

# THE DECEMBER SEEKER 2018

NEWSLETTER FOR THE CALDWELL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



## The Advent of God

Over Thanksgiving break our family went to see the Rockettes' Christmas Spectacular at Radio City Music Hall in New York City. It was a magical day, and the anticipation leading up to the show was just as precious as the show itself, or so I thought. I had been once before, about two and a half decades ago, and I remembered the toy soldier routine and the Rockettes' flawless precision on stage and their mesmerizing delivery.

Santa Claus is the narrator and emcee of the show, along with a few other actors who carry a storyline about believing in Christmas. It was all what I vaguely remembered from years ago and much expected for a commercial enterprise in the heart of Manhattan on the day before the Macy's Day Parade.

So you can imagine my disbelief when Santa segued his monologue to "the true meaning of Christmas," and the show slowed down, and there were no Rockettes at the moment, only beautifully clad actors in rich embroidered outfits walking across the stage, some leading sheep, others leading camels, to follow the star to where the child lay. All the ancient pilgrims paid homage to the child—the three kings came, and before all of New York City and this most commercial setting, there was the live nativity and the orchestra playing, "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing," with brass accompaniment:

Hail! the heaven-born Prince of peace! Hail! the Son of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings, Risen with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by, Born that man no more may die:  
Born to raise the son of earth, Born to give them second birth.  
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born King!"

It was enough to bring tears to the eyes—the surprising sincerity of it all, an audience lost in wonder at the blessing of this birth. It was reverence, and for me, perhaps for others, it was worship.

I was reminded that day of the meaning of Advent, the first season of the church year: it is not simply about readying ourselves for the observances of Christmas, but about setting aside time to prepare our hearts and our lives to receive the gift that comes to us in the stable. Sometimes, you may be surprised at when and how your heart is caught up in the wonder, just as I was that day at Radio City Music Hall.

Wonder leaks out everywhere this season—not only from churches and artists and poets and musicians and dancers and carols and anthems and bells and orchestras—but from caring for our babies and keeping up with our children and writing our to-do lists and all the blessed anticipation; from long walks in the woods and the smell of pine, from special time with a friend, and from dinner around the kitchen table. Each of these moments speak to the wonder of this season—each of these moments invites us to make room for the child.

Madeleine L'Engle's poem "After Annunciation," tells us why:  
"This is the irrational season  
When love blooms bright and wild.  
Had Mary been filled with reason  
There'd have been no room for the child."

May your Advent journey be filled with moments of surprising wonder, and may you find love abloom in unexpected, even ordinary moments of every day. The Advent of God is upon us.

Faithfully, Ali



## December, 2018 Mission of the Month

### California Wildfires



In response to the unprecedented destruction and challenges facing survivors of California's recent wildfires, Direct Relief boosted its commitment to the relief effort, devoting at least \$2 million in cash to bolster response and recovery efforts.

The organization made its entire medical inventory available for healthcare facilities and patients in the affected areas and has made daily deliveries of emergency medications, N-95 masks and consumer health products to health facilities, shelters and public health agencies struggling to care for thousands of displaced residents.

They have also made available their entire stock of fire-related items, including more than 400,000 N-95 masks, for public agencies, local organizations, and first responder groups.

### California Wildfires: Mapping Social Vulnerability

In the past few years, the severity of California wildfires has intensified, a shift with strong ties to climate change, as the landscape becomes increasingly arid and temperatures rise. This year alone has seen two of the most devastating fires in California's history.

Without robust resources and a secure safety net, people in socially vulnerable communities may not have the means or physical ability to avoid a disaster, let alone rebuild. Understanding who is at risk means identifying what areas may need additional funding or greater physical support to recover. The CDC's Social Vulnerability Index uses such social factors — from employment status to types of housing to whether residents own a car — to calculate a community's vulnerability. Higher vulnerability rates put communities at greater risk for being unable to respond to or recover from crises. Even when the flames are extinguished, recovery will likely take many years.

*In the aftermath of a large wildfire a clear picture of the impacted population is key to establishing rebuilding efforts that support the most vulnerable.*





### Nativities from Across the Empire

Everyone is invited to meet Dec. 10<sup>th</sup> for lunch at the Peppermill Restaurant at 12:30. Following lunch, we will go as a group to Parks-Bently Place to view the nativities. See signup sheet on bulletin board.

### Advent Book Group Meeting

Everyone is welcome to join the book group at Sacred Heart on Wednesdays from 11:30 to 12:30.

Bring your own lunch.

### December Coffee Hour Hosts

- 2 Dave & Denise Paddock
- 9 Hunsicker family
- 16 Mannix family
- 23 Dave & Sarah King
- 30 Naomi Hodgkinson & Jess King



### January Coffee Hour Hosts

- 06 Berne Kouba & Carol Bayle
- 13 Dottie & Al Kopf
- 20 Corriveau family
- 27 Dave Madden & Bonnie Kraham



### **Love Feast and Advent Wreath Making Activity**

Again this year, we will hold our Love Feast and Wreath Activity on the first Sunday of Advent, December 2nd at 5:00 pm in the Middle Room.

Those attending should bring enough sandwiches, whole pieces of fruit and baked goods for their family. The idea is to make the sandwiches special, as if for a friend because all of the food is pooled and shared. (You may not necessarily eat what you bring but if you have a picky eater who only eats what you make, it isn't a deal breaker- come anyway.)

After the feast, we will distribute Styrofoam rings, fresh greens, and candles...all the materials needed to make a beautiful Advent Wreath. If you have pruning shears, bring those along. If you have your ring from last year, bring that as well.

The two hour evening will conclude with a brief Advent reading, songs and the lighting of the first Advent candle. Come join our Caldwell Family in this meaningful Christmas tradition. Watch for the sign-up sheet or contact Sarah King at (518)798-0615 or [scubakings@roadrunner.com](mailto:scubakings@roadrunner.com) if you would like to attend.



### **Church Wide Cookie Exchange**

A church wide Cookie Exchange will take place on the same evening as the Love Feast.

You may do one or both activities. If you plan to do just the cookie exchange, please bring your cookies no later than 7 PM. The exchange takes a very short time in the Coffee Room following the wreath making event.



#### **Rules for Exchange:**

Bring 6 dozen of the SAME kind of cookie. They may be on a tray, cookie sheet or box cover whatever is easiest for you to transport.

Also bring a Tupper ware container to collect your cookies in. (You bring six doz. and take home 6 doz. of a mixed variety).



**Time to order Poinsettias to help decorate the sanctuary. You may take them home with you following the Christmas Eve Service. You can choose white, pink, variegated, or red plants. You also choose the foil color of red, green, gold or silver. Please place order in the offering plate by 12/9. Make checks out to: Caldwell Presbyterian Church.**

	Plant color/ foil color/ how many
6 " Pot—1 plant	\$6.00 _____ / _____ / _____
7.5" Pot—2 plants	\$13.00 _____ / _____ / _____
8.5" Pot—3 plants	\$19.00 _____ / _____ / _____
10" Pot w/greens & twigs	\$30.00 _____ / _____ / _____
12" Pot—4-5 plants	\$40.00 _____ / _____ / _____

**Winter Rose Poinsettias with curly bracts**

6" Pot—1 plant	\$6.50 _____ / _____ / _____
7.5" Pot—3 plants	\$20.00 _____ / _____ / _____

**Christmas Day Community Dinner, Dec. 25 at 4:00**  
**at the Courtyard Marriott**

If you or your family would like to join others on Christmas Day for dinner, please call the church office at #518-668-2613 to make reservations.

The dinner is hosted by our church and the Inn at Erlowest.

It will be served at the Courtyard Marriott in Lake George, and you are asked to arrive at 3:30.



**DEACON'S CORNER**

Thank you to everyone who contributed food and helped to make the Thanksgiving Food Baskets. The Deacon's assembled and served 50 baskets this year! Sacred Heart Church served 100 baskets.

The Deacons have soup and freezer meals that we provide to folks who are home from the hospital or in need of some comfort food. If anyone makes soup or a larger batch of food that you would like to share and place in the kitchen freezer, please label the container with date and the kind of food that is inside.

Merry Christmas everyone!

Margy Mannix and the Deacon's



**Adopt a Family**

If you would like to participate, please take a mitten in the coffee room. Buy the gift and place it in an unwrapped box or bag along with the mitten

**Please bring it to the church by Dec. 9th.** Thank you!

# December 2018



**Advent Schedule**

Dec 2 ~Advent 1~ Worship with Communion 10 a.m.  
 5 p.m. Love Feast, Advent Wreath,  
 7 p.m. Cookie Exchange

Dec 9 ~Advent 2 ~ Worship 10 a.m.

Dec 16 ~Advent 3 ~ Children's Pageant Worship at 10 a.m.

Dec 23 ~Advent 4 ~ Worship &

**Advent Devotional available** to enrich your journey through the month of December leading up to Christmas. Please take one per family in the coffee room.

**Please take time to fill out a Stewardship Card** and place it in the offering plate or mail it to the office. You will find one available in the pews. This will help us to plan our budget for 2019. Thank you.

# Happy Birthday

- |                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Sara Bunalski  | 17 Marybeth Tenne |
| 4 Jessica King   | 20 Karen Azer     |
| 10 Kim Cornelius | 22 Maggie Earl    |
| 10 Sean Mannix   | 22 Todd Earl      |
| 12 Tom Jenne     | 25 Jesus Christ   |
| 17 Kathy Duell   |                   |



## PRAYER CONCERNS

Karen Azer, Justin & Alex Blanco, Pam Parrott, Linda Carr, Len Bunalski, Judd Brynes, John Kohland, Bill O'Reilly, Rachel Bush, Bud Steiner, Christine Nicols, Garrett Jahoda, refugee children & families, Jerry Cashion, Ken Austin, Marie Himes, Carpenter's son-in-law & neighbor Chris, Bill Wicks, Eileen Horgan & her mother Shirley, Camille Cadalutto, Melody Courter, David Haskell, Bev Roach, Barbara Brundage, Kevin Galloway, people struggling with addictions, Sue Moore and her friend Lorraine, Joel Palmer's family, Paulie Stevenson, Suzanna Bernd, Bob Flack's family, Paige Brower, Mr. Luefers, Rosenbrock family.



### Pastor Appreciation Thank you Note

Dear Caldwell Family,

Once again your annual ritual of "pastor appreciation month" has blown me away. As we begin our 5<sup>th</sup> year together in ministry, I can think of no more fitting marker than the beautiful handmade stole you commissioned, with the artistic renderings of scenes of Lake George and the surrounding Adirondack Mountains. The inscription reads:

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news..."  
-Isaiah 52:7

I shall wear this stole with profound gratitude always for you and for God who has brought us together.

Thank you also for the wonderful foods from Oscars which have fed us handsomely over the last several weeks! Thank you for the beautiful Aran sweater from Ireland which is especially cozy on those raw chilly days. Thank you for the hand-painted scarf with a palette of blues which I love. Thank you for your notes and expressions of appreciation and kindness, and for your gift cards which are so incredibly generous and which will continue to treat us extravagantly well into 2019.

Jeb, the girls, and I are grateful beyond words to be a part of this family of faith, and we look forward with joy and anticipation to all that lies ahead.

Gratefully,

Ali



## DECEMBER NEWS FROM THE HAITI MISSION SCHOOL

JoEllen and Howard have just returned from their recent journey to Haiti. Many of you followed their journey online, as they posted their Facebook reports. Among the things they did was to visit the school and meet with the parents, students, teachers, principal/director and the committee charged with running the school. JoEllen and Howard report that the Haitian's, especially the parents, have taken a much stronger lead in running the school. Meetings at the school centered on what our continuing relationship will be like. There were a number of places they were hoping we could help. A new building is high on their list. Howard and JoEllen will be discussing all this with our Board of Directors shortly in an upcoming meeting.

Meanwhile, under government support, the school continues to run pretty much as it has in the past, with 145 students enrolled in 6 classes. We have continued providing the food program, with Junior Eustache guiding it and ensuring there is food at the school. The government is providing the teachers, although there is still a teacher vacancy which is causing the principal/ director to have to teach a class. We hope this is straightened out shortly.

During their trip they also met with 22 of the 27 secondary school students at Latibolliere. This meeting is always one of the highlights of our journeys, as we have developed some close relationships with the students over the years. We always enjoy the opportunity to meet with them and hear about their hopes, dreams and lives.

In addition to work with the school and clinic, Howard has a separate program making micro-loans to individuals and groups. He has also helped provide for malnourished children in the town of Monet, and for the orphans and restaviks in Gomyea. One program has provided goats to families that he hopes will be used to build a herd. Each family is required to give a female goat back to the program. This will be used to expand the program to more families. Funds were also provided to build a public toilet in Monet. Many good things are happening in this area thanks to Howard's "Voice of the Children" fund.



*(Visiting these projects normally require travel on the back of a motorbike. An hour on the back of one of these small bikes on the roads of Haiti makes one glad when the hour is up and you have arrived safely. Flat tires are not an uncommon experience and JoEllen and her driver, Judelin, experienced one on the trip to Nimero De. Fortunately, they were right in front of a repair shop that was able to make the repair quickly.)*

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Many of you have met our friend Kendy who has visited with us in the states a few times. On Saturday, JoEllen and Howard were able to take time to go and visit with Kendy, Joanna and their beautiful new baby Keina Britney. Congratulations to the proud parents.

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As I write this news I am thinking of Thanksgiving. By the time you read this newsletter Thanksgiving will have passed, and we will be into the season of Advent and our preparations for Christmas. Many of us will have gathered with family or friends, and we will have paused to give thanks.

One of the things for which I plan to give thanks is the Haiti Mission School. For the past twelve years, this school has been a large part of my waking (and sleeping) thoughts. When I give thanks, I will be thinking of the children of the school. I will be thinking of the many, many ways they have reminded me of some of my own many blessings, especially material ones such as food, health care and social security.

I also plan to give thanks for a depth of understanding about faith. You see, when you are constantly living on the edge, you learn about real faith. When you must literally trust God to get you through each day, it causes you to develop a deep faith, and our Haitian brothers and sisters have shown me that. I would rather not have to give up all the things I have, such as grocery stores stocked with food, a savings account and a nearby hospital that I can turn to if I need it. The problem is, this also insulates me from my need to trust God, and therefore tends to weaken my faith. While I may not live at the same level of need they do, I know that my own faith has been strengthened through their faith. I know that as you receive this news, Thanksgiving day is past, yet I trust you will join me in continuing to give thanks for the school and its students.

*Again, we thank you for your continuing prayers and support for this mission and please remember to continue to pray for Sabrina and the other Haitian Restavec children.*



## Kids Corner

Merry Christmas! We again send out a big “thank you” to those folks who help out with the youth at Caldwell. In December, we will be preparing for our pageant.

If you'd like to be involved with CE in any aspect, please contact Sarah, Dana or Howard.

Some important dates to put on your calendar:

Dec. 2- Advent Wreath Making/Love Feast and Cookie Exchange

Dec. 16- Christmas Pageant

Dec. 23- Activity period, no regular classes.

Blessings,

Your CE Committee



## PRESCHOOL NEWS

**It's the Most Wonderful time of the year!  
We look forward to celebrating Jesus' Birthday!  
What peace, hope and joy He has brought to this world and we  
are working to share this with our student's and their families.  
The Savior of the World is with us, and we are eager to share  
how each little one can trust Him as their personal Savior.**

**We look forward to celebrating all month but on December 17th  
at 10:30 we invite our families and anyone in our church family to  
come and celebrate Jesus. On December 20, we will have our  
pajama and movie day as we get ready for our Christmas break.**

**Thank you for your support and love for  
the preschool. It is a joy to serve our  
community.**

**Serving with you,**

**Christine Sallstrom**



## **The Seeker**

Caldwell Presbyterian Church

71 Montcalm St.

Lake George, NY 12845

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All are welcomed into The Caldwell Church Family.

We would love to see you in church on

**SUNDAY MORNINGS AT 10AM!**

### **Contact Information:**

Office Number—(518) 668-2613

Secretary Email—[secretary@caldwellpres.org](mailto:secretary@caldwellpres.org)

Pastor's Email—[pastor@caldwellpres.org](mailto:pastor@caldwellpres.org)

Website— [www.caldwellpres.org](http://www.caldwellpres.org)