



Newsletter

Oct – Dec 2022

I remember a time when I was a kid. It was a time of children’s delight and parents’ dread. It would come sometime during the crisp, cool Autumn days. I’m talking about the arrival of the Christmas Wish Book, a special Sears and Roebuck catalog.

My sister and I would rush to get it. Each taking our turn, we would pour over the pages—spending extra time with sections of interests, ripping past the toys clearly not marketed to us. We dog-eared pages, circled certain items, starred preferred features. We wanted our parents to know just what we wanted—so they could properly prepare for our Christmas dawn.

Those Autumn days were filled with a hopeful longing. I would pause on certain pages. I would get lost in the thought of playing with the toys found there. I envisioned the adventures I could have with action figures, or spaceships, the wars I could win with bow or arrow or gun, and how fast I could make cars race down the track.

I’ve always had a bit of an active imagination. My mind is a place where I can imagine potential, possibilities. I might find myself more comfortable in the realm of future visions of what can be—than the current reality of what actually is. Autumn days can still be a place of hopeful longing.

The Fall newsletter may seem a far cry from a Wish Book. It does help us prepare for the coming dawn of Advent and Christmas morn (it’s a Sunday this year). You can dog-ear pages, circle information, calendar events, even get ideas on how to invest money—like buying toys for other kids.

It’s good to be prepared. It’s a vital spiritual practice to hope in a preferred future. Yet, I can still find myself focused too much on what can be—and not being present to what the Spirit has in this time and place. Looking toward the coming season, we can say this prayer to be grateful for what we have today.

*Help me be present, Lord, to the blessings of today.
Direct my attention to your presence each hours of the day,
even as I busy myself with the tasks of the season
and prepare for the One to come,
in Jesus’ name, Amen.*

Chris

The Community Breakfast Group News

The Community Breakfast Group joined forces with the SonShiners to sponsor a fall BBQ dinner. The event was a very successful, fun and enjoyable get-together held in Pierce Hall on September 24th. Great food, hardworking volunteers and a very supportive church and local community made for a great time. On the menu was BBQ pork loin, all donated and cooked by Richard Beckwith of Hilltown Smokehouse. Matt Eckhardt smoked turkey and pulled pork. Corn on the cob, corn bread, baked beans, coleslaw and watermelon rounded out the menu. Everything was delicious. We served approximately 90 meals and take-outs and had donations of \$1,350!! Wow!! After expenses, each group received \$500 to use for their missions and program. The idea was to celebrate the end of the summer season and visit with those who travel south for the winter. The group hopes to make this a yearly event - like the mid-winter turkey dinner, with the great fellowship and a fantastic meal.

We are planning to host the turkey dinner again, Saturday, February 25th, 2023. Mark your calendar, more details to follow. Can't wait!

Our first breakfast meeting of the new season was held on October 2. We set dates for the upcoming year. Fall dates –November 6th and December 4th. The January meeting will be held on January 8th – no one wanted to cook on New Years Day!!! We also discussed the BBQ dinner and what things to do differently next year.

If you'd like to be on our e-mail list, please reach out to Paul McMillan, Larry Eckhardt or Ted Bears. Everyone is invited to join us –come one, come all. Hope to see you at the November 6th, December 4th and January 8th breakfast. We eat at 8:00am sharp.

SonShiners

Fall has arrived and our seasonal events have come to an end. With COVID throwing a wrench in our usual routines we were able to participate in 2 events. We still have tabled for 2022 the Italian Dinner and Election Day Luncheon. We can look forward to 2023 and make decisions on what we want to do for fund raising. The Garden/Bake sale held with the Historical Society and the Joint BBQ were great successes and a joy to be together. We will resume our meetings on the 3rd Sunday of the month as holding a meeting at the same time as the Community Breakfast became a challenge.

Meetings until the end of the year as follows:

October 17th

November 20th

December 18th

8:00 am - bring a dish to share



Choir

It has been wonderful to have choir back to lead us in worship. We welcome a new member Jennifer Caswell who is singing with us. We missed one week but are back singing again. They will soon be starting to rehearse for the Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas seasons. If you are interested in singing, please see Bev. We welcome new singers.

Website

Each week you will find our Sunday morning service recorded for your listening devotions or quiet time. Also on here you will find monthly devotions that Pastor Bonnie Bates writes and Bev records music to go along with it. Check in to see any updated events listed at www.stephentownfederatedchurch.org.

Worship Committee

The worship committee meets on zoom each month to prepare for upcoming events. Currently we are discussing Thanksgiving, All Saints Sunday, Advent season and Christmas.



All Saints Sunday Oct 30th 9:30 a.m.

This is the Sunday we are asking people to bring pictures of deceased members who came before us to carry on the work of our church in our community. We are asking you on that Sunday to bring any pictures that you might want to share for our congregation. There will be stands to set the pictures on as well as a place for any that are already in frames. Please take them home at the end of the service. We invite all of you to share in this wonderful experience.



Thanksgiving Service

This service will be held on Sunday, November 20 at 9:30 a.m. *As usual we are collecting food for the food pantry that is housed in our church.* We ask that you bring any food donations up to the designated place at the front of the church before the service begins. These will then be given to the food pantry following the service. This is an ongoing mission that supports our community.

Food Pantry

The **Food Pantry** can always use: canned fruit, canned tuna, spaghetti sauce, chicken noodle soup, dry cereal, biscuit mix, coffee. And during the holiday season: stuffing, cranberry sauce, gravy



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Advent

Our first Sunday in Advent begins on November 27 at 9:30.

We will be having a hanging of the greens to decorate our church following the service. Each Sunday in Advent we will be discussing the meaning of many of our Christmas symbols. Stay tune to our website for further updates. *Advent devotionals will be sent out the week before. Please watch for your copy in the mail.*

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Beginning Nov 27th for the four weeks of Advent we are asking anyone, any family, or couple that has an interest in lighting the advent candles for a Sunday to let Pastor Chris or Bev know you are interested in being a part of this weekly advent celebration.

Blue Christmas Service *Sunday, December 16th 4 p.m.* -Honoring life and loss in the holidays. The Christmas season has an amazing ability to trigger nostalgic memories—both of happy and sad, gratitude and grief. The Blue Christmas tradition honors the fact that for many of us we experience all kinds of loss—the loss of relationships, loss of trust, loss of jobs, loss of health, loss of faith, the loss of joy. Authentic spirituality does not hide this truth, and instead allows us the space for honesty, reflection, community and practices of support. No matter your circumstance, this is an open welcoming service of candlelight, songs, prayers, and hope. The community is welcome.

Christmas Eve *December 24, at 7:30 p.m.*

Come and join us this year for a service of Lessons and Carols...a Christmas Eve service of special music with our choir and soloists as well as carol singing of familiar seasonal hymns for all. All visiting family members and community members are welcome to come and share this Yearly celebration of the birth of our Christ.

Christmas Day Service *December 25, at 9:30 a.m.*

Wow! How lucky are we to have our reason for the season (Christmas) to actually fall on Sunday this year. It is very difficult to justify not having A Christmas service on Christmas Sunday since this is a part of our Christian heritage. We ARE having a service that we hope you will come and enjoy before the family celebrations. Better still bring the family with you and start your celebration with us at 9:30 a.m. we are planning lots of carol singing and perhaps a little history of a carol or two.



October	3	Tom Smith	December	5	Marianne Smith
	6	Joanne Hennig		5	Acelyn Plouffe
	7	Janet Atwater		6	Jennie O'Brien
	12	Mary French		17	Janice Walther
	16	Jessica Rontey		18	Fred Wallbank
	18	Chris Garrison		19	Lynn Morris
	20	Stephen Schnyer		21	Joy Lowenthal
	26	Richard Terpening		25	Donna Densing
	28	June Ross		26	Nancy Beal
				26	Kelsey Hennig
November	2	Kalee Hennig		28	Malik Plouffe
	9	Mark Morris		31	Joan C. McMillan
	11	Judy Leland		31	Helen Wallbank
	11	Aliza Berry			
	19	Valerie Sandstrom			
	21	Sopha Corral			

ANNUAL MEETING

Our annual meeting will be held on January 15th, 2023 following the church service. Please plan to attend this important part in the life of our church. Also, those responsible for group reports please have them into Arlene Longo email: alongo6177@fairpoint.net no later than Dec 15th if possible. I know it's not quite the end of the year, but it takes time to create the report packet for the congregation by the first Sunday of the year.

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thurs day	Friday	Saturday
9:00 a.m. choir rehearsal 9:30 a.m. Service 10:30 a.m. Coffee Hour Oct 30 All Saints – bring photos Nov 20 Food Pantry Donations Nov 27 Hanging of the Greens – after church December 25 Christmas Service						9:00-11:00 a.m. Food Pantry Nov 5 12pm Memorial Service Donna Mullet
Dec. 16 4pm Blue Christmas Service		Worship Cmmt. Mtg Zoom Nov 8 7pm Gen Com 4th week of month Zoom 7 pm	6:00 p.m. AA	Choir 6:30 p.m.		Dec 24 7:30 pm Christmas Eve Service

Each month: 1st Sunday ---Communion – Open to all

2nd Sunday---Hymn Sing at beginning of service

It is time to place your orders for poinsettias in memory of your loved ones. This year the poinsettias are \$10.00 a piece. We are asking that you have your order in by December 4th. You can send your check and order form to: **Stephentown Federated Church, PO Box 10, Stephentown, NY 12168**. Poinsettias will be placed on the altar in time for our Christmas Eve service.

Your name or family name(s)	In memory of:
Your name or family name(s)	In memory of:
Your name or family name(s)	In memory of:
Your name or family name(s)	In memory of:



Total number of poinsettias ordered at \$10.00 a piece _____

Your total amount enclosed \$ _____