

The Freier Flyer

Quakertown United Methodist Church

December 2021

1875 Freier Road, Quakertown, PA 18951

www.qumc.com

The Poinsettia: Jesus' Life Story in a Plant

This is the season when United Methodist sanctuaries around the world bloom into shades of red created by poinsettias, the most popular Christmas plant. With leaves shaped like the Star of Bethlehem, the poinsettia has been a decorative staple for decades.

While most people associate the poinsettia with Christmas, what may get overlooked is how the poinsettia actually represents not only the birth of Jesus, but also Christ's resurrection.

"I can't imagine not having the poinsettias in the church," said the Rev. Donna Friddle, senior pastor at Sandy Ridge and Northwood United Methodist churches in High Point, North Carolina. "The plants are a visible reminder for us of Christ's birth and His death and the meaning behind those events."

Symbolically, we have Jesus' life story in one plant. The leaves symbolize the star that led the Wise Men to the newborn Jesus, the red leaves are a reminder of the blood of Christ shed during His crucifixion.

When it comes to decorating, churches typically place poinsettias around the front of the altar, a location that also has significance.

"As we move forward to the cross, we move through this space that is decorated with poinsettias," says the Rev. Patrick Lewis, senior pastor at Palisade and Fruita United Methodist churches in northwest Colorado. "We move through the birth of Christ to get to the cross."

Lewis continues, "Each year, we used to take them after the service on Christmas morning. We would take them home and my mom would nurture them all summer long, then throw them in a closet in October. Early December, she would pull them back out and they would be this beautiful red plant."

"We don't talk a lot about the resurrection story with the plant. You can regrow the plants every year, but it requires putting them away in a dark place. For me, the message is that no matter what happens, Christ is there, even in the darkness."

(A UMC feature by Crystal Caviness)



Christmas Eve Worship

3:00 p.m. Family Service

7:30 p.m. Service of Lessons & Carols

11:00 p.m. Candlelight Communion



Going the Distance

The Rev. Richard K. Brown II, Pastor

Paternity Leave Plan

This has been the most asked question in recent months (and rightfully so): what is the plan for the new baby? The following details seek to answer this question and share our plan.

The SPRC and I have approved the following. It is a sliding plan since the exact arrival of the baby is not something in our control. As such, please see the following points about my leave relative to baby Brown's birth:

- ✓ Pastor Rick will observe a one-month paternity leave after the birth
 - Pastor Kathryn will be on call for pastoral care needs
- ✓ Following said month, Pastor Rick will be on "light duty" for an additional month
 - Pastor Rick will be back in the pulpit and will be making visitations but will not be attending standard church meetings unless specifically needed
- ✓ Emergency supply preachers are in place
- ✓ Barring the child's birth across Christmas Eve, Pastor Rick will preside over Christmas Eve worship services
- ✓ Please keep Kim, Pastor Rick, Ella and the new baby in your thoughts and prayers as we welcome this amazing gift from God

Youth Ministry Update

Youth Ministry continued in a big way. With studies about Moses and the Burning Bush, the calling of the Prophet Jeremiah, Ruth and Naomi, and more, we delved deep into God's Word with creative games and activities to further our studies. Youth Group meets Wednesdays from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. and we invite you to join us.

One of the most recent developments in our Youth Ministry program was the vision of "The Den." Much like the way an animal's den is a place to seek shelter from the elements and rest from the day/night's efforts, The Den seeks to offer a similar space for our children and youth. A project long postponed during the pandemic, we helped the youth repaint the Youth Room to match The Den. If you have not seen the new colors, we invite you to come and see it. While we have more plans to see this project through to completion, we are eager to partner with our youth in their discipleship.

Capping off the year and season, we held our Christmas Party on Wednesday, December 8. With emoji Christmas song quizzes, Christmas cookie decorating and card decorating for our shut-ins, we had a very festive time. The youth also rang the Rainbow Bells, a special handbell ministry that will be coming to our 3:00 p.m. Family Christmas Eve worship service. You can see photos and videos from this event on the church's Facebook page.

Office Hours & Sabbath

My office hours are Tuesdays & Thursdays from 9:30-11:30 a.m. and I encourage you to stop in to chat with your pastor. Additionally, Pastor Kathryn has added weekly office hours on Tuesdays from 9:30-11:30 a.m. so on Tuesdays you can talk to either or both of your pastors! Lastly, as always, you are welcome to give me a call, shoot me a text, or pop me an email so we can work out a time to meet that best fits your schedule.

I observe my Sabbath on Fridays, so all non-emergency matters will be contacted the following day. Pastor Kathryn takes her Sabbath on Mondays.



Pastor Rick is available by phone (484.358.1138) or by email (pastorrick@qumc.com).

Pastor Kathryn can be reached at kathrynswan19@gmail.com or 610-348-2632.



“Sleigh Ride”

Holiday Handbell Concert, Saturday, December 11, 4:00 p.m.

Experience music of the holiday season as the exceptional Philadelphia Handbell Ensemble presents “Sleigh Ride!” Featuring our own Director of Music, Bethan Neely, the program features everything from three versions of *Sleigh Ride*, to a wide array of Christmas carols, the coquettish *Santa Baby*, and the charming *White Christmas*. A holiday musical delight, the concert is sure to send you into the night filled with the warm sounds of the season.

This concert series is the debut of PHE’s new Artistic Director, Lynn G. Atkins, Jr. A freewill offering will be received. Suggested donation: \$10.

December Children's Message



The Christmas Angel



During the holiday season, we see many angel ornaments for sale in stores. Oftentimes, we decorate the very top of our Christmas tree with an angel.

We picture angels as loving spiritual beings, wearing halos on their heads, large wings on their backs, and long flowing robes. They float high above us in the sky and travel back and forth between Heaven and Earth to help do God's work. Angels are mentioned hundreds of times throughout the Bible, and they appear as both male and female, young and old, and with light and dark skin colors.

Angels play an important part in the story of the first Christmas. The angel Gabriel predicted the birth of Christ to Mary, and an angel visited Joseph in a dream to tell him that he would be Jesus's father here on Earth. Angels appeared in the sky over Bethlehem to announce and celebrate Jesus' birth. Simple shepherds tending sheep in the fields at night heard about the birth of Jesus, not from a daily newspaper or from television, but from an angel of the Lord. Later, when King Herod plotted to find and harm the baby Jesus, God sent an angel to Joseph in a dream, warning him to take his family, flee Bethlehem, and go to Egypt.

Although we may never actually see an angel ourselves, we may feel their presence at times. People often call newborn babies "sweet little angels" because they are beautiful and innocent and our hope for the future. Some people also believe loved ones who pass away take the form of angels and visit us and help protect us from harm at times.

This Christmas, when you look at the angel placed on top of your Christmas tree, think of it as a messenger of hope and wonder and new life, spreading the good news of Jesus' birth and the story of the first Christmas throughout the world.

Thank you for reading my monthly Children's Messages during the past year. This is my final message since we are now able to meet for worship on Sunday mornings and hear the children's lessons in person. Have a wonderful holiday!

Mrs. Molly Minarik

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP SCHEDULE



Our worship and Sunday School schedule at QUMC is:

- 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. - Worship
- 9:45 to 10:45 a.m. - Sunday School for Children and Adults
- 11:00 a.m. to 12 noon – Worship

11:00 a.m. worship will continue to be livestreamed on Facebook and YouTube.

If you have any questions about the new worship schedule, please feel free to contact Pastor Rick (484.358.1138 or pastorrick@qumc.com) or Gail Schadler (glschadler@gmail.com).



JOIN US FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL!
Sunday Morning, 9:45 to 10:45 p.m.

2-Years-Old to Kindergarten	Room 107/108
Grades 1 to 5	Room 106
Middle and High School	Room 105
Women's Class	Room 114
Men's Class	Room 112
Faithbuilders	Room 109

Children's Sunday School classes, age two through grade 12, now meet in Miller Hall on Sunday mornings at 9:45 a.m. for a brief period of fellowship, songs, and prayer. After opening exercises, teachers will escort the children to their individual classrooms. Parents can pick up their children from their respective classroom at 10:45 a.m.

Sunday School is in need of additional Middle School/High School teachers. We are also in need of assistants and substitutes for the program. Anyone interested in giving of their time and talent to this ministry of the church is asked to contact Christine Rush at (215.264.4815 or rushcm@npenn.org).

Small groups are an integral part of the Christian Education program at QUMC!

Bread for the Journey is a small group meeting Tuesdays, 1:00 p.m. in the Library. Together we pray, explore Scripture, and read and discuss books as we journey together to grow in our relationship with God. For more information, contact Gale Hewitt (gwhewitt4@gmail.com or 267.218.2479).

The Friday Online Bible Study meets on ZOOM, Friday mornings, 9:30 a.m. To learn more about this small group, contact Gail Schadler (glschadler@gmail.com) or Janet Finch (jmfumw@aol.com).

From Missions Commission



Kensington Area Ministries (KAM) Giving Tree

QUMC has once again been given the opportunity to buy Christmas gifts for the children of KAM. Look for the Christmas Tree and the list of names in the narthex. Taking a name or two from the list and getting a gift for these children is a wonderful way to celebrate this giving season.

Update from Jim Newcomer and QUMC Cares

“I’ve been busy putting the special collection funds from QUMC to good use for a senior high school student who was seriously injured in a car accident. He could no longer work, nor could his mother (temporarily) who needed to care for him. The family does not have reserve funds any longer.

Yet he is determined to graduate and is back to his studies, but without his computer, which was destroyed in the accident. A real hindrance to complete his school work these days.

So we used the special collection to get him, through the school, a replacement PC. He is relieved and delighted, while otherwise physically recovering, and back on track.

Thank you again for your caring thoughtfulness.”

More from Jim...

“We thank you for supporting our mission in recent years, or, for some of you, during all the years since our founding 25 years ago in 1995. During the most recent six years, we have assisted our neighbors with over \$270,000 in small, but meaningful gifts of food cards or cash when any such aid is received as a godsend. That’s over a quarter million dollars delivered in over 2,000 envelopes, each opened by a school family, veteran, or senior in need. Pre-COVID, a turkey and fixings at Thanksgiving were provided as well.

You make a difference. Together we make a difference. Each time a recipient opens our envelope in a moment of need, that person is thankful and knows that Quakertown cares.”

Jerusalem House Ministries

QUMC would like to thank all of the folks who contributed turkey and side dish donations to Jerusalem House. As always, the food was given to families who needed a boost to their Thanksgiving holiday. Thank you!

Blanket Sunday

Blanket Sunday was a rousing success! Thank you to those who contributed.

American Red Cross

Our most recent blood drive was held on November 5. Thank you, thank you, thank you to everyone who took the time to come out and donate blood. The American Red Cross has seen blood shortages ever since COVID. We appreciate the thoughtfulness of all donating individuals.



Family Matters

Happy Birthday to: Donald Diehl – December 8, Elaine Wentz – December 31.

Baptized: On November 7, Jacob Bryan Carney & Elizabeth Rose Carney, born May 11, 2021, son and daughter of Jarek and Bridget Carney.

On November 14, Kamden Donovan Stout & Kennedi Anne Stout, born July 20, 2021, son and daughter of Zachary and Amanda Stout.

Notes of Thanks:

"Thanks to everyone who helped with the 'Sprinkle' for Pastor Rick and his family, including the decorators, bakers, and servers. Everyone had a great time! We collected more than \$300 in the pink and blue baby bottles in the narthex, which was used to purchase gift cards to Target and Amazon for the expectant family. About 60% of the collected monies were deposited in the pink bottle, suggesting the majority of the congregation anticipates the "Christmas baby" will be a girl!"

The Hospitality Team

"Thank you for the 'button wreath.' It's hanging on my entrance door to my apartment. Also thank you for the bulletins each week. I always read the scriptures that were in before the message. Thank you for the holiday bag of crackers too.

I'm waiting to hear about the baby shower and waiting to hear of the arrival.

I was told someone was here to see me when I was out for an appointment. I sure would like to know who it was - they said it was a man.

Blessings for Christmas and the New Year."

Yours truly, Anna Wolfinger

UPDATE: EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENT FUND GRANTS



The Educational Fund of QUMC receives gifts and bequests from members and friends. While the principal remains invested, 70% of the interest earned is available to be disbursed as gifts to students who are members in good standing of the Church. It is hoped that these gifts will be an encouragement to students and will be used toward educational expenses. We offer these gifts of love and appreciation to our students with the hope that they are a sign of our commitment as the body of Christ to one another. All of God's people have a place in ministry. We encourage our students to remain connected to the local church, and to Share Christ, Grow in Christ and Serve Christ.

On Sunday November 21, we awarded \$500 checks each to seven (7) students to assist with their 2021-2022 education costs. Since 2007, we have distributed 133 grants for a total of \$41,900. Due to the upturn in our investments in the past year, we are able to offer each student \$500 this year.

By popular request, we are including short bios for the 2021 grant recipients so that the congregation can follow their educational careers.

Alyssa DeSimone

Alyssa is a freshman at Kutztown University studying Art Education, headed toward being a high school art teacher. While she is taking general education courses, her recently declared major will allow her to work on specific courses in the spring. She is trying to find ways to be more involved in campus clubs and activities while commuting to school.

Jaaron DeSimone

Jaaron is a freshman at Lehigh University, majoring in Mathematics. Jaaron commutes from home. He is doing well at adjusting to school, getting around campus, and focusing on his academics. He appreciates that his family is very supportive.

Emily Ghorm

Emily is in her second year at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, majoring in Music Education, but this is her first semester physically on campus. She is acclimating well and makes sure she takes time to keep her soul fulfilled in love and gratitude. Emily is surrounded by great people and talented musicians. After graduation, she would like to be a high school band director/music teacher.

Blake Miller

Blake is adjusting to a new school year with tougher courses and getting back to in-person learning and teaching in his Masters of Science in Engineering at Penn State. He has added commuting three times a week to the equation. Blake has been able to keep up his grades and continues his research in “shape memory alloys and understanding the martensitic transformation,” while continuing as a teaching assistant for undergraduate courses. He would like to work in Pennsylvania after graduation this coming May. This is Blake’s 6th year of receiving grants - a new benchmark for QUMC!

Shawn Newswanger

Shawn is a sophomore in the SMEAL School of Business at Penn State, studying Management. Shawn provided a full resume with his application. He keeps himself very busy in classes during the year and then works summers locally at the West End. He strives to be a CEO or COO after graduation.

Morgan Smakulski

Morgan is working on a degree in Criminal Justice at Northampton County Community College. She is taking two in-person classes and three online classes. Morgan expects to graduate this spring and attend the Police Academy. Due to her work schedule, she has not been able to attend church with her family but expects to follow her faith in spite of this obstacle.

Anisha Wilson

Anisha is in the second year of her Masters in Digital Communication and Media Arts at DePaul University and will graduate in June. She has taken a variety of courses in film production, public relations analysis, editing and writing, and content creation. This includes ways to get story points across in media.

We congratulate our students and wish them success in their future endeavors.

The Educational Endowment Committee,
Steve Finch, John DeSimone and David Rush





Come out and join our youth for some fun, fellowship, and exploring our faith!

If you have any questions about Youth Group, contact Pastor Kathryn (kathrynswan19@gmail.com or 610-348-2632).

YOUTH GROUP MEETS WEDNESDAY NIGHTS, 6:30 TO 8:00 PM

Our Youth Group is primarily for fourth- to twelfth-graders; however, if you have a younger child who would like to attend please contact Pastor Kathryn and Pastor Rick so we can have a conversation. Likewise, if you are a high school graduate and would like to take part, please be in touch as we can share specifics of how you can become a Youth Group volunteer. A friendly reminder that all youth are welcome to attend - you need not be a member of QUMC. So please feel free to invite friends and family to attend.

Middle and High School girls are invited to join us for a monthly outing at Panera in Quakertown. This is a chance for the girls to have fun and fellowship in a casual setting with Pastor Kathryn. To learn more, contact Pastor Kathryn.



Christmas Fun!





Youth Group is now on Christmas break, returning on Wednesday, January 5, 6:30 p.m.
Hope to see you there!

Looking For Ways To Help?



- Altar Flowers are \$40 for two vases and can be sponsored in honor or memory of someone (or if you just feel it upon your heart to provide flowers for a Sunday during the year). The florist will use flowers seasonal at the time. Special requests can be fulfilled at an additional cost. Flowers are yours to keep after worship services. To sponsor altar flowers, contact the church office (215.536.4992 or barb@qumc.com).
- Got Talent? If you play the piano, flute or another instrument, you can make a meaningful contribution to worship! Musicians are needed to play occasionally throughout the year, solos or with others. In particular, Bethan is looking for a pianist to play a four-hands duet on Christmas Eve. To share your musical gifts by making a joyful noise unto the Lord, see Bethan.
- The Hospitality Ministry is in need of volunteers in these areas: Greeters, Hospitality Table, Welcome Center. If you are interested in serving in any (or all) of these areas, contact Molly Minarik (craftlover38@aol.com or 610.282.3708).
- The Bountiful Basket of Morning Snacks at our Hospitality Table is a popular spot on Sunday mornings! Donations of pre-packaged breakfast snacks are welcomed and can be placed in the kitchen, clearly marked "Hospitality Table." Many thanks!
- Finance Chair Committee Member is needed. Anyone with a background in finance who would volunteer for a three-year term as Chair of Finance (leading meetings and the team), is encouraged to contact Pastor Rick. This position is very important to the financial health of the church.
- Stewardship Chair is needed. Contact Pastor Rick if you can volunteer for this position.
- Bucks County Children and Youth Social Services Agency is looking for caring individuals or families interested in providing a short- or long-term home for a child and/or children in foster care between birth and 17 years of age. You will receive financial assistance for room and board and medical assistance. You will receive 24/7 professional supportive services and preservice training. Contact Shantelle at (215) 348 -6922 or sjgammon@buckscounty.org.
- Outreach Care is in need of volunteers to assist the homeless in Upper Bucks County by helping them to get back on their feet. Contact Joanne Cramer (610.442.6465) to learn more.



Church Secretary Barbara Hafler will be on vacation Friday, December 24 through Sunday, January 2. In case of an emergency, she can be reached at 215.538.7817.



We're Updating and Would Like to Hear from You!

The church is in the process of updating telephone contact information for family and friends of QUMC. We ask that you reach out to the Church Secretary (215.536.4992 or barb@qumc.com) with the best contact phone number for your family. It can be a cell phone number or a landline, whichever is your preferred mode of telephone contact. Thank you!

Interested in a 2022 Confirmation Class?

Do you have basic questions about what confirmation is and our process? If you are interested in confirmation for 2022, contact Pastor Kathryn for more information (kathrynswan19@gmail.com or 610.348.2632).

Safe Sanctuary Clearances

Welcome back everyone! Due to COVID, we lost over a year, as well as track of Safe Sanctuary clearances and expiration dates. If your clearances are updated, please make sure we have a copy for our files. Contact Marj Lofland (215.257.7389, 267.227.8990, or yeamarj@gmail.com) for more information.

The following three background checks are required:

- ✓ Department of Human Services Child Abuse History Clearance.
- ✓ Pennsylvania State Police Request for Criminal Records Check.
- ✓ Federal Criminal History Record Information (CHRI)

If your original form has been misplaced, or if you need a new application, you can access the following links.

Volunteer Clearances (If your clearances need renewal)

All volunteers working with children must meet Safe Sanctuary requirements which include:

Child Abuse Clearance <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home>

Criminal Background Check <https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp>

Both are currently free to obtain.

You also must get a fingerprint check done if you have not lived in the state of Pennsylvania for 10 years, or you can sign a waiver instead if you have lived in Pennsylvania for 10 or more years. Here is the link:

Fingerprinting https://www.pa.cogentid.com/index_dpw.htm

Lastly, there is a Safe Sanctuary training offered periodically that must be taken. If you would like hands-on First Aid and CPR training, it can be arranged by contacting Marj Lofland.

Youth Group Library Project

This project is underway. The youth are collecting books for our little library project. Contact Pastor Kathryn (kathrynswan19@gmail.com or 610.348.2632) if you have questions or are looking for more details.

Faith Preschool

For more information, reach out to Megan McGinty (registrarfps@gmail.com or 215.536.8172). The registration form for Faith Preschool can be found at :

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vq2wupgX4r24OWo3gcokTFNWLuHaTIFH/view?usp=sharing>

"You are a child of God, you are wonderfully made, and dearly loved and precious in his sight." - Psalm 139

Acts IV Fund

We would like to remind the church family that members of the congregation experiencing financial difficulty should contact Pastor Rick (pastorrick@qumc.com or 484.358.1138).

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.

Prayer Shawls

Those who are ill, grieving or just lonely can request a shawl for comfort. Contact the church office (215.536.4992 or barb@qumc.com) or Janet Finch (215.538.0835).

Worship Service Materials

Anyone desiring a copy of the bulletin each week is asked to contact the church office (barb@qumc.com or 215.536.4992) to get on the email and/or USPS list.

Want To Become A Member or Schedule a Baptism?

The doors of QUMC are always open! Contact Pastor Rick for more information (pastorrick@qumc.com or 484.358.1138).

Paper Recycling

We like to do our part to save the planet. Receptacles can be found in the southwest corner of the church parking lot to recycle paper. 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

This is yet another way we save the planet, while helping defray costs of the annual Chicken Barbecue. Bag and bring your cans to the 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.



Thank you for your continued commitment, financial support, and faithfulness to QUMC.

The Finance Team has begun the process of establishing the 2022 budget. Please continue to keep the team in your prayers as they continue this diligent work.

Should you have any questions regarding your individual giving record, feel free to contact Financial Secretaries Bob & Anna Mushrush (215.536.3112 or robert.mushrush@yahoo.com).

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.



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!