



The Church Mouse

Newsletter

The First Presbyterian Church of Maywood
401 Maywood Ave, Maywood, NJ 07607

December 2021

December Message:

Dear Friends,

By the time you receive this newsletter our Advent journey has already started. May you recall that **Advent** is the **four-week** season before Christmas when the church not only eagerly remembers the birth of Christ, but also looks forward to the second coming of Christ. Symbolic of this is our **Advent wreath** with the four candles plus the Christ candle in the center of the wreath. Each week beginning on November 28, 2021, one candle will be lit for Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. The Christ candle will be lit on Christmas Eve.



There are two “popular” sayings now used for Christmas time and I’m sure you have heard both of them. The first being, “Jesus is the Reason for the Season? And the second one “**Keep Christ in Christmas**”. In fact, both of these sayings can be found on magnets, signs, various notices for church services and also in advertising. If that approach works, “Hooray”, but here is something that should be factored into this.

First, “Jesus is the Reason for the Season”. This is true as we Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus. The welcoming of a newborn baby is usually a joyous occasion both then and now. Some people even have a birthday cake, “Happy Birthday, Jesus” at their Christmas dinner with a candle placed in the center of the cake. Some even sing “Happy Birthday, Jesus”. But, let’s remember, **Jesus is NOT seasonal, He is eternal**, The Son of God and our Lord and Savior.

The other saying is “Keep Christ in Christmas”. Let it be known that **Christ NEVER left Christmas!** Simply put, people left Christmas. The Christmas celebration over long periods of time became increasingly more commercial and the religious focus diminished. Oh, there is a religious commercialism present today but that focus is more symbolic of the Nativity, mangers, shepherds, wisemen, star, etc. We must place **Christ at the center of our lives** and make **Christmas** and **our whole lives** more meaningful to God’s will. We, all of us, have to have Christ in the center of our lives. He’s there, but it’s like an awaking, Keeping Christ in Christmas.

May your **Christmas** be **blessed** with the **true reason of Keeping Christ in our lives**.

You are invited to join our **Christmas Eve Service** on **December 24, 2021 at 4 p.m.**

With love and prayers,

Betty, CLP



The Clerk's Corner

When I think of the joys of the holiday season the children of our church immediately come to mind. They add happiness to our lives year round, but I'd like to share some of my favorite Christmas memories with you.

When our Sunday School was larger, and many of our children were smaller, there were yearly Advent programs. The Kutchas, Webers, and one Heffernan participated. I remember Griffin playing the drums, RV playing the piano, and Kay Weber exclaiming, "I didn't even know she could play!" after her daughter played a note-perfect solo by ear. In more recent years, Donovan Carberry delighted us by insisting that he needed to be a penguin in the Nativity scene, while little Ben was a very bright Star of Bethlehem.

One year the Barberena children very politely declined to sing. They explained that they were shy, and that standing up in front of everyone was just too hard. We sat down to discuss this, and I explained how much everyone enjoyed hearing the children sing, and that music was like a gift from the children to the congregation. All three allowed love to overcome fear, and decided to sing!

As we enter this season of Advent, I hope that we may learn from our children. Let us strive to find the joy of our young musicians, and the brightness of that tiny Star. May we have the strength of our convictions that led the penguin to the Manger, and the love and courage that led three shy young children to sing for all of us.

Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and a healthy, Happy New Year!

With hugs and prayers,

Sheryl

MEMBER UPDATES



Our **Christmas Eve Service** is at **4:00pm Fri. Dec. 24th!** Hope to see you all there and perhaps invite a neighbor or a friend to come along as well!

Be on the **lookout** for our **Christmas Poinsettia** forms! The forms will be in our **December 5th Bulletin** and must be returned to **Carol Dass** by **December 19th**. The cost is **\$10.00** per plant! Why not dedicate a plant to a loved one or with a Christmas cheer message this season and adorn our church at the same time!

Our church has received a lovely **thank you note** from **The Center for Hope and Safety** located in Rochelle Park. Our donations over the summer surely were appreciated! **Thank you to everyone** who generously donated to this worthy cause to help women and children in their time of need.

Thank you to **Sarah Carberry** and **Sandra Barberena** for **decorating** our church so beautifully for **Christmas!**

Don't Forget...Maywood & Music's "I'm Gonna Make You a Star" on **December 3rd & 4th at 8:00pm** at **Our Lady Queen of Peace Church** on Maywood Ave. Tickets are **\$15.00** and can be bought at the door or from Betty. Fellow church members **R.V., Sheryl, Tom, Betty and Carol will be in the show!**

Special **thanks** to the entire **Barberena family** for working so hard on the **Manse** and for trouble shooting the **church heating system** and **inner workings** of our house of worship! Much time *was* and *is* spent on beautifying our church grounds too! **Thank you so much** for your tireless dedication ☺

KNIT OR NOT fellowship meets on Tuesdays from 2:30 to 4:00 in the **Church Conference Room!**

You don't have to be a knitter to come by and enjoy this fun time together!

Our annual TOY DRIVE has begun! Our DEADLINE for donations is **Sunday, December 12th** at which time Carol Dass will deliver our toys to the Maywood Police Department following our church service. **We already have some really nice toys up in the front of our Sanctuary!** Let's keep that pile growing! It's so important for us to try to make it a **bright and happy Christmas for children** in and around our towns! For some might not receive brand new toys this holiday. All toy donations should be new, unwrapped toys. Let's watch our donations **grow into a loving bounty of gifts for children!** Thank you in advance 😊



The Herald Angel: Did you know...?



The symbol of the **Herald Angel** is an Angel floating in space with his right hand raised in benediction. It is a symbol of the **Nativity**. (Hence the hymn "Hark the *Herald Angel* Sing glory to the new born King")



Throughout **December** we will be focusing on our **food collection** benefiting the **Center for Food Action**. Many families are suffering due to the pandemic and rely upon donations of food. **Christmas** quickly approaching let's make holiday tables for others less fortunate more joyous! Donations of non perishable items are greatly appreciated. Donation bins can be found in our Lobby area.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

Emma Barberena - December 16th
Doris Werner - December 21st
Julie Sibbald – December 26th

Wishing you all a very Happy Birthday
and a terrific year ahead!



☺ Just for laughs ☺



Question: Why did the Cranberries turn red ?

Answer: It saw the Turkey dressing !

Thought for the month:

" There are two ways of spreading light: to be the *candle* or the *mirror* that reflects it."

... Edith Wharton



MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL

