

December 2018



First Pres. Press

The season of Advent is about preparing for Jesus' presence in our world, not merely for the celebration of the first arrival of the infant Jesus, the son of Mary. Preparation for Christmas can get so encompassing that we get distracted from Jesus' presence now and ultimate arrival of him as King.

This season is a great time to take up a practice like the Examen which can help you be more aware of God's grace, how God is working in your world and life, and the freedom you have to choose to cooperate.

Pray As You Go is a great (and free) resource for the Examen from the Jesuit movement in Great Britain. (I also use the daily prayer exercise.) You can download it for mobile use at www.pray-as-you-go.org or use the website. There are Examen for youth and one that parents can use with children at bedtime, as well.

If you are looking for a print version I've included a version of the Examen later in this newsletter.

I hope that this year your preparation will not only be the celebration of Christmas but also for the Christ who is waiting expectantly for you right now in your soul.

Peace and grace,
Pastor Garrett



We will host our **Family Candlelight service at 7:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve, Monday December 24th.** Family and Friends are welcome to join us!

Adult Education Opportunities

The third of the series, "Reading the Bible" class/discussions will be held on Dec. 9th. You are invited to come to this gathering after worship. Bagels and coffee will be provided and gathering time will be an hour to an hour and a half. Please join us on **Sunday Dec. 9. Reading the Bible Part 3- "Connecting the Dots"** led by Garrett

ORDER YOUR POINSETTIA FOR CHRISTMAS NOW!

This year the poinsettias are \$10.00. They are available in white or red. **Please include your payment with your order form.** You may place the tear-off in the offering plate or drop with Heather in the church office. *Your poinsettia may be taken home after the 7:00 p.m. Family Candlelight Service on Christmas Eve.* **Orders are due by Sunday 12/2, thank you!!!**

The Examen (10-15 minutes)

1. Sit comfortably, attentively, and breath deeply.
 2. Remind yourself that God is with you in this moment and place. Even if you haven't been aware of God until now God is glad you are here. Ask God to help you be receptive and ready.
 3. Feel your thankfulness for the simple gifts of today (sunrise, coffee, touch of a hand, sound of birds, a quiet house)
 4. Call to mind the deeper gifts of God's Spirit
 5. Ask the Spirit for help to remember the significant things of the day and the grace to look with neither condemnation nor complacency.
 6. What comes to mind of this day? Who were you with? What did you do? What thoughts and feelings came to mind? Where were you blessed? When did you feel most alive and connected to others, yourself, God. When were you conscious of God being with you? When were you distant from God? When did you choose to ignore others or God? When did you feel trapped? Pre-occupied or unaware of your true self in Christ? Do not be harsh or condemn yourself but only notice these times. Ask forgiveness if you need to.
 7. Make a simple intention to next time listen for God's presence and respond in faith in these situations. Ask God for what you need for tomorrow.
- End your time with a simple prayer such as the Lord's Prayer, Glory Be to the Father, or the Doxology.

Hanging of the Greens

For your calendar: The annual Hanging of the Greens is Sunday, **December 2, 3:00-6:00**. If you are new to our church, this is an annual event in our church where we decorate the sanctuary for Christmas, frost cookies, make Christmas ornaments, work on a mission project, eat a pizza dinner and celebrate with Christmas carols in the decorated sanctuary. This event is for our entire church congregation and is one of the most special times in the year!

BAKERS NEEDED!

We need lots of cookies for frosting at our Hanging of the Greens event. If you can make 2-3 dozen Unfrosted sugar cookies, please let Leigh Anne know. They are needed for December 2. Thank you!!!!



Friday December 7th, 7pm@ St. Matthew's Episcopal Church Community Service of Remembrance



Every year at the beginning of the holiday season the Liverpool Clergy Association along with Maurer Funeral Homes holds a service of remembrance for loved ones who have passed away. When we are missing people, the holidays can be anything but joyful. The days of decreasing light can add to the sadness. You are invited to come join with others in hope and love and light candles in memory of those you miss. Light refreshments will be served

LFPC Church Groups

Monday: CNY Photographers-Meets 6:30pm every third Monday of the Month at LFPC.

Wednesday: -Pelotte's Bible Study meets every other Wed. at 1:00 in the Library, Dec.12th

-Women's Bible Study-BFF's meets the 2nd and 4th Wed. at 6:30 p.m.

Thursday: -Choir has practice on Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. In the Choir Room.

-Presbyterian Women's Group, Ladies of the Church, every third Thursday in Fellowship Hall@ 12:30.

Friday: Fay's Small Group meets the 1st and 3rd Friday of each month at their home for Bible Study

Saturday: Young Parent's Group, meets the 3rd Saturday of Each month at 9 a.m.



The Angel Tree Program

The Angel Tree program will run this year from now till December 9. This program is a Salvation Army program to sponsor a needy person in our local area for Christmas. You can sponsor a needy person by either buying or making a gift for that person. Tags for needy people will be found on the Christmas tree that will be set up in the fellowship hall. When taking a tag from the tree please sign the log next to the tree (see instructions on back of tag). Your signature indicates that you are sponsoring that person.

If you haven't participated in this program in the past, please consider participating this year to help make Christmas a little brighter for someone in need. Thank you.

Presbyterian Women's Group, Ladies of the Church,

All are invited to join our Presbyterian Women's Group, every third Thursday in Fellowship Hall @ 12:30. Bring a brown bag lunch & your Study Books. Refreshments, potato chips & great Fellowship will be provided. EVERYONE IS WELCOME.

The Elsie O'Neil group will be sponsoring a Birthday Cake quarterly, during Fellowship Hour, after worship service. It will be for birthdays in January, February & March, with the cake on February 10th. If your birthday does not appear in this newsletter, please call the church office & let them know. We look forward to celebrating your birthdays together.

LFPC's Bi-Annual Rummage Sale

We made \$1141.76 at the Fall Rummage Sale. We will be supporting many area missions during the Christmas Holiday Season. We'll be donating to, "Friends In Faith Preschool", "Meals On Wheels", Isaiah's Table, "Heifer International", & "Vera House". In addition to supporting these charities we put aside some funds to cover a few Angel Tree Tags, which are usually left over.

Early next year, we have plans to renovate our bathrooms, with new curtains, a sink skirt & toilet seats. We're very excited about our contributions. Many thanks to all of you who supported us through the Rummage Sales & Bake Sales.



The Liverpool Community Chorus will be performing their Christmas concert **at Soule Road Middle School on Saturday December 1 at 7:30 p.m. & Sunday December 2 at 3:00 p.m.** Ticket Prices: \$12.00 General admission, Kids 18 and under FREE. We will also be singing at the **Everson Art Museum, 401 Harrison St, Syracuse, on December 9, 2018 @ 3:30PM.** Come & help us, "Carol in Christmas"! Happy Holidays! We would love to see you there!

Mission December 2018

Blessings in a Backpack

Team up with other Liverpool churches to provide simple healthy food items on school weekends to elementary students at Seymour Dual Language Academy in Syracuse city schools. For November and December we are asked to donate:



Mac & Cheese cups (Any Brand)

Grey collection bins are labeled with Blessings in a Backpack in fellowship hall and back of the sanctuary.

Blessings in a Backpack as Advent Conspiracy Offering

Through the weeks of Advent we will collect a special offering to go toward this new vital mission in our community. The offering goes toward bulk purchase of food items used to fill the backpacks with pre-selected nutritious food items suitable for a child to eat with minimal assistance.

In past years we have called this special offering an 'Advent Conspiracy' after a series of sermons from years ago and a counter-consumerism movement around Christmas. The "conspiracy" is a counter-culture intentional choice to worship fully, spend less, give more, and love all. See the website <https://adventconspiracy.org/> to learn more.

In response we have set aside the Advent season as another opportunity for a special offering, and this year we focus on the new Blessings in a Backpack mission. Remember:

- Syracuse has the highest poverty rate among cities over 65,000 in New York State at 32.4%.
- Children suffer the worst of any age demographic. 50% of children under age 5 lived below the poverty line in 2017.
- In the Syracuse City School District, every single student — some 20,623 children — receives free or reduced breakfast, lunch and a snack every weekday.
- But at 3 p.m. Friday afternoon, many of those children go home to food insecure households where they don't know where their next meal is coming from until 9 a.m. Monday morning.

These are our neighbors. Just 5.2 miles away from LFPC. And we can help.



APPEAL FOR VOLUNTEERS FOR Samaritan Center Meal Service Mon.

Dec. 31. As a church family we are signed up to serve the meal at the Samaritan Center on Monday, Dec. 31st. A sign up sheet is in the sanctuary. We will need the full complement of 25 volunteers for the meal service shift from 12:30pm-3pm. All volunteers need to be 12 years or older for meal service.

We have not done a Samaritan center meal service in some time. Let's share the love of Jesus together as a church family in support of this vital community mission with our neighbors in Syracuse!

Respectfully submitted,
Rob Santos

LFPC Food Pantry Shopping List:

Canned Vegetables, Canned Fruit in juice or water (not syrup), 100% juice
Protein rich foods 7 grams per serving: Beans, Canned meats, Canned fish, Peanut butter

Bottle Drive

We are still collecting returnable cans and bottles for the preschool. There is a bin downstairs outside of Fellowship Hall to place your donations. Please rinse the cans and bottles out first. Thanks!

Friends in Faith News!

Children and families enjoyed a special outing to Chuck Hafner's Fall Festival. Pumpkin painting, corn mazes, special snacks and lots of fun!

Our Annual Fall Family Dinner was a success despite the snowy weather. As the afternoon of November 15th progressed and our preparations for the dinner continued all local schools cancelled afternoon activities. What shall we do? Continue of course! We welcomed children, parents, grandparents, alumni, and siblings for a total of 140 guests. All gathered for a wonderful event as the snow began to fall. The preschoolers shared songs of thanksgiving and entertained their audience with a sounding round of Mr. Turkey struts around. A hot meal of ziti and homemade cookies was shared. A huge thank you to those who baked and to the steering committee that managed the kitchen and clean-up. A special thanks to the youth group for setting up the tables and chairs ahead of time. This truly is a group effort and everyone made it a special night. -Tracie Folley, Director of FIF



MAIL ON MONDAY!!!!

When you check the mailbox, do you always anticipate something that is not a bill, or junk mail or credit card offers? Isn't it exciting when in the mail, there is a specially addressed card just for you? As we continue to expand our Caring Connection Ministry, think about being part of MAIL ON MONDAY! All you need to do is:



1. Buy or make a few "thinking of you" cards
2. Put stamps and your return address on the envelopes
3. Place cards, envelopes and the church directory all in a convenient spot
4. Each Monday, write a card or two to someone you know at church or outside of church that could use a bit of sunshine. If you are on the prayer chain, suggested names will be given with the address.
5. Say a prayer for God's blessings for your cards and put in the mail!



December Birthdays

1 – Erin Folley, Ruthann Arras	5 – Joan Halsted
6 – John Pfeffer	10 – Emily Cirillo
12 – Colin McConnell	17 – Matthew Calnan
18 – Mary Calnan, Garrett Anderson	20 – Mary Lou Matthews, Chris Pfeffer
26 – Bill Newell	

(If anyone has been omitted from this list, please call the church office)

The Church Office will be CLOSED Mon. Dec. 24th and Tues. Dec. 25th for Christmas. We will also be CLOSED Thurs. Dec. 27th and Fri. Dec 28th for vacation. Please join us for our Family Candlelight Service at 7:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve. May you have a Blessed Holiday with Family and Friends!



The January 2019 Newsletter Deadline is Friday December 21st by 12 noon.

Please get all articles and pictures into the church office by 12/21. You may call Heather at 315-457-3161 or email lfirstpr@twcny.rr.com.