MCPRESBY NEWS

MCDONALD PRESBYTERIAN



Christmas Eve Services
5:00 & 11:00 p.m.

CHURCH CHRISTMAS DINNER

Every family has to have Christmas Dinner! Our family also loves to get together and celebrate the Birth of Jesus with a special meal. On Sunday, December 20th, we will gather in Trinity Fellowship Hall after worship to share a holiday meal together. Meat will be provided, and everyone is invited to bring their favorite side or dessert to add to our meal. This is the perfect Sunday to invite friends and family to worship and to share in our common meal after church.



In this issue...

Pastor's Page ~ 2
Announcements ~ 3
Missions ~ 4
O.C.C. ~ 5
Music/ Friendsgiving ~ 6
Life Groups ~ 7
Youth ~ 8
Church Info ~ 9
Birthdays & Anniversaries ~ 10
Calendar ~ 11 & 12
Salvation Army/ Love & Prayers ~ 13

LET IT BE A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory!

Revelation 19:6-7a

In a special way, the story of the birth of Jesus, and especially the angel appearances, are glimpses of heaven. God sent messengers to share the powerful news regarding what was about to happen. A heavenly reality was being revealed on Earth. God's intentions for special events are revealed to us at the time and manner of his choosing. The curtains of heaven are pulled back at special moments, Jesus'baptism, him slipping through the hands of those who wanted to harm him at Nazareth, his transfiguration, and the earthquake and darkness that marked his death on the cross. The list could go on with miracles and wisdom that exceeded that of the Jewish leaders even at a young age.

In these moments, God breaks through the visible laws of physics and enters into our reality through dreams, visions and miracles. These supernatural events are actually a more authentic version of reality than what we experience on a daily basis. The most authentic picture of reality includes a beautiful and sophisticated spiritual dimension where, above everything else, there are great multitudes of angels and beings in heaven worshiping God and proclaiming, "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns."

When we step into the story of the Holy Family and live into the message God shared with Mary and Joseph, Elizabeth and others, we can't help but be filled with love and rejoicing. Our reality encompasses both the spiritual and the physical. The fullness of life that exists with faith in Jesus is far more powerful and glorious than the godless life that others choose to live. We have hope and peace that passes understanding because our eyes have been opened just like Mary's. God was breaking into the world through the baby in her womb. Much would stand against this child but the forces of love would overcome every assault and every attempt to block the rescue of God's children.

With all this being said we do not need to have our own vision or see a supernatural miracle to be convinced that Jesus is sitting at the right hand of the Father. All we need is to pursue God in our time and see the evidence that he leaves all around us of his love and glory. May the wonder of the season draw you deep into the heart of our Father in heaven and know that we have every reason to be filled with joy and laughter because of all the things he has done for us.

With Christmas Joy,

Dr. Justin

DEACON'S DOINGS

Our next Deacon Meeting is Sunday, December 6. Deacon hospitality and Christmas flower distribution for covenant partners to help deliver to our shut-ins is on Sunday, December 13.

Our annual soup fundraiser is being planned again, with a kick-off luncheon on Sunday, February 7, following church, in Calvary Fellowship Hall. Come and taste the new soups we have planned for 2027!

ONLINE GIVING

Did you know that you can make your weekly offering and other church contributions online? You can do this by visiting mcdonaldpres.org, or you may scan the QR code.

SILVER SOULS NEWS

Can you hear the sweet sounds of Christmas Carols in the air? Is the smell of cinnamon and vanilla beginning to fill your homes? Is there a chill in the air that a warm fireplace can chase away? Well, that means it is nearly time for our Silver Souls Christmas Gathering scheduled for Wednesday, December 9 at 11:30 in Trinity Fellowship Hall. Please remember to get your RSVP's in to the office by December 1st. We look forward to sharing time together in devotions, singing, sharing memories and sharing a delicious holiday luncheon! Any questions, please call Syndria at 412-337-3831.



HEARTS & HANDS

Our next Hearts & Hands gatherings will be on Friday, December 4th and Friday, January 8th, from 6-8pm in Trinity Parlor. Everyone is invited to attend. You may bring a craft or project of your own to work on. We also have a few crafts on hand that you may do. We would love for you to join us for this time of fun and fellowship!



ROSE MANOR OUTREACH

Our monthy gatherings at Rose Manor are as follows:
Monday, December 21st 5:30-6:30= Carol Sing & Party
Monday, January 18th 5:30-6:30= Worship
Wednesday, January 20th= Bingo



FOOD BANK NEWS

For the months of December & January, the Food Bank is requestingnon-perishable items of your choice that can be dropped off in Calvary Parlor. They are also accepting cash and check donations. Please make checks payable to McDonald Presbyterian Church and indicate"Food Bank"on the memo line. Please contact Ed Nalesnick with any questions.



BLESSING BOX

Did you know that we have a blessing box located outside our church office? The blessing box has non-perishable food items that members of our community may take for their use in times of need, and it is thriving! If you would like to make a donation to the box, you may drop off items in the church office. Popular items include, but are not limited to, breakfast items, peanut butter & jelly, noodles, mashed potatoes, soup, canned meats, spices, and condiments/sauces

YEAR-END MISSION GIVING

As of this writing, McFall Fest proceeds are still being tallied. This fact demonstrates your generosity that continues to bless long after the last scarecrow has been boxed and stored away. Our humble thanks go out to each and everyone of you for the time, talent, and treasure you contributed to our 2026 mission-driven event. Most importantly, we thank God for his faithfulness, encouragement, and goodness.

Last month, we reported that proceeds were over $15,000. We have traditionally provided 10% of proceeds to nine separate programs and organizations, holding 10% in mission reserve. It is our intention to do so again this year. We are delighted to provide special gifts to:

MPC Vacation Bible School 2027
MPC Summer Service Week 2027
ReNew Youth Ministry

Choices Pregnancy Services
Lifewise Academy
Pine Springs Camp

Faith Comes By Hearing
Operation Christmas Child
Michael Stewart Robb

In addition to the distribution of McFall Fest proceeds, several area organizations have also received year-end monetary gifts to further each of their worthwhile causes. These organizations include Fellowship of Christian Athletes of Fort Cherry School District, Faith Fortifiers of Fort Cherry High School, Helping Hands (Blessing Tree) of Fort Cherry School District, and Center UP Church/Summer Helping Hands program.

Additionally, missions funds helped co-sponsor a table at the annual benefit dinner of Choices Pregnancy Services. Also, a few of our Life Groups and individual Covenant Partners have blessed the clients of Choices by adopting three families this Christmas and donating winter baby clothes along with other much needed baby items.

"And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need, and plenty left over to share with others. ~ 2 Corinthians 9:8

2026 OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD UPDATE

"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows." James 1:17

Thank God for the good and perfect gift of His Son, Jesus.
We thank Him and all of you for making it possible for MPC to send **1,036** shoebox gifts through Operation Christmas Child this year!

To everyone who prayed, donateditems, prepared for the packing party, attended the all-church party, packed a shoebox at home or online, donated to defray OCC ministry costs and shipping, and/or volunteered at the drop off center this shoebox season…
please know your time, energy, resources, dedication and sacrificial love will make an eternal difference in so many lives!

****

Wearevery grateful forthe followingbusinesses thatgenerouslydonatedshoeboxesorgiftcards:

Costco (North Fayette)
Home Depot (Bethel Park, Bridgeville, North Fayette, Ohio Twp., Ross Twp., Washington, West Mifflin)
Lowe's (Bethel Park, North Fayette)
Sam's Club (North Fayette)
Shop 'N Save (Imperial)



We will start planning for our 2027 Packing Party in January!
Be on the lookout for details about an easy way to help purchase items for the shoeboxes. As always, if you have any OCC-related questions, please contact Michelle Unruh (412-720-8232).





MUSIC REHEARSALS FOR DECEMBER AND JANUARY

December 3: Jubilant Ringers 6:00, Echoes of Mercy 7:00, Sacred Sounds 7:30
December 8: Amplify, 6:30
December 10: Jubilant Ringers 6:00, Echoes of Mercy 7:00, Sacred Sounds 7:30
December 17: Grace Notes 6:00, Echoes of Mercy 7:00, Sacred Sounds 7:30
December 22: Echoes of Mercy 7:00, Sacred Sounds 7:30



January 7: Grace Notes 6:00, Echoes of Mercy 7:00, Sacred Sounds 7:30
January 14: Echoes of Mercy 7:00, Sacred Sounds 7:30
January 21: Grace Notes 6:00, Echoes of Mercy 7:00, Sacred Sounds 7:30
January 28: Echoes of Mercy 7:00, Sacred Sounds 7:30

MUSICAL FUN FACT

In the 1500s, around the Reformation, there were disagreements about music in the church. John Luther was for singing hymns and carols, while John Calvin limited music and singing to psalms. It was common practice to use and reuse well-known tunes in that time period up to the early 1900s. That said, the "Doxology" is set to a tune written by Louis Bourgeois. The tune was first published in 1551 in the Geneva Psalter, with the words from Psalm 100. The tune itself became known as "The Old 100th." Ten years later, Rev. William Kethe published it with the words from Psalm 134. The setting of "All People That On Earth Do Dwell" to that same tune became known as "Calvin's Reformation Hymn." (Source: "Then Sings My Soul," Book 2, Robert J. Morgan, page 7)

FRIENDSGIVING

On Saturday, November 21st, we hosted our second annual Friendsgiving dinner for our MPC friends and family. Nearly 80 guests joined us for an evening of fellowship and gratitude! We provided the turkey, mashed potatoes, and stuffing, while everyone else contributed a favorite side dish or dessert to share.

A huge thank you to all who stepped up and volunteered their time to make this event a huge success!!









COMUNITY LIFE GROUPS

LAMPLIGHTERS: Meet: Monday evenings at 7:00pm in Trinity parlor
Topic: (Yet to be selected for 2027)
Gender: Women
Age: Any
Led By: Patty Doane & Syndria Lowe

LUNCH LADIES: Meet: December 14th at 11:30 in Trinity Fellowship Hall;
January 4th & 18th in Trinity Parlor
Topic: Heaven by Jennifer Rothschild
Gender: Women
Age: Typically retired seniors
Led By: Peggy Samarin & Linda Matchett

MIGHTY MEN: Meet: Sunday mornings at 9:30am in Calvary pastor's study
Topic: Attributes of God
Gender: Men
Age: Any
Led By: Don Roths

QUARTER-LIFE CRISIS: Meet: Tuesday evenings at 6:30pm in Calvary pastor's study
Topic: The book of Matthew
Gender: Any
Age: 10th grade through 20's
Led By: Kylie Bowland & Julia Amsler

READY, SET, GROW: Meet: Sunday mornings at 9:15am in Calvary tower room
Topic: The previous week's sermon
Gender: Any
Age: Any
Led By: Dana Motte

YAHWEH WEDNESDAY: Meet: Dec. 16th & 30th; Jan. 13th & 27th at noon in Trinity parlor
Topic: 1st & 2nd Peter
Gender: Any
Age: Any
Led By: Dr. Justin Amsler & Jim McDowell

NEW GROUP FORMING: Meet: Sunday mornings at 9:30am in Calvary above Café
Gender: Women
Age: Parents of children still living at home
Led By: Sarah Amsler

RENEW YOUTH GROUP

upcoming events

12/9 Stocking stuffing for Meals on Wheels
12/16 ReNew Christmas Extrtavaganza
no renew 12/24 & 12/30

CLUB 724

12/13 Holiday Hangout 12:15- 2pm
12/27 Duck Pin Bowling at Major Mallard's in Canonsburg 12:15-3:30 pm
1/10 New year's Hangout 12:15-2pm
1/24 TBD
2/14 Super Bowl Party

ACOLYTE SCHEDULE

December 6 (Communion)
Selah Amsler & Silas Amsler
December 13
Jonah Amsler & Ryker McMillen
December 20
Hannah Smith & Alyssa Wasco
December 24 (11pm Service)
Selah Amsler & Asher Martin (or Jonah if needed)
December 27
Lucy Duesenberry & Della Endy
January 3 (Communion)
Asher Martin & Emily Wasko
January 10
Jonah Amsler & Ryker McMillen
January 17
Ella Puhlman & Hannah Smith
January 24
Lucy Duesenberry & Della Endy
January 31
Silas Amsler & Alyssa Wasco

Children's Church- Learning about the Good Samaratin and living it out by helping others





STEWARDSHIP UPDATE – GOD'S BLESSINGS AND PRESENT NEEDS

To our whole church family: We are blessed in wonderful ways by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. By his grace, our church continues to strengthen due to the years of faithful love and service that we have shared together. We are making our church a more beautiful spiritual home through our relationships and, with respect to our campus, a more resilient physical plant. We could recount so many areas of spiritual vitality, and we rejoice over significant investments in our roof and heating systems in addition to the beautiful Kairos Café that we are all enjoying. These large projects have been completed mostly out of our long-term facility funds. Our annual operating fund is completely dependent on member contributions.

As we prepare to close out another calendar year, we look at our numbers and see what God has been doing. We have had strong member giving through 2026 and are in our usual place of hoping to see strong end-of-year giving. We are about 5-6% behind where we would like to be as we close out the year, and it would be a wonderful thing to close that gap as we walk through December together. An extra fifteen to twenty thousand dollars in our final month would really put us in a strong position to enter 2027 in a way that allows us to follow God's leading and keep investing in our ministry. If it is within your ability and heart to make an extra year-end contribution, we know that God blesses us for our faithfulness. Thanks again for all that you do to help strengthen and continue our beautiful church family here in McDonald.

ENVELOPE PICKUP AND ECO ANNUAL DUES

2027 giving envelopes will soon be available for pickup in Calvary Parlor. Please help us by taking your envelope box even if you complete most of your giving on-line. The envelopes are a guide to us through the year and include a reminder about our annual dues and other special giving needs.

Our denomination provides us with an abundance of support, and we are proud to be members of a group that holds our values and stands strong upon the Word of God. Each year we ask our covenant partners to contribute a small amount towards our denominational support responsibility. The request is that each Covenant Partner (member) would contribute $20.00 per year towards this expense. It is not too late to submit your contribution for 2026.

ADVENT SERMON SERIES: SALVATION STORIES PART II: RESCUED BY TRUTH

November 29th - Trustworthy Hope: Jeremiah Chapter 29
Jeremiah promises the people that God is with them in their trouble.



December 6th – An Inheritance of Peace: John Chapter 14
Jeremiah promises the people that God is with them in their trouble.

December 13th - Rejoicing Over Good News: Acts Chapter 8:26-40
Phillip witnesses to the Ethiopian Official

December 22nd – Wrapped in Clothes of Love: Luke Chapter 2
Jesus was born into a beautiful family full of Love and Peace.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Our annual congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, January 24th, following worship.

BIRTHDAYS

DECEMBER

Keith Diamond December 03
Abigail Kocian December 05
Ella Puhlman December 08
Sylvia Budash December 09
Mallory Mohon December 10
Karen Cooper December 11
Thomas Saunders December 13
Jacqueline Ewing December 14
Molly Maxwell December 14
Laurain Lacotte December 17
Charlene Potts December 19
Jill Parkison December 20
Dessie Almady December 20
Noelle Bair December 22
Mary Catherine Garrett December 27
Jack Roths December 28
David Hanczar December 29
Brad Unruh December 29
Terri Cole December 31
Jennifer Smiechowski December 31
David Masquelier December 31
Ryan Carter December 31
Joy Snatchko December 31



JANUARY

Robert Klimas January 02
Kamden Ware January 02
Patricia Sember January 02
Patricia Doane January 03
Mike Powell January 03
Mary Hawes January 05
Jennifer Caldwell January 06
James Secreet January 08
Warren Briceland January 09
Eleanora Little January 09
Eileen Cushey January 09
David Wright January 10
Ryan Baldigowski January 12
Heather Bowland January 13
Kerry Schmitt January 14
Jeffrey Ware January 14
Amber Wasko January 14
Shirl Krenn January 16
Dana Martin January 17
Marcia Jewell January 21
Centa Bowland January 24
Courtney Elias January 24
Karen Irwin January 28



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Terri & Duane Cole December 5
Dana & Erich Puhlman December 21
Sue & Greg Gilbert December 28

Melanie & Don Roths January 7
Diane & Jay Nation January 10
Jill & Bob Parkison January 15

MPC EVENT CALENDAR

December 1	Quarter-Life Crisis	6:30 p.m.
December 2	ReNew Youth Group	6:00 p.m.
December 4	Hearts & Hands	6:00 p.m.
December 6	Ready, Set, Grow	9:15 a.m.
	Mighty Men	9:30 a.m.
	Deacon Meeting	12:00 p.m.
December 7	Lamplighters	7:00 p.m.
December 8	Men's Breakfast @ Jojo's	9:00 a.m.
	Quarter-Life Crisis	6:30 p.m.
December 9	Silver Souls	11:30 p.m.
	ReNew Youth Group	6:00 p.m.
December 13	Ready, Set, Grow	9:15 a.m.
	Mighty Men	9:30 a.m.
	Club 724 Holiday Hang-Out	12:15 p.m.
December 14	Lunch Ladies Christmas Party	11:30 a.m.
	Session Meeting	6:30 p.m.
December 15	Quarter-Life Crisis	6:30 p.m.
December 16	Yahweh Wednesday	12:00 p.m.
	ReNew Youth Group	6:00 p.m.
December 20	Ready, Set, Grow	9:15 a.m.
	Mighty Men	9:30 a.m.
	Church Christmas Dinner	12:15 p.m.
December 21	Rose Manor	5:30 p.m.
December 22	Quarter-Life Crisis	6:30 p.m.
December 24	Christmas Eve Services	5:00 & 11:00 p.m.
December 27	Ready, Set, Grow	9:15 p.m.
	Mighty Men	9:30 p.m.
	Club 724 @ Major Mallards	12:15 p.m.
December 30	Yahweh Wednesday	12:00 p.m.

MPC EVENT CALENDAR

January 3	Ready, Set, Grow	9:15 a.m.
	Mighty Men	9:30 a.m.
	Deacon Meeting	12:00 p.m.
January 4	Lunch Ladies	12:00 p.m.
January 5	Quarter-Life Crisis	6:30 p.m.
January 6	ReNew Youth Group	6:00 p.m.
January 8	Hearts & Hands	6:00 p.m.
January 10	Ready, Set, Grow	9:15 a.m.
	Mighty Men	9:30 a.m.
	Club 724 New Year's Hang-Out	12:15 p.m.
January 11	Session Meeting	6:30 p.m.
	All-Leaders Meeting	7:00 p.m.
January 12	Men's Breakfast @ Jojo's	9:00 a.m.
	Quarter-Life Crisis	6:30 p.m.
January 13	Yahweh Wednesday	12:00 p.m.
	ReNew Youth Group	6:00 p.m.
January 17	Ready, Set, Grow	9:15 a.m.
	Mighty Men	9:30 a.m.
January 18	Lunch Ladies	12:00 p.m.
	Rose Manor	5:30 p.m.
January 19	Quarter-Life Crisis	6:30 p.m.
January 20	ReNew Youth Group	6:00 p.m.
January 24	Ready, Set, Grow	9:15 p.m.
	Mighty Men	9:30 p.m.
	Congregational Meeting	12:00 p.m.
	Club 724	12:15 p.m.
January 26	Quarter-Life Crisis	6:30 p.m.
January 27	Yahweh Wednesday	12:00 p.m.
	ReNew Youth Group	6:00 p.m.

SALVATION ARMY BELL RINGING



We are blessed with the opportunity to be the coordinators for the McDonald Service Unit of the Salvation Army. With the help of the community, we raise funds from Thanksgiving Eve until Christmas. It is a sacrifice of time to serve but a great investment in our community. Each year about $8,000 is donated to be shared with those in need. All of the contributions go directly toward helping members of our own community with bills, coats, shoes, assistance to Meals on Wheels and more. Please use the link on the church website (www.mcdonaldpres.org), scan the QR code, or call the church office to sign up and serve. Thank you!

Nativity Word Search

X	S	M	B	I	Y	L	V	Y	Y	J	U	H	O	L	Y	S	F
D	O	S	E	C	A	M	E	L	S	O	J	G	S	Z	S	T	G
J	V	T	T	Z	A	M	A	N	G	E	R	T	Y	F	J	A	I
O	B	A	H	Z	O	Y	S	C	T	Z	G	J	J	I	Q	B	F
S	D	R	L	N	A	T	I	V	I	T	Y	C	R	E	P	L	T
E	B	Y	E	Q	D	D	O	N	K	E	Y	I	A	I	S	E	S
P	A	J	H	J	Y	X	E	E	J	H	U	V	A	N	J	U	G
H	B	O	E	S	H	E	P	H	E	R	D	S	N	M	D	L	S
O	Y	H	M	T	C	R	J	X	W	A	R	X	G	T	P	L	I
P	E	X	L	O	V	E	P	E	A	C	E	C	E	R	E	V	E
K	I	N	G	S	I	Y	F	Y	B	P	X	A	L	D	Y	L	P
D	H	P	J	Y	A	U	A	D	V	E	N	T	M	A	R	Y	Q

ADVENT ANGEL BABY BETHLEHEM CAMEL
CANDLE DONKEY GIFTS HOLY JESUS
JOSEPH KINGS LOVE MANGER NATIVITY
PEACE SHEPHERDS STABLE STAR MARY

Our Love & Prayers Go Out To...

Laurain Lacotte
Kadima Rehabilitation and Nursing at
North Strabane, Room 402
100 Tandem Village Road
Canonsburg, PA 15317

Karen Altman
Belmont Village Senior Living Westwood
10475 Wilshire Blvd, Apt 417
Los Angeles, CA 90024

Jon & Patty Sember
Strabane Woods, Room 314
319 Wellness Way
Washington, PA 15301

Larry Doak
H. John Heinz III Progressive Ctr
First Floor South Hall
1010 Delafield Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15215

Betty McWreath
Concordia of Bridgeville- Room 58
3570 Washington Pike
Bridgeville, PA 15017

Middy Ecker
Cloe Barricklow
Rose Manor
100 Rose Court
Oakdale, PA 15071

AT HOME:
Janet Crawford
Ed Esposito
Mary Catherine Garrett
Lana Gilbert
Julie Hanczar
Chuck "Tootie" Smith
Bob Zyra

MCDONALD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Worship Site:
202 West Lincoln Avenue
McDonald, PA 15057

Office Location:
119 Station Street
McDonald, PA 15057

Office Hours:
M: 8-4:30, T: 1:30-5
W: 8-2, Th: 8-2

Phone: 724-926-8561

Website: mcdonaldpres.org

December 2026/ January 2027
Newsletter

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
MCDONALD, PA
PERMIT NO. 9

Pastor
Dr. Justin Amsler
justin@mcdonaldpres.org
(724) 699-0157

Pastor of Connections
Dana Motte

Administrative Assistant
Kerry Schmitt
kerry@mcdonaldpres.org

Children's Ministry Coordinators
Erich & Dana Puhlman

Director of Music Ministry
Heidi Betschart

Assistant Director of Music Ministry
Jeff Betschart

Bookkeeper
Dana Myers
bookkeeper@mcdonaldpres.org

Operations Officer
Tom Maxwell

Custodian
Gary McGinnis

MPC is an active and vibrant community of faith connecting people from the greater McDonald region. We find much joy in studying the Scriptures and actively serving Jesus Christ. We have been blessed and are inspired weekly to serve him more fully. Living well in today's world is challenging to say the least. Life is better when lived out with brothers and sisters in the faith! If you live in the McDonald area and are seeking a place where you can connect with God and with others we think that you will enjoy worshiping and serving with us.

