

The Freier Flyer

Quakertown United Methodist Church

December 2020



How Sending a Christmas Card Encourages Your Heart

In the digital age we live in, Christmas cards are a beautiful, welcome change from an over-stimulating pace. Most of us love to receive a handwritten card or note in the mail. It shows someone went above and beyond. It means that a friend took an extra minute to be a purposeful encourager. Who doesn't love receiving wonderful reminders of our Lord's birth?

While we can easily recognize the beauty in receiving Christmas cards, stepping up to be the sender can seem daunting. We feel like there's just not enough time. Or we don't understand how sending Christmas cards celebrate Jesus' birth. But sending cards does so much more than encourage the receiver. Incredible changes take place in the sender's heart too!

Act of Prayer

Writing out Christmas cards provides the time to pray for those we love, and prayer always transforms hearts! Asking the Lord to bless each receiver while addressing and signing cards is a wonderful way to ease a busy mind into thinking of others and their needs.

Act of Service

The physical act of creatively engaging our hands to serve someone else provides both mental and emotional contentment. God created our hearts and hands to be used for his glory. When we take tangible steps to fulfill his work in our lives, we can experience holy satisfaction.

Act of Worship

When our minds form words and our fingers form letters, we can lift this work up to God in worship. Sending Christmas cards to encourage others and remember our Savior's birth is a form of praise. We are celebrating that God loved the whole world so much that he gave his Son!

Experience JOY

Through the above-mentioned activities of praying, creating, and celebrating, our hearts will experience true joy! I remember an acronym for JOY that I learned as a child. J-esus, O-thers, Y-ourself. What an incredible JOY that can be ours through the simple act of sending Christmas cards!

Enjoy sharing a sweet celebration of Christ's birth by blocking out a time in your planner to prepare cards (and your heart) and be blessed in the process! The miracle in encouraging others is that you find yourself encouraged, too!

Article by Rachel Wojo

Dayspring – Living your Faith



The Pastor's Palette

“Making Things New”

We all know the story of Christmas. We've heard it many times. Every year, we re-tell the story of Jesus born in Bethlehem and relay all of the chronology of that majestic day.

But as with any story told over and over again, often it can lose its freshness. We read over details, because we've heard it so many times. We don't pay attention to it the way perhaps we pay attention to something we've heard for the very first time, because we know how it begins, and we know how it ends.

Or do we?

You see, the old, old story doesn't change. But we do. Every time we read it, every time we remember Jesus' gift to us, God's plan for us, we experience a refreshing of our hearts and a renewal of our spirits. We feel the joy of that magical moment. We feel excitement for the coming day. We feel somehow that the world has become new again, and so have we.

The beauty of scripture is that it is both old and new, eternal and yet made fresh each and every day that we read it and re-digest it for our own lives and circumstances.

What does it mean to you that Jesus was born to save you? What does it mean for your life and relationships that Jesus lives through you in the form of the Holy Spirit?

These are questions we all have to ask again, and again, and again.

This year, we are experiencing a very unusual year. And we know that Christmas for us will hold a very special meaning because of it.

For “the people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned” (Isaiah 9:2).

How will the Light of Jesus' birth illuminate your doubts and fears this Christmas? What will the dawn of God's hope look like in your life and in your church in 2021 in the midst of the greatest viral invasion of the century? What will the old, old Story mean to you in light of your story?

For God's story is not one that ends with the conclusion of Isaiah or the last words in Revelation. But God's story continues on in you. Every day, you continue to write God's story with your life.

This year, may the Story of Christmas resonate loudly in your ears and shine brightly in your eyes. May the birth of the Christ Child remind you of God's great presence and glory in your life and in the life of your church. And may you experience His everlasting peace.

The Rev. Dr. Lori Wagner
loribethwagner@gmail.com – 360.298.8327

Children's Message for December: My Favorite Nativity Animals



Hi Kids,

Before you realize it, it will be Christmas Day. Years ago, my father-in-law made our family a large wooden nativity set for Christmas. He filled it with figures of Mary and Joseph and the baby Jesus and with all kinds of animal figures he bought at Sine's 5 & 10 store. When I pulled out the Nativity set this year, I thought about the "nativity" animals I liked the best. There are plenty of animals to choose from – goats and donkeys and camels and elephants and cows and sheep and chickens and pigs and so on. I chose three of my favorite "nativity" animals to write to you about, but you probably have your own favorites.

- I really like the donkey because this good friend of man's, no matter what many people think, is actually very intelligent and hardworking, very dependable and friendly. It was a simple donkey that faithfully carried Mary and Joseph and their belongings almost 100 miles from Nazareth to the city of Bethlehem, where Jesus was born.
- I also like the camel, which we don't often think of as part of the nativity story. Camels are tough animals, and they were especially important for travel in Jesus' time, because they could store a supply of water and food in humps on their backs for making long trips. Wise men who traveled across the desert to visit the newborn King, Jesus, probably rode on camels.
- My third choice is the lamb. I think of a lamb as soft, gentle, and innocent, much like a newborn baby – much like the baby, Jesus. A lamb grows up to be a sheep at age one, and becomes shaggy and rugged in order to survive extreme weather. When Baby Jesus grew up to become a man, he, too, had to prepare for tough times.

Think about all the different animals that were lucky enough to be at Jesus' birth. Choose a couple of your favorite "nativity" animals, and maybe your parents can help you discover some new and interesting facts about them.

Have a happy holiday and please stay safe,

Mrs. Minarik



COVID~19 Update

Check your email or USPS mail to keep updated about COVID-19 updates in regard to the church.

As of November 20, there is no indoor in-person worship at QUMC until positivity rates drop to below 10%. Positivity rates are rising at an alarming rate. For the week ending December 4, the positivity rate in Bucks County was an alarming 15.3%. Please continue to wear your mask, wash your hands, and practice social distancing to keep not only yourself, but others, safe.

Based on this data, Church Council passed a scale of sanctuary occupancy numbers within the limits of the Bishop's guidelines but according to what is in the best interest of safety standards for QUMC:

- 0-8 % positivity rate: 50-60 (total) allowable in the sanctuary
- 8.1-9.9% positivity rate: 25 (total) allowable in the sanctuary
- 10% positivity rate: virtual worship only (no indoor in-person worship)

You may attend the 9 AM Parking Lot Service as this service is safe and will continue. You may also watch worship online on our Facebook page, Sunday mornings at 11 AM during the Livestream (or any time during the week).

The church is now closed for all in-person activity. No one is to enter the church without permission. The Church Secretary will continue her daily check-in for mail and will continue to utilize the copier in the church office. Otherwise, she will be working remotely from home. The Financial Secretaries will continue to count weekly offerings, the Pastor will occasionally stop in, and the Sexton will continue to clean the building. Other than that, no staff or parishioners are to be in the church building.

If you opt to meet outdoors, masks must still be worn.

All meetings and groups must meet online. If you need a ZOOM link for such purposes, contact the Church Secretary (barb@qumc.com or 215.538.7817).

Worship Service Schedule

Sunday Mornings:

- 8:00 a.m. Early-Bird Narthex Worship*
- 9:00 a.m. Parking Lot Worship
- 10:00 a.m. Men's and Women's Adult Sunday School Classes*
- 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary Worship* with Livestream

*contingent on COVID-19 positivity rates, see COVID-19 Update above

(Worship Schedule continued on page 5)

Advent Worship Services (Wednesdays, December 2, 9, 16):

7:00 p.m. A Service of Prayer & Song Livestreamed

Christmas Eve Worship:

2:00 p.m. Parking Lot Worship

7:00 p.m. A Service of Lessons & Carols Livestreamed



From Missions Commission

Due to the cold weather and the increase of Coronavirus, Missions is going into hibernation for the winter months. We will see you all in the spring. For more information on Missions outreach programs of the church, contact Carol Pertuit (610-346-6713 or carolpertuit@verizon.net).

Missions is happy to share an update from Eliberto and Molly (Jamison) Juarez (and their new baby, Elliot!) below:

Happy Thanksgiving from the Juarez Family and Mision Vida y Paz (MVP)!

We hope this email finds you and your family in good health. We know that Thanksgiving will look different for most of us this year. And yet we hope that you can still find ways to give thanks and share a meal on Thursday, whether in person or virtually. As Thanksgiving day approaches, we wanted to take a moment to express our gratitude, both as a family and as MVP. This has not been an easy year, yet there is still much to be thankful for.

During this season, here are just a few of the many things we are grateful for:

- We are grateful for the life and health of baby boy Elliot, the joy he brings, and the reminder that not all has been lost over these past 8 months.*
- We are grateful for God's protection over our loved ones, friends, family, and ministry partners in El Salvador over the past month as two strong hurricanes swept across Central America. Despite the landslides and flooding threatening Nejapa, all of our volunteers are safe with little to no damage to their homes.*
- We are grateful for technology that allows us to safely connect with friends and family during a global pandemic, sharing laughter and conversation despite the distance.*
- We are grateful for all those who support our family and ministry, making our work in El Salvador possible and inspiring us to continue working to bring God's peace to our world.*

Thank you for being part of MVP; we are truly so grateful to share this journey with you!

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While we make a point to express our gratitude during this time each year, our prayer is that we might learn to weave gratitude into our way of being. This quote from Melody Beattie's book The Language of Letting Go reminds us of all the gratitude can offer if we work to embrace it as a way of life. We hope this quote inspires us toward gratitude, especially as we reflect on 2020 and strive to live fully present during these unusual times.

*In peace & with gratitude,
Eliberto , Molly & Elliot*

GROWING TOGETHER IN FAITH



Children and Youth Sunday School, as well as the Adult Friday Morning Bible Study and Devotional, are being held online. Sunday School resources are distributed by email weekly. The Women's and Men's Sunday School classes are presently not meeting in-person due to COVID-19 restrictions. Youth Group continues virtually for middle and high school students, while Kid's Club is offered for grades one through five.

For more information on any Christian Education opportunities, please contact the respective contact person listed below:

Children's Sunday School:

Christine Rush (rushcm@npenn.org or 215.264.4815)

Youth Sunday School and Youth Group:

Pastor Kathryn Swan (kathrynswan19@gmail.com or 610.348.2632)

Women's Sunday School:

Laura Lillie (lalillie@verizon.net or 215.529.1059)

Men's Sunday School:

Ed Wilson (edwinwilson@comcast.net or 215.799.4086)

Friday Morning Online Bible Study and Devotional:

Janet Finch (jmfumw@aol.com or 215.538.0835) or Gail Schadler (glschadler@gmail.com or 267.733.3328).

Kid's Club:

Babs Kerns (babs.kerns@gmail.com or 267.825.5693).



Scandalous!

Fits, Foibles, and Fatal Flaws that Trip Us Up and Dislodge our Faith

Join Pastor Lori for seven weeks of "case studies" on some of the most ghoulish, ghastly, troubling, and sad stories of the Hebrew scriptures. Put on your detective hat and help profile the psychological portraits of those figures whose all-too-human trip-ups created ghosts that would haunt them for a lifetime.

Envy. Anger. Distraction. Entitlement. Disloyalty. Stubbornness. Peer Pressure. And Murder (gasp)! These are the scandalous stories of the Bible that give us clues about how to avoid the psychological pitfalls that might just lay in our own futures.

Investigation begins Monday, January 11, 2021, 7 PM on ZOOM. The study will take place on Mondays January 11, 18, February 1, 8, 15, 22, and March 1. There will be no Bible study on Monday, January 25 due to Dreamtank.

Join Pastor Lori on ZOOM, bring a Bible, a pad and pen to write down clues, a snack, and your best investigative skills. Electronic copies of the study will be available. To receive a copy of the study, or to get the ZOOM link, contact the Church Secretary (barb@qumc.com).

Diversity Training



Quakertown UMC will host a seminar focusing on diversity training, Thursday, January 7, 2021, 7:00 p.m. on ZOOM. Hosted by Tahara Akmal, Head Chaplain and CPE Supervisor in the Medstar Maryland Health System, the link to attend is available by contacting the Church Secretary (barb@qumc.com).

This training will last 1.5 hours. All members of the congregation, as well as friends and neighbors of QUMC, are encouraged to attend this free event.

Honorarium donations are not required but will be accepted from those desirous to contribute a gift to the guest speaker. Please send honorarium donations to QUMC, clearly labeled "Diversity Training Speaker." Thank you!



	Revenues	Expenditures
October 2020	\$16,136.20	\$21,419.07
Year to Date	\$228,450.76	\$218,181.90

Updated Status of the Budget Development for 2021: The Finance Committee is working on a proposed 2021 QUMC Budget to take to the Church Council for its consideration and approval. This is a very important time for the many leaders in our church as difficult decisions will need to be made in order to prepare the proposed budget for the Church Council. Please continue to pray for our church!

Stewardship Campaign: The Stewardship Campaign for the 2021 QUMC fiscal year continues. Please return your 2021 Commitment Card as soon as possible as this information is needed to complete the 2021 QUMC Budget. Thank you.

Continued Appeal Regarding Bequest Opportunities: Bequests from individuals are an important part of the funding of our church's missions. If or when you plan a charitable bequest to help support the mission of the Quakertown United Methodist Church, you can direct your bequest in the following ways:

1. **Unrestricted bequest:** This is a gift for our general purposes, to be used at the discretion of our Trustees and Finance Committees. A gift like this - without conditions attached - is frequently the most useful, as it allows us to determine the wisest and most pressing need for the funds at the time of receipt.
2. **Restricted bequest:** This type of gift allows you to specify how the funds are to be used. Perhaps you have a special purpose or project in mind. If so, it's best to consult us when you make your will to be certain that your intent can be carried out.
3. **Honorary or Memorial bequest:** This is a gift given "in honor of" or "in memory of" someone. We are pleased to honor your request and have many ways to grant appropriate recognition.
4. **Endowed bequest:** This bequest allows you to restrict the principal of your gift, requiring us to hold the funds permanently and use only the investment income they generate. Creating an endowment in this manner means that your gift can continue giving indefinitely.

Feel free to contact Pastor Lori or a member of the Trustees Committee or Finance Committee to learn more about helping our church through a bequest.

You Are Needed! There are many opportunities for members of our congregation to serve not only our God, but the QUMC church as well. Please contact Pastor Lori and find out how you may fit into the plans of our church.



Holy Communion: Sunday, January 10, 2020

We will celebrate Holy Communion to welcome the New Year and to celebrate the Baptism of Our Lord. Communion will be celebrated at both the 9 AM Parking Lot Service (in-person worship from your car) and the 11 AM Livestream Service (online worship). At the Parking Lot service, someone will come around to your car to distribute a communion kit (containing your elements).

To make this a church fellowship celebratory experience, we will offer those who attend livestream worship the opportunity to pick up a communion kit for that service, livestreaming Sunday, January 10 at 11 AM, but available on Facebook at any time.

If you are a livestream viewer and are interested in obtaining communion kits for your household to use for January 10 worship, you can pick up your kits in the church parking lot on the dates and times listed below. Feel free to invite friends and neighbors to share in this celebratory experience too!

- Friday, January 8, 3 to 6 PM: Melea Rupert and Marj Lofland will be present with gloves and masks to distribute communion kits.
- Saturday, January 9, 10 AM to 2 PM: Laura Lillie and Gail Schadler will be present with gloves and masks to distribute communion kits



Acts IV Fund

As the holidays approach, we would like to remind our church family that if anyone is experiencing financial difficulty during these unprecedented times, please contact the Pastor (loribethwagner@gmail.com or 360.298.8327). The church has an Acts IV Fund specifically designed to help members during a time of financial struggle. Inquiries are completely confidential.

Now more than ever, we realize many are struggling to make ends meet. QUMC is here to help.

Those with sufficient resources who have it in their heart to contribute to the Acts IV Fund can send donations, indicating that preference, to QUMC, 1875 Freier Road, Quakertown, PA 18951.

Volunteers Wanted

Outreach Care 215-804-5869 Joanne Cramer 610-442-6465

- Are you good at encouraging someone a little down on their luck?
- Would you mind taking someone to an appointment or job interview?
- How about delivering food to a person in need?
- Would you enjoy helping someone find a place they call home?

Outreach Care helps provide resources to people who are homeless in Upper Bucks County get back on their feet. They are looking for mentors and drivers to help with fund raising, taking phone calls and special events. Give as little or as much time as you want. If you like helping your own community, please give us a call.

Worship Bulletins

Anyone wishing to have a copy of the bulletin and hymns each week, please contact barb@qumc.com to get on the email or USPS mail list to receive these materials each week.

Staff Time Off

Pastor Lori will be on study leave attending the annual Society for Biblical Studies/American Academy of Religion Conference, held online this year, Monday, November 30 through Thursday, December 10. In case of emergency, do not hesitate to contact the Pastor during this time.

The Church Secretary will be on vacation beginning Monday, December 14 through Sunday, January 3. During this time, please contact Pastor Lori (loribethwagner@gmail.com or 360.298.8327) if you require assistance.

Church Membership

Contact Pastor Lori at loribethwagner@gmail.com for more information. Please note membership transfers do not require classes. We hope you'll join us!

Paper Recycling

Receptacles can be found in the southwest corner of the church parking lot. Acceptable materials to recycle include newspapers, magazines, catalogs, books, office paper, school paper, wrapping paper, and junk mail. Missions will receive a check to be used for missions programs of the church.

Aluminum Can Recycling

Bag and bring your cans to the two white trash cans at the church pavilion. They do not need to be crushed but they are easier to handle if they are. All brands of aluminum cans are welcome. Proceeds from can recycling helps to defray costs of the annual Chicken Barbeque.

Monthly Newsletter Submissions

If you have items for the monthly newsletter you can email them to Teddi Miller at QUMCNewsletter@gmail.com or you can put them in the newsletter mailbox in the church office. To assure your items are published in the next monthly newsletter, please email Teddi or drop off the information in the church newsletter mailbox by the 15th of the month prior to the publishing month. Thank you!



Family Matters

Happy Birthday to:

Donald Diehl – December 8; Elaine Wentz – December 31

If you are 80 years old (or over) and would like your birthday included in the newsletter, please let the church office know.

Recently, third graders Lucas Kikelhan, Emily Mushrush, and Emma Tomlinson received their very own Bible from QUMC. We pray for each of these young people and their faith journey.

Notes of Thanks:

“On behalf of Quakertown UMC, we would like to say ‘thank you’ to all that have returned 2021 Commitment Cards. For those who have not yet done so, we urge you to return your completed Commitment Card as soon as possible. The financial information on your Commitment Card helps the Finance Committee prepare the 2021 Budget, specifically in the area of projected revenues. Once revenues are projected, the committee can then more accurately project the expenditures that will be supported by those revenues.

As always, please continue to pray for our church, our Pastor, our staff, and the many lay people that do so much in God's name.’

*Thank you,
Bruce Bovard, Finance Chair*

"Thank you to my church family for the phone calls and birthday cards in celebration of my 89th birthday. Your thoughtfulness and kindness is greatly appreciated."

*Sincerely,
Laura Clymer*