

## A Light in the Darkness

Sometimes the world seems to be a dark place. We turn on the television, open the newspaper, or see a news feed on the internet and our heart sinks. We read of big troubles and problems all around the world, both near and far away.

“Have any of you known trouble?”

Yes, indeed, trouble seems to abound more and more often these days. As I am writing this, Paris was attacked just a few days ago. Violence happens on some very large scales and this reminds me of the attacks of 9/11 in our country.

These dark and dangerous days are referred to in the Bible. John’s Gospel speaks about darkness:

“In him (Jesus) was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”

Jesus is the light of the world! No matter how dark things appear, the darkness never ever overcomes the light of Jesus!

In Matthew 5, which is Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, he says:

“You are the light of the world... so, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”

Little lights in the darkness make a difference; many little lights, collectively, make a huge difference!

It seems to me that we can each be a witness of Christ’s birth in this season since we are believers. We are a light in this world only because Jesus is the light that overcomes the darkness. We get our light from him.

I am sometimes a little tired of the political correctness in our current society. Don’t get me wrong, I do believe in the value of diversity both in thinking and even in belief. However, if we don’t stand for something of importance at least sometimes, then what are we really standing for anyway?

I want to stand for Christ, who was born in Bethlehem a long time ago. But we do not forget that birth. We celebrate it every year in this month of December. So let’s celebrate it! We should be proud to be Christians because of what Jesus did for us and what his birth means for us! We should not be obnoxious about it, but we should be little lights that shine even on the dark days in our world.

So light a candle or a light in your home this year. Remember that Jesus is the Light of the world, and remember that you are also a light in the world today. Live it by your actions and be a light to others.

Merry Christmas!



Bob Shank

**Gather! Grow! Make a Difference!**

# Daily Scripture Readings

**December 1**

Luke 1

**December 2**

Luke 2

**December 3**

Luke 3

**December 4**

Luke 4

**December 5**

Luke 5

**December 6**

Luke 6

**December 7**

Luke 7

**December 8**

Luke 8

**December 9**

Luke 9

**December 10**

Luke 10

**December 11**

Luke 11

**December 12**

Luke 12

**December 13**

Luke 13

**December 14**

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**December 15**

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**December 16**

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**December 17**

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**December 18**

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**December 19**

Luke 19

**December 20**

Luke 20

**December 21**

Luke 21

**December 22**

Luke 22

**December 23**

Luke 23

**December 24**

Luke 24

**December 25**

Micah 1

**December 26**

Micah 2

**December 27**

Micah 3

**December 28**

Micah 4

**December 29**

Micah 5

**December 30**

Micah 6

**December 31**

Micah 7

**Gather! Grow! Make a Difference!**

# DECEMBER

## To Serve you in December

<b>Greeters</b>	8:30
6	Norma Snow
13	Jackie Herrero
20	Kirsten Lee
27	Janet Woolever
	11:00
6	Gary Braman
13	Joanne Reed
20	Nancy & Marcos Nascimento
27	BJ Bachman
<b>Ushers</b>	8:30
DeAnn Harris	
Kay Bucci	
Janet Woolever	
Norma Snow	
	11:00
Dick Seip	
Bob Dellicker	
Sue Gouger	
Kelly Edinger	
Eva Knight	
<b>Counters</b>	
Carole Everitt & Doris Philips	
<b>Altar Guild</b>	
JoAnn Calkins & Joanne Reed	
<b>Soup Kitchen</b>	
<b>Sunday's at 4:00 pm</b>	
6	Feeding Families - Diane
13	McMichael's UMC-Rachel Shock
20	Pocono Internal Medicine-Nancy Fisch
27	Pen Argyl UMC-Tom Odenwelder
<b>Tuesday's at 5:00 pm</b>	



## OUR CHURCH STAFF:

<b>Ministers</b>	Everyone
<b>Pastors</b>	Bob Shank & Ted Good
<b>Pastor Emeritus</b>	Tom Anderman
<b>Church Secretary</b>	Jackie Herrero
<b>Choir Director</b>	David Lantz
<b>Organist</b>	Marti Lantz
<b>Youth Leader</b>	Vin Zelizo
<b>Handbell Director</b>	Lynn Seip
<b>Custodian</b>	Matt Parton

## OUR CHURCH LEADERS:

### Daniel's Dream Team

Chairperson, Sue Scarborough  
admin@poconoymca.org

### Worship

Chairperson, Pastor Bob Shank  
bobshank@stroudsburgumc.com

### Property & Building

Chairperson, Dick Seip  
relseip@ptd.net

### Servant Resource Team

Chairperson, C. J. Penwell  
cjpen53@ptd.net

### Stewardship

Chairperson, Paul Edinger  
paul.edinger@stroudsburgumc.com

### Missions

Chairperson, Elizabeth Miller  
erm822@gmail.com

### Membership & Evangelism

Chairperson, Peggy Stewart  
bpstew@juno.com

**Lay Leader**  
Beryl Hellgren  
bykoh@verizon.net

## UMW & Missions Updates

### UMW Jam Sale

Jams will be available for sale after Sunday services until sold out. \$4.00/jar.

Jam makes a great gift!

The following flavors are available:

Strawberry Jam

Blueberry Jam

Peach Jam

Apple Pie Jam (with raisins)

Apple Pie Syrup (with raisins)

UMW will be selling Rada knives during after service fellowship on December 6 & December 13.

Enjoy a Bear-y Good Christmas Tea hosted by SUMC UMW. Saturday, December 12 from 2-4 pm in Fellowship Hall. Bring cookies or finger foods to share. Bring a special teddy bear or doll and a story to share about it. All women of the church are invited. Bring a friend. Contact Joni Singer or Ruth Weber with questions. See you there.

The Missions Team has gift baskets, scarves and table runners for sale during after service fellowship on December 6 & December 13. Stop by for great inexpensive gift ideas!

The Missions Committee has some exciting announcements for the new year! Each month we will be doing a Monthly Missions Challenge, highlighting a mission SUMC supports and hosting a variety of fundraisers and item drives. To kick it off in the Christmas season, December is Heifer International Month. We will be hosting a Living Gift Market on Sunday, November 29 and continue fundraising for Heifer until January 1. There will also be an online marketplace where you can donate - more details and the website address to come. We thank you for your continued support and hope to see everyone involved in this month's Monthly Missions Challenge!

# Dates to Remember

Saturday, December 5 - 6:00 pm - Pizza with Santa  
Saturday, December 12 - 2:00 pm - UMW Christmas Tea  
Sunday, December 13 - 8:30 & 11:00 - Choir Christmas Cantata  
Thursday, December 24 - 7:30 pm - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service  
Thursday, December 24 - 11:00 pm - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service  
with Communion

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## Pumpkin Pie by Alberta Weber



- 2 cups cooked fresh pumpkin
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. nutmeg
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. cloves
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 2 Tbsp. corn starch

Mix and pour into pie crust - sprinkle with cinnamon. Bake at 350° for 40-50 minutes. Serve with whipped cream or cool whip.

## Strawberry Parfait Pie by Ruth Sibley Bensinger

- 8" or 9" pie shell
- Heat 1 1/4 cups liquid (juice drained from 1 package frozen strawberries plus water) to boiling in 2 qt. sauce pan. Remove from heat.
- Add 1 package lemon jello - stir until dissolved.
- And 1 pint vanilla ice cream - cut into pieces to hot liquid - stir immediately until melted.
- Chill until mixture is thickened but not set - 25-35 minutes
- Turn into cooled baked shell. Top with whipped cream if desired.



I would like to thank Bob Fox, Mike Fox, Matt Heller and Kelly Heller for working in the kitchen preparing and cooking food for the Holiday Market.

Thank you to Gary Braman for the great job designing and printing the menu order forms.

Thank you to UMW for the delicious soups that we sold as part of the lunch menu.

Thank you to Gale Butz, Kathy Cook, Bob & Joanne Reed and Claribel Sebring for their generous donations.

Thank you to Vin Zelizo for being the cashier.

Thank you to the Youth Group for the great job taking and serving food orders.

Thank you to everyone who came out, tried our food and supported the Holiday Market.

May God bless you this holiday season.

- Deb Fox



### December Birthdays

1	Tim Stewart
5	Carol Romansky
11	Emily Vail
14	Jimmy Stewart
18	Alex Herrero
18	Carole Vuchak
20	Lydia Shank
20	James Shank
20	Scott Sebring
23	Robin Farrow
26	Betty Michelin
28	Rose Schwedler
28	Cindy Transue
31	Crista Kopec

If you would like a card on your special day,  
please call the church office -  
570-421-6020



## Christmas Concert

The Pleasant Valley Choral Society will present its annual Christmas Concert on Saturday, December 12th at 7:00 pm, and Sunday, December 13th at 3:00 pm at the Pleasant Valley High School auditorium in Brodheadsville, PA. This year's concert will feature traditional favorites, as well as lesser known songs, both secular and sacred. Attending the concert would be a great way for you and your family and friends to begin your celebration of the Christmas season. Suggested donation is \$8.00 for adults while children under 12 are free. Tickets can be purchased at the door. For more information, please call 570-402-2026.

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It suddenly seemed important for me to let you all know how much my faith and Methodist connections have helped these past couple of months. Thank you for your words of encouragement.

To keep the brain going I do crossword puzzles, and in between therapy and medical testing, I read. "Quotes" are of interest and one has lingered more than any. Because I liked it - I'd like to share it.

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote:

"What lies behind us  
and dies ahead of us  
are small matters  
compared to what  
lies within us!"

Now isn't that a lovely thought! Thank you for your cards and visits. I hope to be going home in a few days.

- Ruth Sibley Bensinger  
Nov. 1, 2015

## HOLIDAY MARKET 2015 REPORT

This year's Holiday Market took a lot of planning, effort and follow-through, for which I thank all of you who helped in any way throughout the year including donations for the Market tables. Unfortunately, although I couldn't be there, the people I have spoken to say we had less customers than last year, and those people were not spending much money for either handmade items or food. We had lots of food to sell, but some left over. Not all vendors made out very well, including our own church groups.

I do wish to thank everyone who stepped in to take over for me the last couple of weeks when my husband was in the hospital and afterward, especially Ruth Weber, who picked up the ball for me overseeing all the details. Everyone did a marvelous job and we were able to avoid some of last year's problems.

Due to Phil's health concerns, I will be unable to take the coordinator's job in the future. We will need someone to step forward to fill this position if we are to have future Markets. I will be glad to pass along all my information from the past two years and answer any questions. Please prayerfully consider whether you would be interested in doing this. We begin planning for next year some time in February and there are already a lot of people on the committee. Although this has been a UMW-sponsored project, if UMW folds, another group will need to sponsor the Market. I would ask that all SUMC groups consider doing this.

Thank you,

Lois Shaffer, Coordinator



## DECEMBER 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>29</b> <b>8:30 AM</b> Worship-Sanctuary <b>9:45 AM</b> Sunday School - Children - Adults <b>11:00 AM</b> Worship/Sanctuary <b>4:00 PM</b> Soup Kitchen-Dining Room	<b>30</b> <b>1:15 PM</b> Monday Tea Time-Nancy Haase's Home <b>7:00 PM</b> Cherub Choir Rehearsal <b>7:00 PM</b> Mostly Mondays Small Group	<b>1</b> <b>5:00 PM</b> Soup Kitchen <b>7:00 PM</b> Digging Deeper Small Group-Conference Room <b>7:00 PM</b> Experiencing God Small Group-Lounge	<b>2</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> Bible Study-Lounge <b>2:00 PM</b> Stitch & Pray Small Group-Lounge <b>6:00 PM</b> Cub Scouts <b>7:00 PM</b> Handbell Rehearsal - Sanctuary	<b>3</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> My Brothers' Keepers Quilting & Little Quilts-Downstairs <b>7:00 PM</b> Scouts <b>7:00 PM</b> Youth Group <b>7:30 PM</b> Choir Rehearsal	<b>4</b> Church Office Closed	<b>5</b> <b>6:00 PM</b> Pizza with Santa-Fellowship Room
<b>6</b> <b>8:30 AM</b> Worship/Communion-Sanctuary <b>9:45 AM</b> Sunday School - Children - Adults <b>11:00 AM</b> Baptism of Bentley Jack Storm <b>11:00 AM</b> Worship/Communion-Sanctuary <b>4:00 PM</b> Soup Kitchen-Dining Room	<b>7</b> <b>1:15 PM</b> Monday Tea Time-Nancy Haase's Home <b>7:00 PM</b> Cherub Choir Rehearsal <b>7:00 PM</b> Mostly Mondays Small Group	<b>8</b> <b>5:00 PM</b> Soup Kitchen <b>7:00 PM</b> Digging Deeper Small Group-Conference Room <b>7:00 PM</b> Experiencing God Small Group-Lounge	<b>9</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> Bible Study-Lounge <b>6:00 PM</b> Cub Scouts <b>7:00 PM</b> Handbell Rehearsal - Sanctuary	<b>10</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> My Brothers' Keepers Quilting & Little Quilts-Downstairs <b>7:00 PM</b> M & E Meeting-Lounge <b>7:00 PM</b> Scouts <b>7:00 PM</b> Youth Group <b>7:30 PM</b> Choir Rehearsal	<b>11</b> Church Office Closed	<b>12</b> <b>2:00 PM</b> UMW Tea-Fellowship Room
<b>13</b> Choir Christmas Cantata-both services <b>8:30 AM</b> Worship-Sanctuary <b>9:45 AM</b> Sunday School - Children - Adults <b>11:00 AM</b> Worship/Sanctuary <b>4:00 PM</b> Soup Kitchen-Dining Room	<b>14</b> <b>1:15 PM</b> Monday Tea Time-Nancy Haase's Home <b>7:00 PM</b> Cherub Choir Rehearsal <b>7:00 PM</b> Mostly Mondays Small Group	<b>15</b> <b>5:00 PM</b> Soup Kitchen <b>7:00 PM</b> Digging Deeper Small Group-Conference Room <b>7:00 PM</b> Experiencing God Small Group-Lounge <b>7:00 PM</b> Stitch & Pray Small Group-Fellowship Room	<b>16</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> Bible Study-Lounge <b>6:00 PM</b> Cub Scouts <b>7:00 PM</b> Handbell Rehearsal - Sanctuary	<b>17</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> My Brothers' Keepers Quilting & Little Quilts-Downstairs <b>7:00 PM</b> Scouts <b>7:00 PM</b> Youth Group <b>7:30 PM</b> Choir Rehearsal	<b>18</b> Church Office Closed <b>12:00 PM</b> Armitage Family Christmas Dinner	<b>19</b> Armitage Family Christmas Dinner Clean Up
<b>20</b> <b>8:30 AM</b> Worship-Sanctuary <b>9:45 AM</b> Sunday School - Children - Adults <b>11:00 AM</b> Worship/Sanctuary <b>4:00 PM</b> Soup Kitchen-Dining Room	<b>21</b> <b>7:00 PM</b> Cherub Choir Rehearsal <b>7:00 PM</b> Mostly Mondays Small Group	<b>22</b> <b>5:00 PM</b> Soup Kitchen <b>7:00 PM</b> Digging Deeper Small Group-Conference Room <b>7:00 PM</b> Experiencing God Small Group-Lounge	<b>23</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> Bible Study-Lounge <b>6:00 PM</b> Cub Scouts <b>7:00 PM</b> Handbell Rehearsal - Sanctuary	<b>24</b> Church Office Closed <b>7:30 PM</b> Christmas Eve Candle Light Service <b>11:00 PM</b> Christmas Eve Candle Light Service with Communion	<b>25</b> Merry Christmas!	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> <b>8:30 AM</b> Worship-Sanctuary <b>9:45 AM</b> Sunday School - Children - Adults <b>11:00 AM</b> Worship/Sanctuary <b>4:00 PM</b> Soup Kitchen-Dining Room	<b>28</b> Church Office Closed <b>7:00 PM</b> Cherub Choir Rehearsal <b>7:00 PM</b> Mostly Mondays Small Group	<b>29</b> <b>5:00 PM</b> Soup Kitchen <b>7:00 PM</b> Digging Deeper Small Group-Conference Room <b>7:00 PM</b> Experiencing God Small Group-Lounge	<b>30</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> Bible Study-Lounge <b>6:00 PM</b> Cub Scouts <b>7:00 PM</b> Handbell Rehearsal - Sanctuary	<b>31</b> Church Office Closed	<b>1</b> Happy New Year!	<b>2</b>

STROUDSBURG UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
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**December 2015**

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