

Evergreen News

A Pastor's Perception

O Little Town of Bethlehem

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times." (Micah 5:2)

"So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them." (Luke 2:4-7)

How often do you consider yourself the least of those around you?

It may seem that others are better leaders, teachers, parents, children, employees - you name it - if you do the comparison game, it seems there is always someone more significant.

But who determines who is greater?

Who determines the outcome from anything or anyone?

Jesus talks about a mustard seed - the smallest of seeds but, in time, becomes the largest garden plant and then a tree - in which the birds find a home.

Have you seen a mustard seed - just looking at it, we couldn't imagine it being used for much other than being ground up with a bunch of other mustard seeds to become a condiment that would be delicious on rye bread and pastrami.

But who are we to determine what might come of it?

Jesus also talks about having faith, even as small as a mustard seed - Nothing is impossible.

It seems at Christmas, nothing is impossible.

A baby born of a virgin.

The cause for great joy comes.

Angels proclaiming to shepherds.

Baby in a manger.

The least likely of places - a manger in Bethlehem.

Yet in thy dark streets shineth

The everlasting light

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What's inside our latest issue:

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- *Weekly Events p. 4
- *Parade Highlights p. 5
- *From our Worship Arts Coordinator p. 6
- *Tiny Timbers Tidbits p. 7
- *Youth p. 7



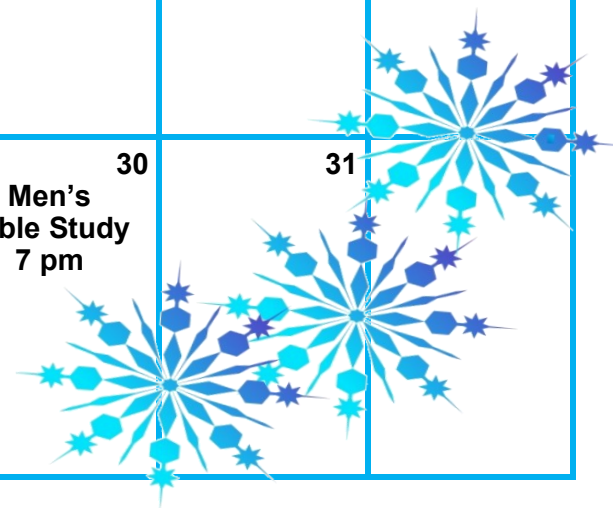
- Office Closed New Year's Day
- Ladies Bible Study Mondays at 11 am
- Youth Wednesdays at 6:30 pm
- Men's Bible Study Wednesdays at 7 pm
- Men's Bible Study Saturdays at 7 am
- Sisters in Christ January 11th at 9 am

Our Vision Statement:

"To Know, Love, & Follow Jesus by serving All"

JANUARY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 New Year's Day Office Closed	2	3	4 3M 7 am Carlyle Hinshaw's Life Celebration 11 am
5 8:30 am SS & Small Groups Large Group Gathering 9:45 am	6 WWW 11 am	7	8 Youth 6:30 pm Prayer Shawl 7 pm	9 Men's Bible Study 7 pm	10	11 3M 7 am Sisters in Christ 9 am
12 8:30 am SS & Small Groups Large Group Gathering 9:45 am	13 WWW 11 am	14 Commis- sions 7pm Leadership Team 8 pm	15 Youth 6:30 pm	16 Preschool Conferences Men's Bible Study 7 pm	17 Preschool Conferences	18 3M 7 am Strategic Planning 10 am
19 8:30 am SS & Small Groups Large Group Gathering 9:45 am	20 WWW 11 am Tiny Timbers Closed	21	22 Youth 6:30 pm	23 Men's Bible Study 7 pm	24 Youth Retreat	25 3M 7 am Youth Retreat
26 8:30 am SS & Small Groups Large Group Gathering 9:45 am Youth Retreat	27 WWW 11 am	28	29 Youth 6:30 pm	30 Men's Bible Study 7 pm	31	



A Pastor's Perception (Continued from Cover)

An apartment in Rheems.
 A duplex in Elizabethtown.
 A work truck on 283.
 A cubicle in an office building.
 A classroom in a middle school.

I doubt Joseph or Mary thought of Bethlehem as the ideal honeymoon spot; I doubt they would have chosen for Mary to become pregnant before marriage. Doubtful, they wanted to take an arduous road trip in the final days of her pregnancy.

Yet in God's great plan - Bethlehem would be the inbreaking of the kingdom of God as King Jesus comes to reign.

You may not be in the place you would have chosen, but is it possible that God has you exactly where He wants you?

The least likely of places. Yet, with faith the size of a mustard seed - nothing is impossible.

Your faith, regardless of the size and where you find yourself - in due time, can become great, a place where others can find rest, assurance, and safety. Perhaps where you are right now is where you can usher in the kingdom of God as His ambassador.

The everlasting light that shone in Bethlehem on that Christmas night - now shines in each of us.
 May our faith be fanned to flame as you experience the miracle - the impossible becomes possible.
 Our great God comes to Earth - God with us.

May **His kingdom come and His will be done on earth** (in Rheems, in Elizabethtown, on 283, in a cubicle, a work truck, a classroom, wherever you find yourself) **as it is in heaven.**

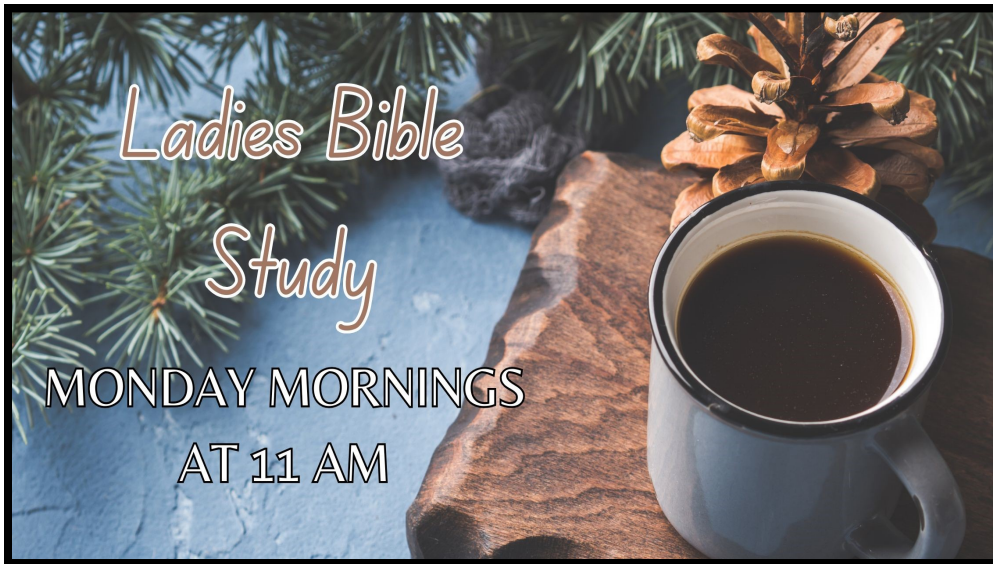
Yet in thy dark streets (in Rheems, in Elizabethtown, on 283, in a cubicle, a work truck, a classroom, wherever you are) **shineth The everlasting light**



The VBS team is starting the process of reviewing the available themes for VBS 2025. Save the date now for VBS – July 14th to July 18th from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm. We will also be decorating the week before in the evenings so keep your eyes peeled for ways that you can help with this great outreach.



**Start 2025 off by joining a small group gathering!
Groups for Ladies, Men & Youth!**



New Heating System

Following the approval of the furnace replacement, the Stewards reconvened with Lance Hitz, taking into consideration the questions and concerns presented at the special CBM. After conversing and reviewing the pros and cons, we are progressing with the project as planned. The equipment will be purchased in December and installed 2025.

We applied for a grant from the Atlantic Northeast District Facilities Assistance Fund and will receive \$7,500 to help offset cost of the equipment.

If you have any questions, please see a member of the Stewards Commission.

Steward Commission
Shane Schwanger (Co-chairman)
Donna Ring (Co-chairman)
Dustin Youtz
Jason Leonard
Randy Youtz

Thank You!

I Corinthians 3:9

For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

Thank you to the decorating committee for making our church beautiful and pleasing to the Lord and to the congregation .

Thanks also to the Stewards for all their help as we work together to glorify the Lord!



This years Elizabethtown holiday parade was a joyous event. Thank you to those who volunteered their time, talent and tools/ equipment to build this years float! A special thanks to Doug Brenneman for allowing us to use his tractor and wagon to build the float! Our youth group did a fantastic job making the fruits of the spirit signs. We are very appreciative of everybody that helped the day of the parade - our amazing singers and musicians, some carried signs for us. Others handed out 750 flyers to inform the public of West Green Tree Christmas dinner and other events at our church. And of course, our candy people who handed out almost 88 pounds of candy that M&M Mars so graciously donated! Finally, we're thankful for everyone that came out to watch the parade and support our church and the community. Merry Christmas and Happy holidays to all!



“Challenges: A Fresh Perspective for Growth”

Serving in ministry always provides for opportunities to hear and experience varying perspectives. I am constantly challenged by the perspectives that are shared with me. In my ripe old age of 26, I am learning that ‘challenged’ is often a good place to be. Challenges help us grow, challenges form us into those people that God has called us to be, challenges help us gain perspective and understand (and even appreciate) what is going on around us.

As 2024 draws to a close, the year has had its share of challenges and challenging perspectives.

One of these challenges was in the intentional decision to stop using music stands for our vocalists. I remember that one of the perspectives regularly shared with me indicated that the worship team had some room to grow in how we were engaging our brothers and sisters in Christ during the times of singing. How true that was! In doing some praying and discerning, it seemed a great place to start was by trying something new. In late June, with some prayer and grace, we moved the vocalists from using a music stand to fully relying on the confidence monitor on the back wall of the sanctuary. And wow, what a change that was made. All of a sudden our vocalists were looking up, hands were being lifted and it has seemed that our faith family is becoming more and more engaged in the musical component of the gatherings.

Some of our song lyrics present challenges. Perhaps the wordsmithing of the songwriter taps on a thread of the gospel we are not aware of. It is imperative for us to take up the challenge of researching and digging deep into our song vernacular to know if it is a song that is theologically forming and informing. I have appreciated conversations held over particular songs and song lyrics and the discussion that is had around how these songs serve as means by which we worship God. **Colossians 3:16 - “Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.”**

As I said, challenges often provide opportunities to be stretched and to grow in our knowing, loving and following of Jesus. Two recent examples come to mind. On the last Sunday that I preached, Naomi Clugston stepped up and led the pre-service huddle for the worship team. She offered words of encouragement and prayed. I was so proud. She clearly had taken a big step. This is worth celebrating! Thank you, Jesus! Much to my surprise, in conversation with Jenna Huber, she shared how it was laid on her heart to do the same thing as Naomi the very next week. Jenna led our huddle and shared encouragement and offered the prayer over the worship team. Again, this was a visible step of obedience in following the lead of the Spirit. Thank you, Jesus!

Church, as we face 2025, we must recognize that this year will come with its share of challenges. We will inevitably have to modify the means by which we do things to engage both those inside our faith family and those who are yet to be a part of our family. In hindsight, getting rid of the music stands seems like such a small way to improve connectedness. What other things are we clinging to that need removed to better connect with God and each other? We will also be sure to learn new songs. Perhaps our songs will challenge to mean what we sing and know the scriptural basis for why we sing what we sing. What song will you allow God to speak to you through? Perhaps 2025 will present you with a challenge where you can grow and stretch yourself. My prayer would be that you find the obedience to answer the call of the Spirit.

May God bring us the strength to meet and exceed our challenges in 2025.

Sing’cerely and Love,
Ryan M. Arndt



Anniversaries

Birthdays

- 1/1 - Deb Myers
Chris Wynn
- 1/3 - Cadence Youtz
- 1/4 - Greg Seitz
Katrina Corsa
- 1/5 - Mindy Smith
- 1/8 - Laurie Hollinger
- 1/10 - Donna Ring
- 1/15 - Audrey Landvater
Dane Youtz
- 1/16 - Josh Evans
- 1/20 - George Clugston Sr.
- Kim Houser
- 1/24 - Dawn Shirk
- 1/26 - Dennis Gerdel
Sadie Coble
- 1/30 - Bill Weaver
- 1/31 - Dori Schwanger

WGT Winter Delay/ Cancellations

For activities that take place Monday - Friday, the leader of each meeting/activity will determine cancellations. Please ensure you have the contact information to contact the appropriate person regarding cancellation concerns.

For weekend activities/gatherings, please check local tv stations, WJTL (fm90.3) or the church website (click the **Worship** tab & then click **Updates & Changes**) for information on delays/cancellations.



December is a busy time at Tiny Timbers. The classroom is full of excitement! Each class has been busy preparing for the Christmas program. At the program the kids will each be dressed up to help tell the Christmas story. We will have Mary, Joseph, angels, shepherds, wisemen, and a star! They have been working hard practicing songs, learning Bible verses and making special gifts for their families.

The year is going quickly. I can't believe we are about to start 2025! We have had a really good year so far. In the classroom we continue to work on letters, numbers, and our cutting skills. Have you ever given a pair of scissors to a 3-year-old? It can be a bit scary, but they are doing great!

Thanks to everyone who supported the Dutch Country Soft Pretzel fundraiser. We are excited to announce that we sold 316 pretzel vouchers. We raised \$1,274! Tiny Timbers will use these funds to purchase sensory toys and activities for the classrooms. Thanks to everyone for making this possible.

Congratulations to Noah and his family for selling the most pretzel vouchers. They sold 65!!!



WGT Youth News

The youth will participate in a winter retreat the weekend of January 24th-January 26th at Gretna Glen Camp. Upcoming teachings for Wednesdays in January will be a new series...still discerning which one this will be! For Sundays in January we will start a new series entitled **Tear Down the Idols**:

"Throughout history, humans have struggled to become all God created us to be. Jesus restored our special purpose, but now we have a choice to make. Whom will you serve with your freedom? To live fully devoted to God, we must Tear Down the Idols."

In December we focused on a series titled, Who Jesus is?

"Who is Jesus? At the end of the day, this is the ultimate question. Because if Jesus is who He said He is, it changes absolutely everything. During this series, we explored some of the different titles given to Jesus and allowed those titles to help us better understand who He is and what that means for our lives today. The different lessons we focused on were Jesus is Immanuel, Jesus is the Son of Man, Jesus is Messiah and Jesus is King."

	11/24	12/1	12/8	12/15
Total Worship	110	114	141	130
Sunday School	75	70	83	75
General Fund	\$6,851.15	\$4,234.78	\$9,684.16	\$7,298.98

740 Greentree Road
Elizabethtown, PA 17022

WEST GREEN TREE
CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

WEST GREEN TREE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

“Come to me,

all you who
are **weary** and
burdened, and



I will give you rest.”

-Matthew 11:28

Sunday Service Times:

- ♦ 8:30 am Sunday School/Small Groups
 - ♦ 9:45 am Large Group Gathering
 - ♦ 9:45 am Live Stream via YouTube
- “West Green Tree Worship”**

Weekday Activities:

- ♦ Monday: Ladies Bible Study @ 11 am
- ♦ Wednesday: Youth @ 6:30 pm
- ♦ Thursday: Men's Bible Study @ 7 pm
- ♦ Saturday: Men's Bible Study @ 7 am

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