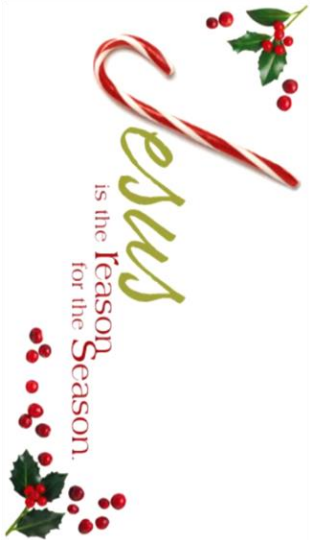


December 2020



Free Spring Church of the Brethren
670 Free Spring Church Road
Mifflintown, PA 17059

Free Spring Fountain



The water I give will become a spring of water welling up to eternal life. – John 4:14



Free Spring Church of the Brethren

670 Free Spring Church Road
Mifflintown, PA 17059
(717) 463-3192
FreeSpringCOB@yahoo.com
Terry Smith, Pastor
Charles Eldredge, Moderator
Lona Henry, Church Secretary

Office Hours:
Thursday
5:30 – 7:00 pm

Sunday Services:
Early Worship – 8:30 am
Sunday School – 9:30 am
Worship Service – 10:30



Truck Stop Ministry Cookie Packing
Saturday, December 5
8:00 am

NO Meals-on-Wheels Desserts
for December



Christmas Eve
Caroling and Candlelight Service
Tentatively Scheduled
8:00 pm

All items for the January newsletter and calendar must be in the Free Spring Church office by **Monday, December 21**. If we do not receive these items by then, we **WILL NOT** be able to put them in the newsletter.



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,
 Christmas is meant to remind us that God is with us. We yearn for peace on earth, but often pack the season with so many activities and expectations that anxiety sets in. One fellow said that he is just praying for a healthier year ahead for all people.

We see all the glitzy commercials for gadgets and garb that are a little over the top, even as we also witness long food pantry lines and more people facing business closings. Yet, there is hope. Mary and Joseph were plain and simple folks who were called to trust the Angels' messages. They were not given any guarantee that bringing God's Son into the world would be an easy experience. We know that it was a real challenge to journey to Bethlehem, find a place for the birth, and then flee to Egypt to escape the wrath of Herod.

I came across the following story by Sue H. Wolman from many years ago. It reminds me of how some people can be so happy with so little:

"When I was small, my mother read me a story about a little Dutch girl from a poor family. The little girl was told by her mother and father that they could not afford to get her any presents for Christmas, but the little girl laughed merrily and said that everyone receives something at Christmas.

On Christmas morning the little girl found in her wooden shoe, which she had set by the fireplace the night before, a baby bird with a broken wing. The bird had fallen down the chimney during the night.

'See?' exclaimed the little girl gaily to her parents. 'I told you that I would get something for Christmas. I'll take care of this little bird so that he will get well.'

This little girl had discovered the true spirit of Christmas. For her it was not a time for receiving lavish gifts. It was a time for helping those who were less fortunate than she was."

May this Christmas inspire in us a faith and love like that of the little Dutch girl in this simple story. We have been blessed, so let us be a blessing to others.

In Christ's Love,
Pastor Terry

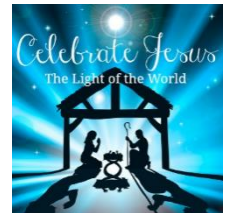


Scriptures and Messages for December

	<u>December 6</u>	
Mark 1:1-8		<i>"The Beginning of the Good News"</i>
	<u>December 13</u>	
John 1:6-8, 19-28		<i>"Who Are You?"</i>
	<u>December 20</u>	
Luke 1:47-55		<i>"Sing of Your Love"</i>
	<u>December 27</u>	
Luke 2:22-40		<i>"Rejoice in the Lord"</i>

**December Deacons of the Month:
 Warren & Connie Wagner**

Caroling & Candle-Lighting Christmas Eve Service



This year we will have several options for a tentative Christmas Eve Service to stay socially distanced but still remember the meaning of Christmas. Service will be held at 8:00 pm. Please note the time change. As previously mentioned, these plans are *tentative* and may be changed due to COVID as numbers continue to rise locally. Keep your eyes on bulletins and emails from Lona and Pastor Terry.

The following service options are as follows: upstairs in the sanctuary with masks *required*, downstairs in the fellowship hall via radio broadcast with masks *recommended*, and in the parking lot via radio broadcast. We'll be singling first verses of familiar carols and can be considered caroling or sing-a-long with the radio. Candle-lighting will have options as well with traditional candles or using cell phone lights or headlights from cars. Inside we will not circle the sanctuary or fellowship hall but stay in our seating area to light the candles.

It may not be like Christmas Eves of past years, but we will still bring light to the world as God did when He sent us His Son.

Free Spring Library News

The following are fiction books, some are part of a series.

The More the Merrier by Linda Byler

After her husband's death, Emmy Miller can barely keep her eight children warm, clothed, and fed. Then she meets Dan Beiler, a widower raising six of his own, who understands her struggle. Emmy begins to feel unexpected stirrings in her heart, but a family with 14 children would be impossible amid the Great Depression – wouldn't it?

The Christmas Swap by Melody Carlson

All Emma Daley wants this holiday season is a white Christmas. But the young teacher and struggling musician sure can't find that in sunny Arizona. Luckily, there's someone living in a perfect mountain home in the Colorado Rockies looking to make a vacation trade this year. Tyler Prescott is an in-demand songwriter and talented musician who put his own singing career on hold to write songs for celebrity acts to perform. When his mother convinces him to do a vacation trade for Christmas, he never imagined one of the houseguests would be so sweet – or so strikingly pretty.

Christmas Bells by Jennifer Chiaverini

A teacher in present-day Boston is stunned by somber news as she prepares for a Christmas concert at church. But when she discovers the full story of Longfellow's famous 1863 poem "Christmas Bells" it speaks across the generations to bring her hope – just as it did for a nation in the midst of the Civil War.

The Pelican Harbor Series by Colleen Coble

Two Reasons to Run – Police Chief Jane Hardy is still reeling from the scandal that rocked her small-town department just as she took over for her retired father – the man who wrecked her life with one little lie. Now she's finally been reunited with her presumed-dead, fifteen-year-old son Will, and his father, documentarian Reid Bechtol. When a murder aboard the oil platform Zeus exposes an environmental terrorist's plot to flood Mobile Bay with crude oil, Jane and Reid must put their feelings for each other behind them and work together to prevent the rig from being sabotaged. (This is the second book in the series; the first book is One Little Lie.)

Danger Never Sleeps Series by Lynette Eason

Acceptable Risk – Sarah Denning is a military journalist with the Army in the Middle East when her convoy is attacked and she's taken hostage.



When former Army Ranger Gavin Black is asked by his old unit commander – Sarah's imposing father – to plan an extremely risky rescue, he reluctantly agrees and successfully executes it. (This is the second book in the series; the first book is Collateral Damage.)

Global Search and Rescue Series by Susan May Warren

The Heart of a Hero – Navy SEAL Jake Silver and heart surgeon Dr. Aria Sinclair fight to survive a category 4 hurricane in Key West. Jake battles traumatizing memories that resulted from his career as a former sniper and Navy SEAL. As part of the Jones, Inc. rescue team, Jake finds some element of redemption by utilizing his skills to rescue and save the lost and injured. One of his most rewarding moments was saving the life of pediatric heart surgeon Dr. Aria Sinclair – a woman he still can't forget. Aria has dedicated her life to helping children born with defective hearts. After all, she was one of those children. Driven to succeed, she lives a lonely, stressful life. Although she finds Jake both exciting and handsome, he's also dangerous, and she refuses to take the risk of loving again. When Jake hears that Aria is in the path of a deadly hurricane in Key West, he can't help but jump on a plane to rescue her. As the hurricane turns paradise into peril, Aria realizes she needs Jake desperately. With their very survival in the balance, can they hope for a second chance at life...and love? (This is the second book in the series; the first book is The Way of the Brave.)

The following is a nonfiction book.

Seven Words of Christmas by Robert Morris

Celebrate the eternal hope and change of the first Christmas! Best-selling author and pastor Morris helps you examine seven words of prophecy God spoke through Mary, Joseph, Elizabeth, and others around the time of Jesus' birth. In 21 devotional readings, he'll help you discover their message of salvation, favor, blessing, guidance, joy, redemption, and peace.

~ Kathy Bowman, Librarian



Free Spring Book Club

The next Free Spring Book Club discussion group will meet on **Monday, December 21 at 1:00 pm**. We will be discussing I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou.

Nurture Commission News



This year has been a very different year due to COVID 19. Hopefully you have remembered who really has control and live your life according to His Word.

Nurture Commission would like to take this opportunity to THANK EVERYONE!! for handing in your Time & Talent Surveys for next year and to those who were willing to give of their time and talents this past year. We would not have been able to accomplish many of the challenges that we faced during the year if it wasn't for the kind and giving congregation like Free Spring has, whether it was taking a meal to someone in our congregation, in their time of need, playing the piano, being worship leader for a month, decorating the church for special events, or just by taking the time to pray for someone, WE THANK YOU!!!

There are still positions that need filled yet so please let Mark Zeigler or someone on the Nurture Commission know what you would like to do so we can get it to Lona for publishing.

SPECIAL THANKS to Pastor Terry and Wanda for being the wonderful, helpful and caring people they are. We are very grateful to have them in our congregation.

Please keep the people who can't get out for Christmas and people who will be traveling in your prayers.

OUR BIRTHDAY OF THE MONTH IS Angela Bryner, who celebrates her birthday on December 27. Please remember her with cards and prayers.

Music & Worship Committee is planning something different this year for our Christmas Eve Service on December 24 at 8:00 pm. Details are in the bulletin and this newsletter. Please come and enjoy the real meaning of Christmas.

LOOKING FORWARD:

January 3 – Bread & Cup Communion

Items for College Goodie bags will be collected in January.

We will also be collecting children's names again in January for the mentor affirmation group.

~ Erin Bell, Darlene Leach, Mark Zeigler, and Art Zug



December Birthday of the Month

Our Birthday of the month is Angela Bryner on December 27. Please remember her with your prayers and cards.

Witness Commission

December Food Pantry Delivery by: Mildred "Skip" Miller



Merry Christmas to all of you and I know we are all looking forward to a Happy New Year!

Our Food Pantry giving during September and October included 9 bottles of laundry soap, a jar of applesauce, a box of Benedryl®, and 4 bags of cough drops. For November we have been collecting toothpaste and the total will be reported in the next newsletter.

The Bethesda Mission Collection ended in November and we are so happy to see the table in the church overflowing with donations. The Mission has so many needs and we are just one of their answers to prayers. Thank you for your giving to this Outreach!

We are looking forward to packing Christmas Cookies for Truck Stop Ministry on December 5. We hope everyone is planning on what special cookies they will be making. The packing will be at the church starting at 8:00 am.

For the month of December, we will be collecting a special offering for Children's Aid Society. Since we did not have candy-making this year, this will be our alternate way to give to them.

~ Connie Hesford, Jen Sparks, Warren Wagner and Dina Zug

Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child Update

Thank you to all who packed a shoebox for Operation Christmas Child. On Monday, November 23, Becky Zeigler and I delivered 38 shoeboxes from the Free Spring congregation to the drop off center at the Guardian Angel bookstore in Richfield.

The Samaritan's Purse project has been collecting and delivering shoebox gifts – filled with school supplies, hygiene items, and fun toys – to children worldwide for more than two decades.

Thanks again for your support!

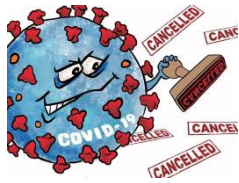


~Mary Zeigler



Congratulations!!

Hope & Jay Shenk are the new parents of Amelia Joy Shenk, born at 10:10 am on 11/11 in 2020! 😊 She weighed 8 lbs 12 oz and was 22 inches long. Hope and Amelia came home last Friday. All are doing well!



CANCELLATION
 There will be no
 Meals-On-Wheels Desserts
 for December.

2020 CHEESEBALLS

To Benefit Relay for Life

Our Free Spring Cheeseballs are delicious for snacking anytime or for holiday parties. They make great gifts (just add a pack of crackers!). And only \$8 for a one-pound cheese ball!



Order yours starting November 1 by signing up in the church narthex. Please sign up to donate cream cheese or make a \$ donation toward the sharp cheese (sign-up sheet for that also in narthex). Also sign up if you are able to help make the cheeseballs on **Friday, December 11**.

You may pick up the cheeseballs Sunday, December 13, 20, or 27. Questions? Ask Sharon Ritzman



Carlisle Truck Stop Ministry Inc
2020 Cookie Collection
Saturday, December 5

On Saturday, December 5, at 8:00 am, we will be gathering to put together cookies for the Carlisle Truck Stop Ministry.

We need you to please make your famous Christmas cookies and drop them off at the church fellowship hall before that Saturday or if you plan on helping that morning, you may bring them with you then.

We had a great number of bags donated last year and I am praying that we can try to top that number again this year.

Please keep COVID concerns in mind as you are preparing your cookies. Also, we will be requiring masks and gloves be worn during the morning of packing.

Thank you in advance for all your support to make this project a success!

FREE SPRING CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
Results of Election held on October 15
SLATE FOR 2021



Auditing Committee:
Committee:
 Dan Barkley

Counting

Jayne Book
 Sharon Ritzman
 Barbara Shepler

Church Board:
 Ron Gordon
 Jen Sparks
 Brett Wagner
 Warren Wagner
 Becca Walters
 Mark Zeigler
 Art Zug

Nominating Committee:
 Cindy Lucas (3-year term)
 Kathy Bowman (2-year term)

Pastor/Parish Relations:
 Lucille Saner

School House Committee:
 Sharon Ritzman
 Jeremy Smith
 Matt Wray
 Orlyn Saner

Bible School Committee:
 Gretchen Wray

Church Board and Commissions
Ron Bell – Church Board Chairperson, '22
Mark Zeigler – Vice Chairperson, '21
Becca Walters – Secretary, '23

Christian Ed Commission
 Shari Book (Chair) , '22
 Dee Bell, '22
 Dara Reinford, '22
 Mary Zeigler, '22

Stewards Commission
 Rich Walters (Chair) , '22
 Dan Elsasser, '21
 Brett Wagner, '23
 J Allen Zendt, '21

Nurture Commission
 Mark Zeigler (Chair) , '21
 Erin Bell, '21
 Ron Gordon, '23
 Art Zug, '23

Witness Commission
 Dina Zug (Chair) , '21
 Jen Sparks, '23
 Warren Wagner, '23
 Becca Walters, '23

Enclosed in this newsletter or on the church's website at www.cob-net.org/church/freespring under Documents is the form used for completing your information to be added or changed in the 2021 Free Spring Church Directory. You do not need to be a member to be included in the Directory. This form may also be used to indicate you wish to have a mailbox here at the church (for those who do not already have one) and if you'd like to "go green" and have the monthly newsletter e-mailed to you rather than receiving a hardcopy!



Fill out your
Family Profile
For the Church
Directory Update!

Please use a separate form for others not in your household. Extra forms are on the table in the narthex.

The following is a tentative schedule for completing the Directory:
Sunday, December 20 – the lists for addresses, birthdays, and anniversaries will be placed in the narthex for review. Any information in red on the address pages is for identifying those who have not provided any information. Changes may be made on these sheets or marked OK in place of a form if you prefer.

Sunday, December 27 – DRAFT copy of the Directory available

Sunday, January 3 – FINAL DRAFT copy of the Directory available

Wednesday, January 6 – **FINAL DEADLINE before printing**

Sunday, January 10 – 2021 Church Directories will be placed in mailboxes and available in the narthex, and mailboxes will be updated.

Please place completed forms in my mailbox as soon as possible. Thank you all for your help!
~ Lona Henry, Church Secretary



Calling Out Deacons December 6

Two of our Deacon unit's terms expire at the end of the year; they are Mark & Becky Zeigler and Cindy Lucas (these persons are eligible to be "called out" again) and we thank them for their dedicated service.

We need to call out two units to replace them. Therefore, we are scheduling a "calling out" of new Deacons on Sunday, December 6. A Deacon "unit" can be a single person or a couple who are members of Free Spring and in good standing with the church.

~ Ron Bell, Board Chairperson

2021 Offering Envelopes have been placed in the narthex. When taking a cartridge, please be sure to write your name on the paper slip included with each cartridge and place it in the designated box to ensure a proper giving statement is provided to you at the end of the year. Thank you!
~ Lona Henry, Church Secretary



Christmas Angel Program

Thank you so much for responding quickly to the Angel Tree project this year. Since we have completed that so well and so early, our mission now is to deck the tree with hats, scarves, mittens, gloves, socks, etc. for the coming winter months. These items will then be donated to the Food Pantry, where they will be distributed along with groceries to needy families in our community. These can be for children and adults.

Thank you for always being so generous in your donations. Any questions, please ask Cindy Lucas or any Deacon.

Poinsettias



Following is a list of those who have placed poinsettias in the church in honor or memory of someone:

Ron & Dee Bell in Memory and Honor of Family

Ken & Leslie Laudenslager & Family in Memory of Lois and Evelyn

Rosalita Leonard in Memory of Bunkertown Church of the Brethren

Karen Logan in Memory and Honor of Family

Sam & Sharon Ritzman in Honor and Memory of Loved Ones

Pastor Terry & Wanda Smith in Memory & Honor of Family

Art & Dina Zug in Memory of Our Parents

Art & Dina Zug in Honor of our Family and Church Family



Thank you!

We would like to thank everyone for the cards we received for our 50th wedding anniversary on November 21.

God bless you and stay safe!

~ Harold & Jayne Book