

The Promise of Light in the Darkness

Growing up as one of six children, Advent was a period of nearly unbearable suspense. Talk of Christmas was all around, and preparations were happening in subtle ways from every corner of the house. I remember often making gifts, those were always especially exciting to give, as well as the trips to the mall on my bike to pick out gifts for my siblings and parents, and the excitement I felt when I'd hide them under my bed, anticipating each person's Christmas morning surprise and gladness. I don't know how my parents did it, but every Christmas was something special—a trainset, air hockey, sports equipment, even a dollhouse with electric lights one year.

But the Christmas I remember most fondly, the Christmas that stands out above all the rest, is the year we spent together in Foula Boula, Mali, just south of the Sahara Desert, in the Sahel region of West Africa. My family pooled funds to come visit me while I was in the Peace Corps. The villagers welcomed them with honor guard and a fete of talking drums and ceremonial presentations. We slept outside on mats surrounded by mosquito nets, beneath the stars. The village had no electricity so the stars were particularly brilliant. On Christmas morning, we gathered in my little hut with mud brick walls and a tin roof, to read from the Gospel of Luke the story of the birth of our Lord. Our tree was a big drawing on the wall, my best rendition of a Frazier Fur, with a golden symbol on top, the bright Christmas star. Gifts were from local artisans, handmade soaps, embroidered wall hangings, small bunches of nuts, and “dablini”—a bright red drink made from a local plant that tasted a lot like cranberry juice. But the part I remember most was later that night, the villagers coming to share the Christmas joy with us, in the form of a dance party. It was pitch dark outside, and I remember lighting the wick in my lantern, and putting my little cassette player out on the porch with the speakers, and handing flashlights to some of the village children, and the fun we had, dancing together, kicking up the red African dirt, as we sang and rejoiced through the night. New friends, celebrating the age-old gift of Christmas.

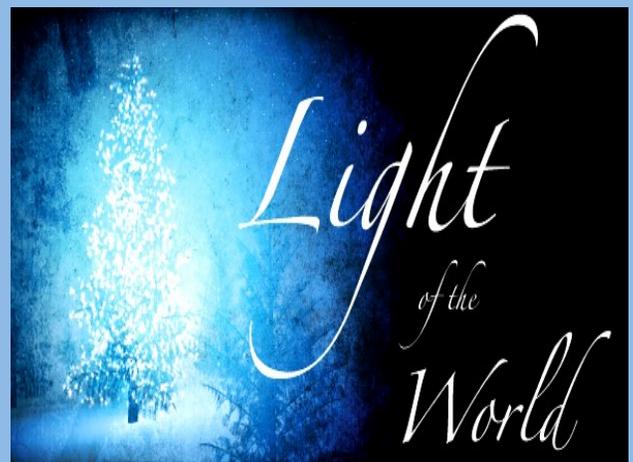


As some of you know, every Friday I walk with my sister. The loss of their child, Henry, in August, is so unbearably sad. We talk about all sorts of things on our walks, but recently, we were talking about Advent, and the gift of Christmas. As we discussed ways we could heighten the season of Advent this year, as we all must stay close to home and create new traditions for our families, amidst the pandemic, as well as the forever changed landscape of our family life, my sister said, with such startling frankness, and in her characteristic economy of words wrapped with intelligence and profound depth of thought, that Christmas for her is, very simply, the promise of light in the darkness.

And it was right then, that I realized, that is exactly what Christmas is, especially this year. The disparities of our world, the divisions in our nation, the ongoing pandemic, the grieving of loved ones we've lost, all too soon, to all of these places, comes the Christmas promise: the birth of that babe of Bethlehem. And what has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

A blessed Advent and Christmas to you all.

Ali





Christmas Community Dinner



There will be a team dinner provided on Christmas Day by Caldwell Presbyterian Church, the Inn at Earlowest, and the Lake George Marriott.

It will be Take Out only. We need volunteers to serve the food, and volunteers to drive the meals to shut in's. We are hoping for a minimum of 4 people on each team.

If you would like a meal, please call the church office at #518-668-2613. Please leave your name, phone number and the number of people who would like a meal. We will call you back with an assigned time of when to pick up your meal, or when someone will deliver it if you are a shut in.

If you would like to volunteer to help, please call the organizer,



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Save the date.....December 20 will be our youth Christmas service. All youth will be participating via Zoom. Hope to see you on Zoom or at Caldwell for our Youth led Christmas service Covid style!

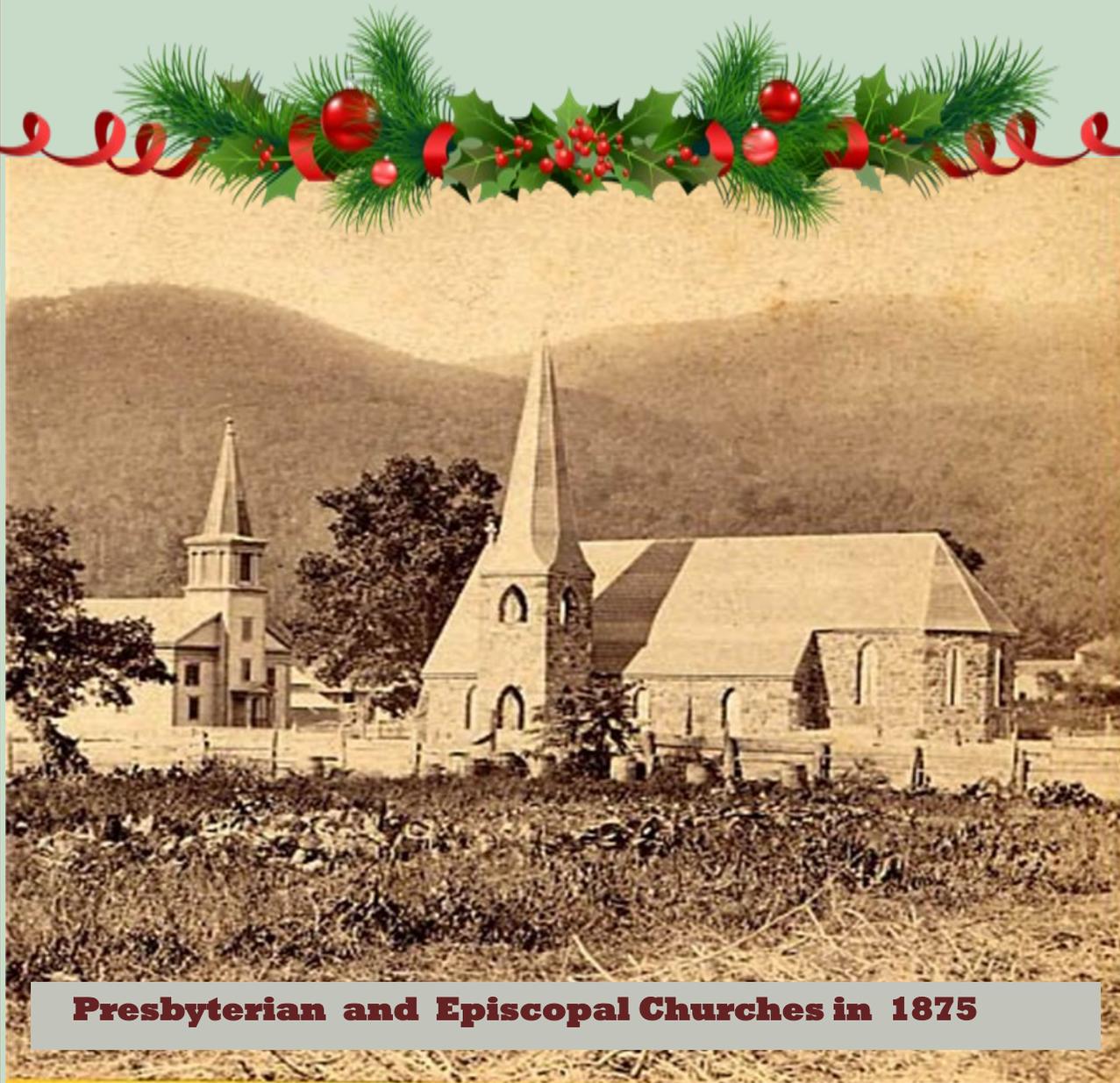
Christian Ed Wish list-Hold on to those Christmas cards! We are looking for Christmas cards with nature scenes, North American wild animals for a future project. Thanks.





JOIN US FOR A SPECIAL ADVENT VESPERS MIDWEEK WORSHIP ON WEDNESDAYS!

Dec. 2, 9, 16, and 23, at 7 p.m., the members of Caldwell Choir will lead us in midweek devotions during the high season of Advent. This is a great way to observe the season together as a church family and to prepare for the coming of our Lord. Worship zoom link will be sent out prior to each midweek service. Create your own advent wreath and join us!



Presbyterian and Episcopal Churches in 1875



DEACON'S CORNER

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

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.

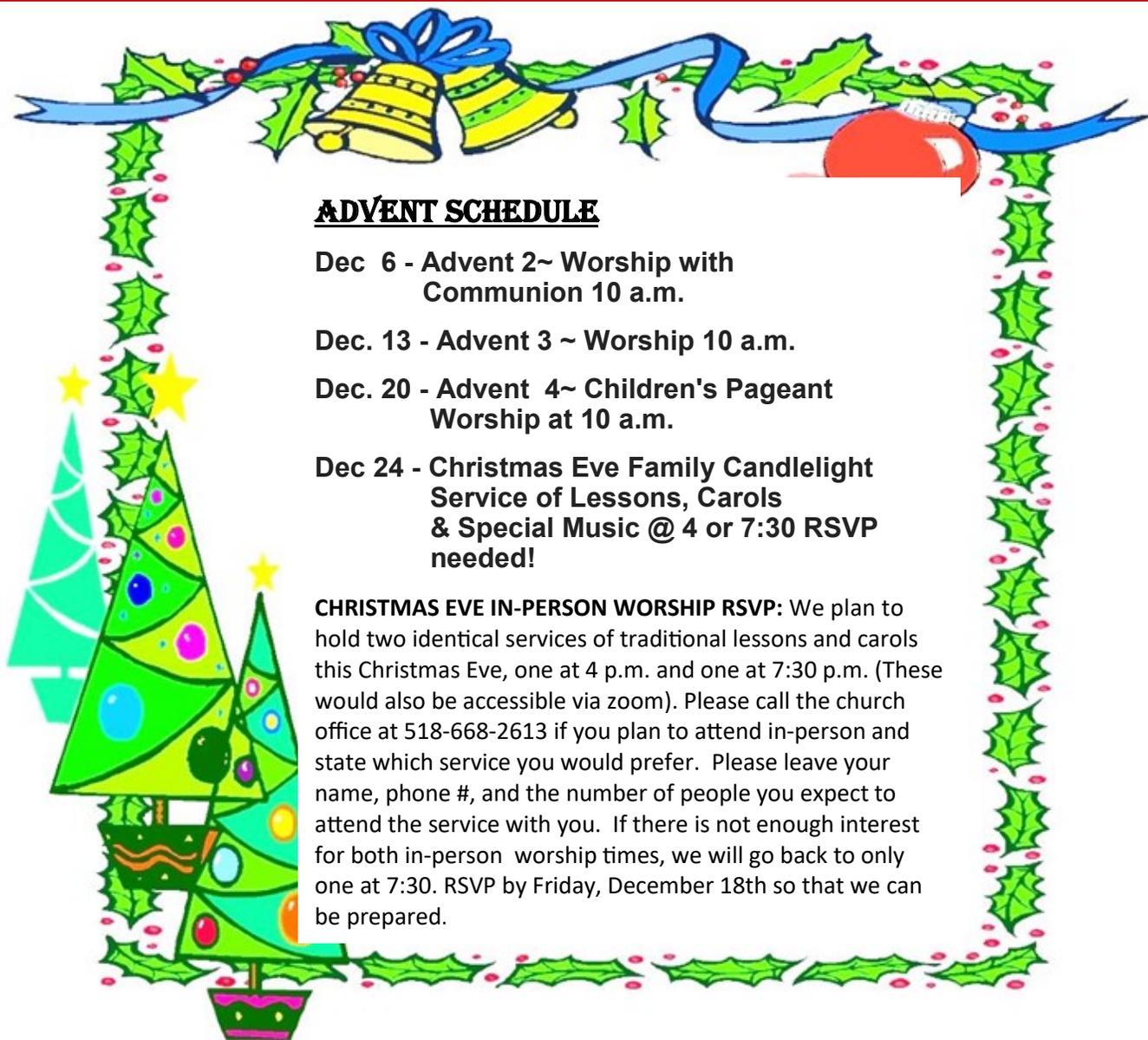
Thank you too for those who contributed to the Mitten ministry. We so appreciate your generosity and you will help make several families in Lake George happy on Christmas Day.

Please bring your gifts into the church by this coming Sunday.

Merry Christmas everyone!

The Deacon's of Caldwell

December 2019



ADVENT SCHEDULE

Dec 6 - Advent 2~ Worship with Communion 10 a.m.

Dec. 13 - Advent 3 ~ Worship 10 a.m.

Dec. 20 - Advent 4~ Children's Pageant
Worship at 10 a.m.

Dec 24 - Christmas Eve Family Candlelight
Service of Lessons, Carols
& Special Music @ 4 or 7:30 RSVP
needed!

CHRISTMAS EVE IN-PERSON WORSHIP RSVP: We plan to hold two identical services of traditional lessons and carols this Christmas Eve, one at 4 p.m. and one at 7:30 p.m. (These would also be accessible via zoom). Please call the church office at 518-668-2613 if you plan to attend in-person and state which service you would prefer. Please leave your name, phone #, and the number of people you expect to attend the service with you. If there is not enough interest for both in-person worship times, we will go back to only one at 7:30. RSVP by Friday, December 18th so that we can be prepared.

Happy Birthday

1 Sara Bunalski

4 Jessica King

10 Kim Cornelius

10 Sean Mannix

12 Tom Jenne

17 Kathy Duell

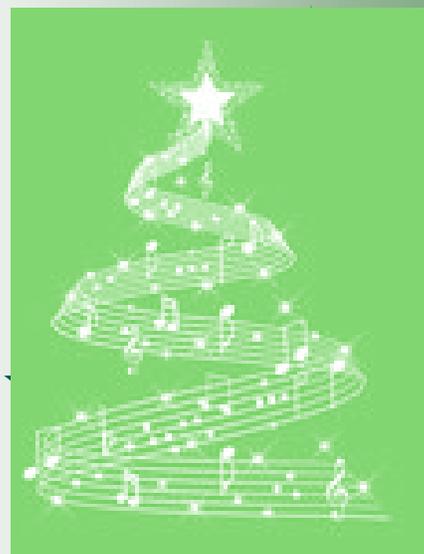
17 Marybeth Tenne

20 Karen Azer, Brynne Chase

22 Maggie Earl

22 Todd Earl

25 Jesus Christ



Prayer Concerns – Nicole Muller, Dante, John Porter (his family), and his work team, Pat Ball, Josiah, people who are out of work, KC Glenn, Stan Maleckie, Shirley Horgan, Marge Mannix, Nellie & Ann Brendal, Roger Phinney, James Rhinehart, for a covid vaccine to be found, Linda Penn, Betty Pridmore, fire and hurricane victims across the country, school administrators, teachers, staff and students, Jo Ellen's brother-in-law, niece Melissa and friend Hannah, Laurie Southworth's father, Linda Nicols, her brother-in-law Ronny, her daughter Chrissy & their missing dog, Pam & Sue Parrott, Kay Kupa, Mike Dalby, Bud Steiner, Anita Rios, Donnie Smith, Emma, Ryan Armstrong, Peg Edwards, Nancy Hollenbeck, Bill Tinsen, Joan Baldwin.



Pastor Appreciation Thank you Note

THANK YOU, CALDWELL CONGREGATION!

Once again, I am overwhelmed by your generosity on Pastor Appreciation Day. All your gifts meant so much to my family and me. We've enjoyed the Oscars delicacies, the homemade tomato tarte and the turkey lasagna, the cookies and gift certificates to LL Bean, the Caldwell House, Walmart, the cash gift, and more. The wooden artwork of the assurance of our faith, and the lovely candles and nuts and chocolates have spoiled us completely.

Thank you for your handwritten expressions of support and blessing.

It meant more to me this year than I can express.

I continue to be so grateful to be your pastor and to walk the road of life with each and every one of you.

A joyous Advent season to you all.

Faithfully,

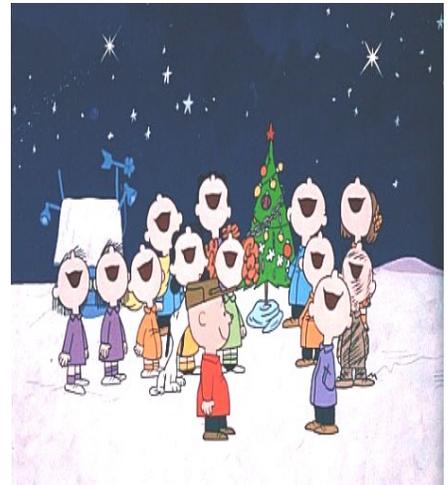
Ali



Please take time to fill out the Stewardship Card we mailed you.

and place it in the offering plate or mail it to the office.

This will help us to plan our budget for 2021. Thank you.



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

Merry Christmas! ~The Preschool Teachers



The Seeker

Caldwell Presbyterian Church

71 Montcalm St.

Lake George, NY 12845

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

Pastor's Email—pastor@caldwellpres.org

Website— www.caldwellpres.org