

# THE SEEKER—DECEMBER 2023

NEWSLETTER FOR THE CALDWELL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Dear Caldwell Family,

In his book *The Longing for Home*, Frederick Buechner “To be really at home is to be really at peace, and our lives are so intricately interwoven that there can be no real peace for any of us, until there is real peace for all of us.” (p. 140)

That is what we anticipate in Advent. A young couple, a man and a woman heavily pregnant, traveling many miles to return home, and when they arrive, making a home, a birth place in a cow stall, transforming a manger into a home to which we all, in some way, return.



Perhaps you will agree with me that our one true home is where Christ is. The home to which we return, regardless of the geography of the thing, or from whom we are separated this Christmas; home is there, that simple manger scene where we know we belong, where we know once again the strong, saving news that there is One who loves the world so much as to be born into it, loves the world so much as to never give up on it, loves the world so much as to continue to work for redemption and peace in unexpected and surprising ways. That’s where we’re headed again this Advent: Home, where we know ourselves to be loved and cared for –and ultimately fully safe, whole, at peace...that modest manger in Bethlehem, the place where, at midnight, even the oxen kneel.

May God bless you on your Advent journey home.

Faithfully,

Ali





Announcements



**Dec. 2: Christmas Craft Fair, 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Shop for your gifts here, bake sale, cookie table, and lunch items.**

**Dec 3: Advent Worship and Communion, 10 a.m.**

**Dec. 10: Advent Worship. Caroling, Cookies, and Cocoa after church.**

**Dec. 13: Community Dinner sponsored by Fort William Henry at Sacred Heart Church, 5:00–6:00 p.m. Free. All are welcome.**

**Dec. 17: Youth Christmas Pageant, 10 a.m. Youth arrival is 9:00 for rehearsal.**

**Dec. 24: Christmas Eve Family Candlelight Service, 7:30 p.m.**



**CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR  
CALDWELL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**SATURDAY, DEC. 2**

**10 AM—4 PM**

**SHOP FOR YOUR CHRISTMAS GIFTS HERE!**

**GOAT MILK SOAP, MANDALA DOT PAINTING, HAND SEWN ITEMS,  
MAPLE SYRUP, BAKE SALE AND COOKIE TABLE, LUNCH ITEMS.**

**BUY LOCAL PLEASE**



**Christmas Blessings**





## COMMUNITY DINNER THANKS & DECEMBER PLANS:

Great thanks to all who pitched in to help make our November community dinner a fun, filling and fulfilling time. We are grateful to the Holiday Inn, Lake George Bakery and all who made desserts, set up, served and faithfully helped with the clean-up. Special thanks to our brothers and sisters at Sacred Heart for making space for all, and this month for making extra Mac & Cheese. We served 90+ meals and the fun, fellowship and laughter could be heard round the block.

Time flies this time of year and coming quickly is our December 13th Community Dinner. You will not want to miss out on the food and the fun. As usual, dinner will be served in the Sacred Heart fellowship hall from 5 to 6pm. Our dinner for December will be prepared by The Fort William Henry. Stay tuned for the menu.

As is our custom, our own Lake George Community Churches will be providing desserts. There will be sign up sheets in the coffee room for those who would like to help with desserts, setting up (4:30), serving (4:45) and cleaning up (5pm to eat before we start clean up). For those who wish to join in the food, fun & fellowship come between 5 & 6pm. We hope to see you there!

## MITTEN MINISTRY.

The Deacons and Mitten Ministry Team would like to thank all of you for helping Lake George families in need. Through our partnership with the Elementary School, the Chase family of Castaway Marina and their boaters, we are able to provide clothing, toys and a meal for Christmas Day. Our Food Pantry families with children will be the recipients of these gifts.

We deeply appreciate those of you who donated money or purchased clothing for these children. The warm winter jackets have already been distributed along with some of the hats, mittens, snow pants and boots..

If you have not done so, please return the purchased clothing item along with our colored paper mitten by December 6th.

God Bless,  
The Deacons





## *December Youth Happenings at Caldwell Church...Please Join Us!*

Sunday, December 3rd, During Church – Christian Ed “Stellar” for *Angel Disciples*. Confirmation Class for *Youth Group*. After Church: Stuffie Tea Party For ALL. Cookie Exchange and Advent Wreath Making (Contact Sarah King, scubakings@roadrunner.com, for Cookie & Wreath RSVP). Pre-School Families, please join us!!

December 10<sup>th</sup>: During Church - Pizza, Painting, Pageant Planning Party

Calling all Youth! Enjoy Pizza and Beverages as we talk about and rehearse our upcoming Christmas Pageant and the ways in which you can make it so special through song, reading, acting, etc. *You'll get to choose the role you'd like to play.* We will also paint a set piece (backdrop) for the Pageant. Pre-School “Angels” will be needed !!! PLEASE RSVP by Email if you are coming to this and let me know what your favorite pizza topping is.



*“Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth...”*

Also, Sunday, Dec. 10th: 11:30am – 12:30 pm - “Fun in Fellowship” Christmas Caroling All are welcomed, young and old, to join in song! Let's together share in the joyful service of Christmas Caroling in our Community! House to House; Heart to Heart. Followed by Hot Cocoa and Cookies in the Coffee Room. Please let me know if there is a special song you'd like us to include in our caroling! Join us and spread the holiday cheer! Instruments and Bells welcomed!

**Sunday, December 17th During Church Service: Christmas Pageant**

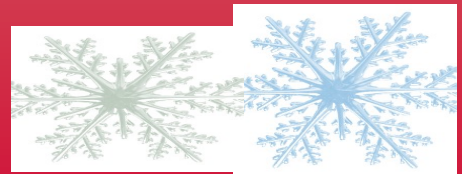
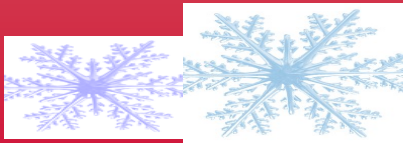
*“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given...” Isaiah 9:6*

Celebrate the true meaning of Christmas with a new twist on the traditional Christmas Pageant.

Based on the Book “The Small Miracle” by Peter Collington

Beautifully performed by the Youth of our Church Family and Adults available to join us.

*Would love to know if you can join us at these Special December Events!  
Please Contact Margo To RSVP: [YouthDirector@caldwellpres.org](mailto:YouthDirector@caldwellpres.org)*





**December Mission of the Month**  
**Josh Heikkila and the Christmas Joy Offering**

Appointed as a PC(USA) mission co-worker in October 2009, Josh is regional liaison for West Africa. He facilitates support for the programs, relationships and activities of PC(USA) partners. He also provides support to PC(USA) mission personnel and helps connect partner churches with PC(USA) churches that want to be involved in ministry in the region.

West Africa has tremendous challenges. Niger, for instance, is *the* poorest country in the world. But the Christian churches of West Africa are some of the most dynamic on the continent, and they are committed to addressing the many problems that people of faith confront. The PC(USA) has partnerships with churches in three countries in West Africa. In Ghana, where our historical roots go back many years, PC(USA) maintains partnerships with two denominations, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana. The PC(USA) also has newer partnerships with the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria and the Evangelical Church of the Republic of Niger. Josh is responsible for maintaining relationships with all of these partner churches.

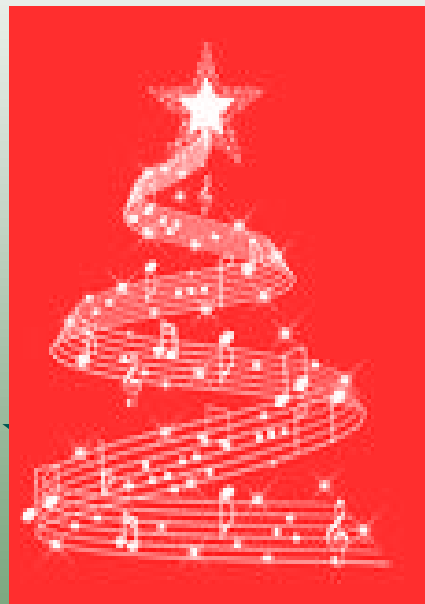
**Josh will be zooming in on 12/17 to talk about his programs.**

**Christmas Joy Offering**

The Christmas Joy Offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s. The Offering distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. The Assistance Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families. Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage. This has been a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years.

# Happy Birthday

1 Xander Bunalski	20 Brynne Chase
4 Jessica King	20 Karen Azer
10 Kim Cornelius	22 Maggie Earl
10 Sean Mannix	22 Todd Earl
10 Dave Paddock	25 Jesus Christ
14 Tatum Chase	31 Oliver Hoose
17 Kathy Duell	31 Joyce Compson





## Prayer Concerns

Cody, Shooting Victims, wars, persecuted Christians, Connie, Melody, Phillip Ceresa, Alyson Laurence, Dennis Dickenson, Linda's sister and sister-in-law, Mary Sue Arnold, Ted Brother's family, Melissa Chambers, Michael Amrock, Papo Villarubia, Jo Ellen's friend Cindy and cousin Ruth, Megan Klein, Tom Nace, L. Rose, Dennis Carey, Danielle, Jessica Army, Fred Sciallaba, Shirley Von Dem Bussche, Chris Beall, Ella Cavas, Andrea, Nicole Coller, Jean Gady, Kathy Hamme, Liz Klein, John, Ruth, Diane Fair, Ron Powers, Dr. Chris Hunt, Tom Roach, Kathy Duell, Peg Earl, Pam Parrott.



## Advent Wreath Making Event

We will hold our annual Wreath Activity on the first Sunday of Advent, Dec. 3 after church in the Middle Room. 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. We will conclude with a brief Advent reading, song and the lighting of the first Advent candle. Join us for this meaningful Christmas tradition. Watch for the sign-up sheet or contact Sarah King at (518)744-9348 or [scubakings@roadrunner.com](mailto:scubakings@roadrunner.com) or Lynda Glenn at 668-9293 -if you would like to attend.



## Church Wide Cookie Exchange

A church wide Cookie Exchange will take place on the same day as the Advent Wreath Making Event.

You may do one or both activities. The exchange takes a very short time in the Coffee Room **before 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. (You bring six doz. and take home 6 dozen of a mixed variety.)

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 2024. Thank you.



**Preschool News:**

December's character development theme is giving. The first week of December, Miss Wendy will read and talk about the Christmas story. Then we will start to decorate a school Christmas tree. Throughout December the children will be busy making presents to give to their families.

To celebrate Christmas we will invite families to create gingerbread houses. On the final day before school we will all wear our pajamas and drink hot chocolate.

December is always a special month here at school!!

Meghan Quillen, Preschool Director



## News from the Haiti Mission School



Haiti Mission School PO Box 445  
Lake Luzerne, NY 12846  
[haitimissionschool@gmail.com](mailto:haitimissionschool@gmail.com)  
[www.haitimissionschool.org](http://www.haitimissionschool.org)

A 501(c)3 organization

### General Haiti News:

In previous news we were able to report that most of the gang violence was primarily in and around Port au Prince. The current news is increasingly troubling as the violence expands. Gangs are now said to be moving into some of the once more peaceful rural areas to the North of PauP. This area, the Artibonite Region, serves as the country's food basket. Gangs are moving in, stealing crops & livestock, blocking access to irrigation systems and attacking agricultural lands, forcing the impoverished farmers to pay for access to their own land and water. Already, by April of this year, nearly 5,000 hectares (12,000 acres) of crops were lost because farmers were forced to flee their land. As a result large numbers of already hungry people are now hungrier.

Because of the lack of police protection civil self-defense (Vigilante) groups called "Boa Kale" have formed in Artibonite and other areas. They are armed with machetes, knives and bats. Their mission is to hunt and lynch suspected gang members. At first glance, this might seem like a good thing, however, among other more dreadful things it can have the effect of turning community member against community member; family member against family member; mistakes can be made and lives lost by mistake can never be recovered. Our feelings are so mixed. These groups are also forming in Jeremie where our mission is located and I am very concerned about this kind of "justice" and its short and long term ramifications.

### Completing Answers re: How much does it cost to send a student to school:

Last month we began to answer the above question posed to us by many people participating in our October Mission of the Month at Caldwell Presbyterian Church where we worship. We found that the average cost to provide food and supplies for one of our *primary school students* each year was \$225. The major expense being food. The average annual cost for a *Secondary school student* is \$185.



### College:

We currently have four students in college: two in Dental College in Jeremie, one student in the College of Agronomy and Business in LesCayes and one in the college of Business & Computer Science in Jeremie.

The annual education cost for *Bruno and Roseberline* in *Dental College* is \$1320 plus \$400 to help offset the cost of food and \$250 Salary and expenses for Junior. That comes to approximately \$2,000 this year at the current exchange rate.

The annual cost for *Sonia* in the *College of Agronomy and Business* is \$1,310 USD plus \$400 to help offset the cost of housing as she is attending school out of the area plus salary and expense for Junior. At the current exchange rate, Sonia's education will cost approximately \$2,000 USD this year as well.

*Brunia* is attending the *College of Computer Science & Business* in Jeremie currently living with family. The annual cost for her education is \$1215 plus salary and expenses for Junior. At the current exchange rate, Bruia's education will cost approximately \$1475 this year.

Some have expressed an interest in providing for a student as part of an alternative gift giving family project. If you or any of your family members would like to join in this way of gifting please let us know at the above email address and if you like we will email you a card acknowledging your gift.

*We join our students, their families, our boards (in Haiti and US) and others in wishing you many blessings and much joy throughout this Holiday Season and in offering our sincere gratitude for your continuing encouragement, prayers and support.*





### **STORY TIME THANKS AND FUTURE PLANS**

Our gratitude goes out to each one who helped make our November Story Time such an interesting, fun and delicious experience for all involved. Thanks to those who helped prepare food, serve food, eat food and/or clean up. Thanks to David King for running zoom, include Rolf's pictures and recording Rolf's story.

Our special thanks to Rolf Ahlers for sharing parts of his life with us through story and pictures. The breadth and depth of life stories within our church family never ceases to amaze and fascinate me. And we know we are only hearing a small portion of what there is to tell.

This was our last Story Time of the 2023 year. Believing *'Everyone has a Story,'* we look forward to hearing from many others in our Church Family in the new year. We continue to encourage each of you to prayerfully consider joining in this time by sharing some of your own story about your growing up years, your time here as part of our Caldwell church family, your work (volunteer or paid), your family, a hobby, your travels or other life experiences.

Once again, I heard many say "Oh, my life isn't interesting enough or I haven't really done anything ...or I couldn't do what one of the other people did or tell my story in the way they told their story." You are a unique and loved part of our family and we would be delighted to hear your own story in your own special way. If you are willing to share some of your story, please contact the Church Office, JoEllen Parsons, Bev Roach or Sarah King.

We have our next Story Time scheduled for 21 January 2024 following worship and hope you will be willing to share some of your story for 15-20 minutes. Thanks in advance.

### **Thank you Deacons and Volunteers!**

*Thank you to the Deacons and volunteers who helped to put together food baskets for needy families in the Lake George area. Over 74 turkeys were given out. We thank Karis and Jose Filomeno of the Lake George Beach Club for their generous donation of turkeys and food.*

*The Deacons are busy putting together Christmas gifts for those same needy families and again thank everyone who took a mitten to help purchase gifts, and to the Chase family who filled a boat with gifts from patrons of their marina.*

*There will be a lot of happy families on Christmas Day!*



*The Poinsettias are Given to the Glory of God,  
and in Memory of Loved Ones:*

*In Memory of\_\_\_\_\_*

*Given by\_\_\_\_\_*

*Dear Folks, if anyone would like to make a donation towards the Christmas flowers used to decorate the sanctuary. Please fill this slip out along with your donation made out to Caldwell Presbyterian church flowers, and place it in the offering plate or the office by December 17th.*

*In insert will be placed in the Christmas Eve bulletin to honor your loved ones.*

### **History behind the famous Christmas hymn “Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee”**

In 1907, Henry Van Dyke was invited to preach at Williams College in Massachusetts. In 1852, Henry was the pastor at Brick Presbyterian Church in NYC. He later became a professor of English literature at Princeton, and the author of several books including the still popular “The Other Wise Man.” He held several eminent positions including Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church.

At breakfast the day of his speech, he handed the college president a piece of paper saying, “This is a hymn for you. -Your Berkshire mountains were my inspiration and it must be sung to the music of Beethoven’s Hymn of Joy”. Dyke went on to say “These verses are simple expressions of common Christian feelings and desires in this present time. A hymn to be sung by people who are not afraid that any truth of science will destroy religion, or any revolution on earth overthrow the kingdom of heaven. Therefore this is a hymn of trust and joy and hope.”

The hymn is bursting with exuberance: “Melt the clouds of sin and sadness, drive the dark of doubt away, giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day.”



## **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)