

Your calendar of events for remainder of November 2020...

OBSERVE SOCIAL DISTANCING 6 ft		2:30 p.m. Sunday, November 22 Community Thanksgiving Service at The Gazebo in Leechburg Park				
22 10am Worship	23	24 7pm Finance	25 Food Bank	26 Thanksgiving Day Office Closed	27	28
29 9am S.S. 10am Worship	30	Sunday School for ALL Ages Starts Sunday, November 29th at 9:00 a.m.				

Your calendar of events for December 2020...

OFFICE CLOSED from 12/24/20 thru 1/2/21		1 7pm Council	2 6:30 Outreach 6:30 Lions Club 6:30 G. Scouts	3 7:00 Al-Anon	4	5
6 9am S.S. 10am Worship	7	8 7pm Trustees	9 6:30 G. Scouts	10 7:00 Al-Anon	11	12
13 9am S.S. 10am Worship	14	15 10:30 Lunches 6pm PPSR	16 6:30 Lions Club 6:30 G. Scouts	17 7:00 Al-Anon	18	19
20 9am S.S. 10am Worship	21	22	23 Food Bank 6:30 G. Scouts	24 Christmas Eve (See listing)	25 Christmas	26
27 9am S.S. 10am Worship	28 7:00 Al-Anon	29 7pm Finance	30	31 New Year's Eve	4pm Children's Svc 7pm Candlelight Svc	

Your calendar of events for January 2021...

2021 ~ HAPPY NEW YEAR!!					1 Office Closed	2
3 9am S.S. 10am Worship	4	5 7pm Council	6 6:30 Lions Club 6:30 G. Scouts	7 7:00 Al-Anon	8	9
10 9am S.S. 10am Worship	11	12 7pm Trustees	13 6:30 G. Scouts	14 7:00 Al-Anon	15	16
17 9am S.S. 10am Worship	18 MLK Day Office Closed	19 6pm PP SR	20 6:30 Lions Club 6:30 G. Scouts	21 7:00 Al-Anon	22	23
24 9am S.S. 10am Worship	25	26 7pm Finance	27 Food Bank 6:30 G. Scouts	28 7:00 Al-Anon	29	30
31 9am S.S. 10am Worship	WEAR YOUR MASKS AND PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING					

Your "Mini" edition of... "The Stepping Stone"
November, December 2020, and January 2021



Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ our Risen Lord!

*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness
—on them light has shined. Isaiah 9:2*

My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

It seems like we have been doing this pandemic thing forever! We are going into Thanksgiving and Advent with more restrictions and facing another possible shutdown. This year, nothing will be like it used to be. It's just hard right now with minimal family gatherings, smaller celebrations if any, and our traditions cancelled. These are not the "good, old days" that we remember. Life is tough when it feels like you are walking and living in darkness.

Take heart! The light of Jesus Christ is still shining, and there is still meaning for us in our holy days. It might not be like last year, not like years gone by, not our usual traditions, but this year is its own year. We need to be creative and find new ways to celebrate that are safer. This is the year to make new traditions that will carry through years to come. We will be able to look back and say, "we started doing this because of the pandemic in 2020, and we kept doing it."

As you might imagine, many things in the church will be different this year. But we know that light has shined on us, so along with cancellations, there are new things.

- Our Community Thanksgiving Service is being held outdoors at the Gazebo on Sunday, November 22 at 2:30 PM – bring a mask and a chair.
- Instead of our traditional Advent Dinner, some folks are planning a walk-through prayer and devotional display, more details to follow.
- Instead of our traditional Christmas Eve service, we will be having two services – a 4:00 PM children's nativity parade and Christmas Carol "hum-a-long" and a 7:00 PM communion candlelight service. Due to coronavirus restrictions, we will only be able to seat 50 people in either service, so we are strictly requiring reservations in advance.

With your patience and understanding, these new ministries will be successful, and we can indeed say together: "A light has shined in the darkness."

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Beverly

News from the Stewardship/Finance Committee

Something New

If you have visited our Website recently, you have probably noticed the addition of a "Donate" option (upper right-hand corner of screen). Our church has partnered with Vanco, a company specializing in on-line or "eGiving" for churches. The tools provided, allow for our members and friends to make a one time, weekly or other recurring donation with a debit/credit card or ACH (checking account) transaction. The screens are user friendly and similar to those many of us use when on-line shopping. All "eGiving" will be documented by our financial secretaries the same as cash or check donations. Please take a moment to look over and consider this option for your giving.

Due to the pandemic and related restrictions, the way we come together to worship is certainly different these days. Whether you have been able to attend services in person or virtually via Zoom, etc., your support, cash, check or on-line, is appreciated and needed to continue the work of the Church. We hope this new option for your giving will be useful.

Blessings

Don Sheaffer

Stewardship & Finance Committee

OUR OUTREACH MISSION GROUP NEWS...

Lori is having an Outreach/Missions Meeting Wednesday, December 2, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. in the upstairs classroom. Details of a new ministry program to provide homemade soup to members of our church or friends and neighbors who might be interested. We have our soup makers, we need recipients. Give Lori the names of people who would like to have some soup delivered or picked up at the church.

Here is an update on the current projects the committee is providing...

1. **Angel Tree Program** ~ All of the names we were given have been assigned to individuals who have requested to help. Lori is asking that ALL gifts are to be wrapped and brought to the church prior to Sunday, December 13th. The gifts will be blessed during our 10:00 a.m. service on the 13th, and then Lori will schedule distribution to the individual families prior to Christmas!
2. **"Feed My Sheep" Ministry** ~ For the months of December and January "Feed My Sheep" will be accepting donations of liquid detergent (dishwasher or laundry).
3. **"Feeding Our Neighbors"** ~ We will be making sandwiches Tuesday, December 15th at 10:30 a.m.
4. **Turkey Give-Away** ~ Distribution of 10-12 lb. Turkeys at Sprankle's Market (Leechburg) Monday, November 23rd at 10:00 a.m.
5. **Ham Give-Away** ~ Distribution of Hams at Sprankle's Market (Leechburg) Friday, December 18th at 10:00 a.m. NOTE: If you need a ham for Christmas or know of someone who could really use a ham, **please** notify Lori or the church office.

Your help is needed to

DECORATE FOR THE HOLIDAYS!

Please contact Terry or the church office if you can help!

A message from The Leechburg United Methodist Women...

The Leechburg United Methodist Women's group may be few in numbers but those few still work to have an impact on those in need through phone calls to shut-ins, donations to local organizations and participation in the global ministries of the UM church.

- This year, Leechburg UMW donated to **P.A.T.H.** (Providing Alternatives to Hunger), a program sponsored by the Leechburg Food Bank. Every week, children who receive free or reduced lunches are provided a sack of food for the weekend to prevent hunger.
- A donation was sent to the **Greensburg District UMW** to help the organizations mission on the District level.
- Through UMCOR, donations were given to **Belize Methodist High School Scholarship and Construction Fund (BMHS)** and **El Porvenir: Clean Water, Healthy Nicaraguans (EP)**. High School education in Belize is costly and not always available. Over 50% of youth in Belize are NOT able to attend school. BMHS plans to construct a high school making education available to people who would otherwise not be able to continue education past primary levels. Improving educational levels in the general population of Belize would help drive up the social economic levels of the population of people in the Cayo District.

El Porvenir: Clean Water, Healthy Nicaraguans works to empower rural Nicaraguan communities to improve their own standard of living through water. Funding will help rural communities and schools in six regions of Nicaragua have access to clean water and sanitation. EP will help schools continually educate about healthy water, and sanitation practices in order to maintain clean water and surroundings. This will improve the quality of life of families in Nicaragua through lowering incidences of water and sanitation related diseases and mortalities. Among other goals, the program also hopes to improve the quality of women and children's lives and health through the construction of improved stoves that remove hazardous smoke from the kitchen.

Leechburg United Methodist Women continue to be a community of women committed to mission. Due to COVID, regular meetings have been cancelled. Future meetings and programs when scheduled will be announced in the bulletin.

Contributed by Chris Steele



**Sunday School for ALL ages
will begin on Sunday,
November 29th,
at 9:00 a.m.**

Naturally, wear your mask and social distance!

2020 Christmas Eve Services

This year we will offer two services for Christmas Eve. The first service will begin at 4:00 p.m. and will feature the children's nativity parade and a Christmas Carol "hum-a-long"! The second service will begin at 7:00 p.m. and will be our Candlelight (glowsticks for all) and Communion (pre-packaged) service.

Because of our capacity limitations, RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE BY ALL! And you must indicate which service you will be attending. When we reach our capacity for each service, reservations will be shut off! Call Terry at 724-845-8761 and make your reservations TODAY!

Due to state mandates concerning the COVID-19 pandemic, the capacity at services will be limited. Please wear a mask and observe social distancing protocols.

OUR PRESENCE: Attendance for the week ending 11/15/2020

OUR GIFTS: Tithes, offerings, and gifts received.

OUR GIVING IS A REFLECTION OF OUR COMMITMENT TO JESUS CHRIST!

2020 Annual Operating Budget: \$169,930.00

NEED EACH WEEK	\$3,267.88	NEED TO-DATE:	\$150,322.48
RECEIVED 11/8/20	\$2,197.00	RECEIVED TO-DATE:	\$130,160.10*
RECEIVED 11/15/20	\$2,137.00	(SHORTAGE)/SURPLUS:	\$ 20,132.68)

Renovation Loan for October 31, 2020

MONTHLY PAYMENT	\$624.06	BALANCE AS OF 10/31	\$19,607.55
RECEIVED IN OCT.	\$206.00		

2020 Connectional Apportionment ~ \$21,640.00

MONTHLY PAYMENT	\$902.00	Total for Year	\$ 9,018.00 (41.7%)
NEEDED BY 1/13/21	\$7,828.40**		

*Includes grants from WPA Conference & PPP

**Adjusted at Church Council Meeting of 11/3/20 (Increased from 50% to 76%)

YOUR THANKSGIVING AND CHRISTMAS OFFERINGS

Envelopes for your Thanksgiving and Christmas Offerings are enclosed for your convenience. Our church has always been a faith-built church and when needs are made known, you have always been there. This church gives to the ministry of Jesus Christ both locally and throughout the world. If every one of the envelopes sent out in this newsletter came back with a 5-dollar bill enclosed in it, more new ministries and programs could be started.

God has created you and rejoices in all that you are... God has chosen you and called you His very own... God has blessed you and made your life a blessing!

We have everything we need to live a life that pleases God. It was all given to us by God's own power, when we learned that he had invited us to share in his wonderful goodness. II Peter 1:3 CEV

Have a Happy Thanksgiving and a very Merry Christmas! ~ Blessings, Terry

Nurture Committee News...

We are looking for cookie bakers! The Nurture Committee is searching for people who would be willing to donate 3 to 4 dozen of homemade (or bought) cookies for the holidays to be distributed to members of our church at the conclusion of our Advent Season on Sunday, December 20th. Please contact Terry in the church office if you are willing to donate. The cookies need to be delivered to the church by 1:00 p.m. Saturday, December 19th. These will also be delivered to members of our church that have not felt comfortable to attend services in church due to COVID as well as to our shut-ins.

Also, the Nurture Committee would like to offer their services to any members of the church who might need errands run for them. Whether it be grocery shopping, picking up a prescription at the pharmacy, doing some Christmas shopping for those who cannot go to the stores, or may need a ride to a doctor's appointment, etc. Please contact Terry in the church office (724) 845-8761, or call/text Shawna Johns at (724) 393-2658.

With numbers on the rise, people are starting to stock up again on toilet paper and paper towels. If you get "caught in a pinch" and are running out of toilet paper and cannot get any at the store, please call the church office. We DO have an emergency supply for those in need.

THIRTY-ONE FUNDRAISER

New items being added to the holiday sale 11/16. These all make great Christmas gifts so keep an eye out for updates!

For every \$50 you spend you get ANYTHING in the catalog for 50% off, including our amazing P.S. Bundles! See me for more info and ideas!

Need a great gift idea for Christmas? How about a zipper pouch in our beautiful Garden Sketch print, paired with some sharpie markers! Less than \$20!!

Take advantage of our 2 for \$32 keyfobs! These make beautiful gifts! See me for more info.

New masks will be available on Nov. 23.

The more orders we get the less shipping will be (if any at all) and the more money the church will receive! The fundraiser will close on December 4 to make sure that the orders are here in time for Christmas. (See me if you would like info/catalog for your Thanksgiving family meal to try to get more orders). So, make sure to get your orders in to get some awesome gifts and help our wonderful church at the same time :)

25% of sales will go to the church

Order online under (parties) "Christmas Goodies" at www.mythirtyone.com/shawnaswagbags

Any questions see Shawna Johns or call/text her anytime at 724-393-2658