Advent calendars for children will be available on the table in the narthex the first Sunday of Advent, November 27. You can also pick up the Adult 2022 Advent Devotional "Simple Gifts".

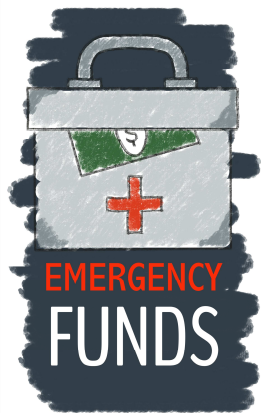
Worship on Christmas Day

This year, Christmas falls on Sunday. We will celebrate the birth of Christ with carols and the Scripture from Isaiah 52:7-10 which begins, How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

December Sermon Themes

- 4 - Isaiah 11:1-10 and Matthew 3:1-12, Heaven and Nature Sing-Loving Joy
- 11 - Isaiah 35:1-10 and Luke 1:46b-55, Heaven and Nature Sing-Joyful Joy
- 18 - Isaiah 7:10-16 and Matthew 1:18-25, Heaven and Nature Sing-Peaceful Joy
- 25 - Isaiah 52:7-10, Beautiful Feet





Serving Our Young Neighbors

Mountville Elementary School (MES) has blessed our church over the past four years with multiple opportunities to serve local children and families in need. MCOB members and friends have fulfilled dozens of Christmas wishes and have consistently responded whenever our contacts at the school have requested clothing, gift cards (for food and gasoline), help with several utility bills, lunch accounts, etc. We anticipate another opportunity to serve neighbors in need as Mountville Elementary again prepares for its annual "Christmas Mitten" project.

Most recently, school counselor Madelyn Saunders and Hempfield SD social worker Aleda Rissler asked that we supply underwear and socks for an 8 year-old boy. Two days later we received an email asking for clothing and shoes for three children whose family home was destroyed by fire. Our congregation's love and generosity has resulted in a fund designated for basic emergency needs of low-income MES families. Because this money is readily available, we were able to shop and deliver the needed clothing items to the school almost immediately. If you wish to help replenish our MES fund, please use a pew envelope and mark your gift for: "Mountville Elementary".

And if you have questions, or wish to add your name to our list of MES emergency shoppers, please contact Larry Booz.

Update on our Afghan Friends

After arriving 5 months ago, our Afghan family of five has settled nicely into the Lancaster community thanks to Church World Service and also to the Mountville congregation's significant contributions of time, dollars, and miles driven. Life is very different here for these former language and literature professors! Dad continues with mostly full-time employment at Packaging Corporation of America off Fruitville Pike. Mom stays mostly at home taking care of her family, but aspires to teach again one day. She is looking for seamstress work that she can do from their home. The 5 year old is doing very well in kindergarten.

Recent support of the family has included transportation to many medical and dental appointments (including root canals!!), education about banking and bill-paying, English/cultural lessons, and driving lessons for Mom. Recently, we've purchased and installed a new washer/dryer in their home and upgraded their cell phones. Our church has embraced the family with open arms, and they in turn consistently have expressed their gratitude back to us.

As the family becomes more and more self-sufficient, our church's week-to-week involvement soon will no longer be necessary. We recognize, though, that the family faces ongoing challenges as they navigate the complexities of medical insurance, auto maintenance, and managing a high cost of living on limited income. And, as Afghan refugees, they remain in a legal limbo until Congress passes the Afghan Adjustment Act. In the meantime, we've begun searching for a low-cost immigration lawyer who will be essential in helping our family file for asylum. We look forward to standing by them in their efforts to overcome this crucial hurdle. Thank you for your faithful prayers and support! — Larry Booz and Nancy Hess for the Welcome Team

Stitch ‘n Sew ‘n Share Returns

Hi! I'm Dottie Light,

Several years ago, before I became a member of our church family, Donna Steiner invited me to join a group called Stitch, Sew, and Share. I chuckled, and said,

"But I don't stitch or sew!" Her response was, "Do you share?"

So I started coming and found a great group of ladies to spend Wednesday afternoons with for a time of fellowship. I still don't stitch or sew, but I do love the sharing part of our name! Now I cut the material for bags for the 300 school kits that we pack each August, and I pass that material on for someone else to sew!

When the pandemic arrived, our times together came to a screeching halt! The kit bags are still getting made, and blankets, hats and mittens, too, but some of us decided we'd like to start meeting again, since we've missed the fellowship so much. We are happy to invite you to join us each Wednesday at 1:00 p.m., in Room 106, starting on November 30.

If you knit or crochet, you can help make afghans, baby blankets, hats, mittens, etc. Those who sew can help make the kit bags. And those who don't do any of those, we have some ladies who are willing to teach you! Or just come and enjoy the fellowship! We welcome you to share in our circle of friends, to stitch or sew or share!!



Forum Recap



The Congregational Forum was held on October 30 following a delicious meal of shepherd's pie served by Rick & Linda Weber and their team. Financial reports and an update on giving showed the generosity of the congregation heading into the final months of 2022. Calling people to serve in church leadership positions was also voted on. We looked at Shared Ministry Priorities which came out of discussions at Annual Conference. We approved the 2023 budget with a 3.5% increase over 2022. The new online giving option called tithe.ly was presented. Please refer to the November *New Vision* for more details about tithe.ly. Tom Musser gave a refugee resettlement update noting the successes and challenges facing our family from Afghanistan.

Mountville COB October 2022 Tithes & Offerings

For General Fund	\$ 21,130.00
Designated	\$ 3,304.00

Thank you for your faithful gifts!



DECEMBER SERVERS

Worship Leaders

4 - Nancy Hess
11 - Lois Silver
18 - Phyllis Kepner
24 - Bill Kepner
25 - Harold Ulmer

Ushers

Beth Hess
Steve Hess
Bob Keller
Holly Mele

Greeters

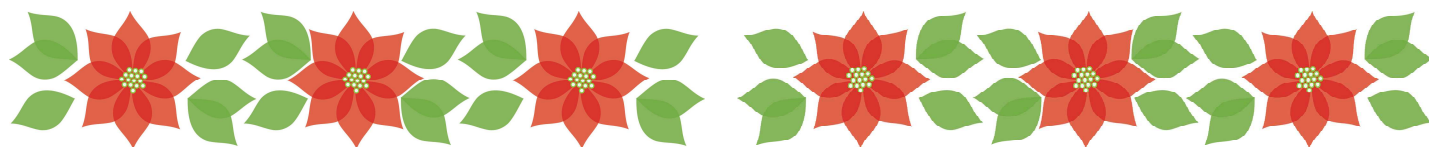
4 - Tom Musser, Charlie Worrall
11 - Carl & Louise Harnish
18 - Joel & Dawn Musser
25 - Steve Hess Family, and Cindy
Cindy Heisey

Children's Worship

4 - Joyce Kerns, Beth Hess
11 - Kitty Collier, Connie Renn
18 - Margie Musser, Sue Beiler
25 - Family Worship

Nursery

4 - Joan Boshnaugle
11 - Betsy Thomas
18 - Connie Renn
25 - No Nursery



Winter Weather Cancellation Policy

In the event that bad weather requires us to cancel church activities or worship services, these are the ways you will be notified:

1. Mountville Church of the Brethren website
2. Facebook notice
3. Church email
4. A phone call IF and only if you have requested a personal call.

If you would like a call if worship is cancelled and have not yet contacted our church office, please do so today.

Cancellation notices will be posted no later than 8:00 a.m. If you are unable to access any of these methods, please call Pastor Angela Finet or Jerry Bushong. The decision is made after carefully considering the weather forecast and the condition of the roads in Mountville and our parking lot. It is our hope that all persons will give priority to their health and safety when making a decision about traveling to church activities and worship services when the weather and road conditions are not optimal. Every attempt will be made to provide an online alternative.

Mental Health Resources

Crisis Text Line:
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:
Preventing Suicide in PA:
Coping with COVID-19 Stress:
PA's Support Helpline:
Disaster Distress Helpline:
Veterans in crisis:
COVID-19 resources:

Text 'PA' to 741741
1-800-273-8255
preventsuicidepa.org
bit.ly/covid-coping
855-284-2494
800-985-5990
veteranscrisisline.net
mhanational.org/covid19



LOOKING AHEAD

November 27: First Sunday of Advent

December 4: Bainbridge Band Christmas

Concert & Carol Sing, 2:30 pm

December 24: Christmas Eve Service, 7:00 p.m.

December 25: Christmas Day Worship: 10:15 a.m.

January 1: Worship: 10:15 .m.

January 8: Communion, 10:15 a.m.



*Deadline for the January 2023 New Vision articles is **Sunday, December 11, 2022.***



*"Your young . . . shall see Visions -
your old . . . shall dream Dreams."
- Acts 2:17-21*

**Address Service Requested
Dated Material Enclosed**