# ST. ANDREWS HERALD

## December 2026-January 2027 NEWSLETTER

*~ Our Values ~ Christ First – Inviting – Joyful – Open-Minded*

*~ Our Mission Statement ~ Inspired by the love of Christ, we are building a community that invites our neighbors into a relationship with God and each other.*




Worship is in person, Sundays at 10am and online @ www.standrewslebanon.org/watchlive on YouTube posted by early afternoon.

### Advent and Christmas Seasons 2026-2027

*A Thrill of Hope*

Nov 29 *Hope*
Mark 13:24-37
Isaiah 64:1-9
**Re-Framing Hope**



Dec 6 *Peace* Communion
Mark 1:1-8
Isaiah 40:1-11
**Clearing The Way**



Dec 13 *Joy*
Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
John 1:6-8, 19-28
**Listening For Joy**

Dec 20 *Love* Rob Preaching
Luke 1:26-38
Luke 1:46b-55
**Boundless Love**




Dec 24 7PM Christmas Eve
Luke 2:1-20
**How God Shows Up**

Dec 27 Guest Preacher: Suzi Souder
Luke 2:22 - 40

### Season of Epiphany

*Seeking God and Following God*

Jan 3 *Epiphany & Communion*
Isiah 60:1-6
Matthew 2:1-12
**Following The Star**

January 10
Psalm 25:1-5
Genesis 6:11-22
**Following God's Instructions**

January 17
Psalm 143:1-8
Numbers 9:15 -23
**Following By Day And By Night**

January 24
Matthew 4:18-22
Matthew 9:9-13
**Following Jesus' Call**

January 31
Jonah 1:1-5,14-17
Jonah 3:1-5,10
**Following or Running Away?**

Feb 7th *Transfiguration*
Mark 9:2-9
**Following Jesus up and back down**

# A Message from Pastor Robin




Dear Beloved People of God,

I started decorating for Advent and Christmas early at my house. This was planned and essential as the Saturday of Thanksgiving weekend the boys invited their schoolmates to a party. And I am thrilled, for the house will be ready early. For once, we will not be behind on decorating and every dark night in Advent, I will come home to big star lanterns alight in the window, shepherds and wise men gathering around Jesus over the fireplace, stockings ready to be filled with delights…and I can sit, even for just a moment to ponder this season where God comes to be with us.

Yes, there will still be piles of laundry and I have to find somewhere to set up a wrapping station. Yet, the stars in the window, the small nativity lit up in the bathroom, the craft ornaments on the tree with pictures of my children, remind me that this is a season to re-imagine God's love and to lean into God's love this year. Not to wait for next year, to live into love beyond what we can imagine this year, for it is the season to believe, in more. More love, more of God's presence with us, more time to gather and be together, more lights to shine in the darkness, more for us to see and find as Jesus is born under a bright star shinning above the laundry piles, shinning for wise men and us to follow and to find. For this year, we need more hope, more of God right here with us.

The world is full of darkness. The world is full of unanswered questions and problems we cannot solve. Grocery bills get higher and higher, electric bills make us reach for real candles, and into this world with all the things we cannot fix, Jesus comes bringing a light that truly is a thrill of hope.

Through Advent, we will gather around this Thrill of Hope with a worship series that takes us all the way to Epiphany.And then Epiphany leads us on, asking us: What do you follow? How will you follow Christ in this world and in your life?

This year, find 2 things to turn you to Jesus, God with us. We will have advent journals, advent calendars, as well as advent boxes for families. You might find your Star Word from last year and give one to a friend this year, sharing how you walked with a word.

This year I walked with Ponder. And I think I tried to change it more than once, into practice or prayer. And yet, as I come into advent, ponder is just what I need; to ponder, to imagine, to sit with God come to be with me, right in the straw, the laundry pile, the stacked dishes, right in the everyday showing up with a thrill of hope, that changes everything.

Go into this season, and look not for perfection, but for God who come, who shows up right in the middle of our mess, with wonder and love and offering so much hope.

In the Hope of Christ,
Pastor Robin

## From the Director of Children and Youth Ministry

**Celebrating a Wonderful Fall!**

Before we turn our attention fully toward the Christmas season, I want to take a moment to celebrate some of the wonderful things that have happened over the past several weeks!

Our Trunk or Treat was an incredible success and a wonderful opportunity to welcome our community into the life of our church. It was exciting to see so many families, children, and neighbors come together for an evening of fun and fellowship. Events like these remind us that ministry isn't always about what happens inside our church walls. Sometimes it starts with a handful of candy, a friendly conversation, and an open invitation to come and be part of something special. Thank you to everyone who helped make the event possible!

Our youth ministry has also been busy! We recently hosted a youth lock-in with 23 students participating in our Presbytery Youth Council gathering. It was an exciting opportunity for students to come together, build friendships, share ideas, and continue exploring how young people can have a meaningful voice in the life and mission of the church. I am continually encouraged by the energy, creativity, and passion our young people bring to these gatherings. There is something special happening when we give students the space to lead, ask questions, and imagine what the church can become.

As we move deeper into the fall and begin looking toward winter, the days grow shorter, the evenings arrive a little earlier, and the world around us begins to settle into a quieter season. There is something beautiful about this time of year, even in the cold and darkness. It reminds us that light doesn't have to be overwhelming to make a difference. Sometimes, the smallest light can brighten the darkest room.

This is one of the things I love about the season of Advent. As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ, we are reminded that God enters into our world not always with grand displays of power, but through the quiet hope of a child born in a manger. Into a world that knows darkness, uncertainty, and struggle, God brings the promise of light, love, peace, and hope.

As Advent begins this November, I look forward to the moments to slow and celebrate with the students the joy of the season and look towards God with us in the darkest nights.

-Rob Cochran, Director of Children & Youth Ministry



SANTA IS COMING...
DECEMBER 6TH 2-4PM

**STORYTIME**

& FREE PICTURES WITH SANTA
@ ST. ANDREWS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

600 S. 12th St. Lebanon, PA 17042 ~ 717-272-9933
Christ First · Invitational · Joyful · Open-minded

## Advent Take-Homes



**Advent Family Boxes**

This year we have a limited number of boxes available
for children and families with an Advent devotional,
family Advent calendar, family activity, and coloring pages.
All from the Thrill of Hope series we will be doing in service on Sundays.
If you are interested, please see Rob.

**Advent Devotional**

In 2017 we created an advent devotional from the writings of congregation members. This year we are re-releasing this devotional and offering the reflections of our congregation again in this season of joy. It will be a joy to sit with the writings and reflections again in this season, but I would like to also invite you to consider possibly writing a reflection for next year. In the spring of 2027 we will begin the work of writing a new church advent devotional for our moment of anticipation in Advent 2027.

## Christian Education Committee

Why are we humans in such a hurry? The treat or treat candy is barely put away when the stores have their Christmas decorations up. The Holiday drinks are at our favorite coffee shops, and the TV has all the holiday favorites on once again. Why the rush from October to Christmas? Maybe this is the year we slow down. Let us not go straight to Christmas. We will be entering the Advent season beginning November 29th. Advent is a season of waiting and preparation leading us to Christmas. This year let us take the time to actually wait and prepare. Prepare for the coming of God's gift that is His son Jesus.

There will be several opportunities to study and help prepare us for the coming of Jesus on Christmas:

The WEBS (Wednesday Evening Bible Study) will begin an advent study "The People of Advent". The study will take a closer look at the people and events surrounding the birth of Jesus. It will explore God's plan for salvation and the roles played by God, Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, and the angels. The study will begin on Wednesday December 2nd at 6:30 pm in the chapel. All are welcome.

The 9:00 am Sunday School will also offer an advent study. On Sunday November 29 the 9:00am adult Sunday school will begin a new Advent study. Using a Thrill of Hope each we will look at the themes of hope, peace, joy and love as we look for God's saving work in our world today. We hope you will join us.

There will once again this year be devotionals available for your independent study. Remember, if you have the Dwell app, there are many opportunities to use the app for individual study.

While we all enjoy the magic and wonder that is Christmas. Let us remember to take time and prepare ourselves for the coming of our savior.

Merry Christmas,
Ken Gries – Christian Education Co-chair

## NEWS FROM YOUR CHURCH LIBRARY

Because of our church's goals to grow as disciples and "re-imagine how we use our physical space" we are revamping our library. Watch for a new display case in the gathering area to start. We could use every idea you have to make to make the Library more inviting and user-friendly.




The session has approved a <u>new procedure:</u>

- You can take a book home to read without a cumbersome procedure (just write the title of the book in a log so we can replace it if necessary)
- Then return to the basket in the library. OR you may pass it along to a friend you think might enjoy it. The more reading going on the better. (Don't worry the book doesn't need to be returned.)
- If the book was very meaningful to you and you want to keep it to re-read or underline ideas, keep it. The goal is to READ BOOKS to know Christ better. Let the wisdom of the saints help us along on our journey.

In December, Advent and Christmas books will be on display. There will be books for all ages. Visit the Library. We have over 1500 books to read. If there are Christ-based books you want to read, let us know. We may be able to find a copy. -Gayle Reilly and Barbara Kopeski



## <u>Bible 101</u>

**Starting January 17th and runs through early May**
**Sundays 11:15-noon, in the Living Room after worship**

How was the Bible formed? Why do we call it the Bible? Are different translations really different? Explore and orientate yourself to God's Word, holding onto key points of various books.

Join the Bible 101 class to consider anew how Scripture was received, gathered, formatted and given. Bring your Bible (Or come choose a Bible that is for you). Class direction will shift based on participant interest and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

*<u>All are welcome, sign up in the Gathering Area for updates.</u>*

**About the leader:**

Art/Arthur Munson was born and raised in Clinton, Iowa, a Mississippi River town. He graduated from Iowa State University in December 1955 with a degree in mechanical engineering. After stints at the Ford Motor Company, the US Army and the Clinton Corn Company, he and his wife Jean felt called into full-time Christian service. This calling led to a 38 year career in management with the American Baptist Churches USA in the field of publishing.

He has a long history of teaching, starting with a class of junior high boys in 1956 and ending with 50 years leading an adult class. He likes to work with adults who will commit to studying their lesson prior to the class time and who will participate heartily in a discussion of the day's lesson. Others are welcome with the anticipation that they will learn from the sharing within the group and become fully integrated into the group.

## The New Era Group

Come Join Us! All Are Welcome!

These gatherings are usually every other month, during the day, on Thursdays. The target group is anyone who's available during those times/dates and has an interest in the upcoming event. We tour regional points of interest, enjoy local theater, have speakers come to church, create a masterpiece at a painting party, watch and discuss movies and the always popular Christmas Carol luncheon. The activity prices are generally reasonable, and lunches are pay your own way. No membership needed - just sign up and let us know you'll be there.
(We always want a head count.)



**The Next New Era Group Event:**

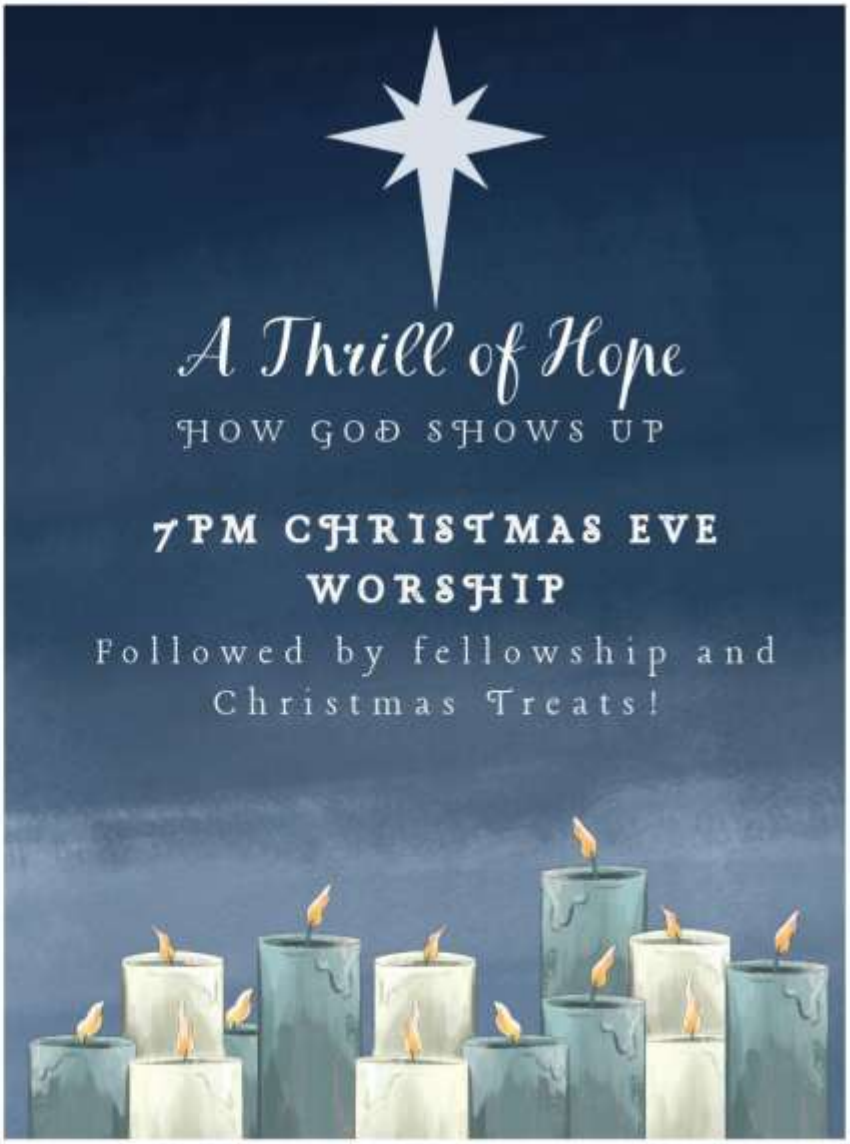
**Christmas Carols with Carole and Lisa.**
**Thursday, December 10th @11AM.**
**Lunch will be served too!**

# All-Church Christmas Luncheon

## December 13th

After Worship in Snyder Hall
We'll provide the meal—
Including dessert!
Come join us for a festive meal
and we'll do our part
to put a little Christmas
in each and every heart!





# Star Words




It's a little gold envelope.
We open ours on Epiphany Sunday, January 3rd.
And, they are ready now, for you to share.

This season is so full of stuff, this simple spiritual is so easy to offer, it reminds me of the parable of the Sower, who scattered seeds. In this season, you are invited to scatter star words. Star words offer an invitation to connect with God, to seek God in the midst of life, with a word that may lead, or offer intention, or meet one in a tender moment.

Here are a few ways to share a star word:

·Take 5 add them randomly or intentionally into 5 of your Christmas Cards.

·Keep 2 in your wallet and leave them with a tip.

·Take them to a holiday gathering and pass them out, asking people to share their words after January 3rd.

·Give one to a friend you walk with, or golf with inviting your time walking together into a more personal level.

·Give one to someone who is on your heart.

You don't have to say anything or explain it. Inside is a note that shares our tradition and offers people different ways to walk with a word.

*May we scatter these star words, looking even now to Epiphany*
*and praying for God to lead us all, right in the midst of this world.*

## Annual Congregational Meeting

Immediately after worship
on **Sunday, January 24th** - Save the date!
**Mark Your Calendar**: the fourth Sunday in January

is our Annual Congregational Meeting
for the purpose of hearing the reports of the committees and organizations of the church.

The Annual Reports will be available closer to the meeting.

*It is good to look back and reflect on what God has done*
*and look forward to where the Spirit is leading us.*

## Mission Committee

**More Than Meals and Beds 5K Run/Walk - Friday, January 1, 2027 All day**

Start your new year off with purpose! Join us for the 1st Annual *More Than Meals and Beds 5K Run/Walk* to benefit all six ministries of the Lebanon Rescue Mission.

For 81 years the Lebanon Rescue Mission has been so much More Than Meals and Beds. In addition to meals and shelter, we provide individual case management, medical care, life-skills training, budgeting, and parenting classes, helping individuals take meaningful steps towards independence and stability while pointing them toward the lasting hope found in Jesus. When you participate you help support all ministries of Lebanon Rescue Mission: Men's Ministries, Women's Ministries, Lebanon Free Clinic, Agape Christmas, Mobile Senior Pantry, Back Dock Ministry.

The run will begin from the Wenger Pavilion in the center of the Lebanon Exposition Center & Fairgrounds. The course will continue to the Lebanon Valley Rails to Trails before making its way back to the Fairgrounds.

ENTRY: $35, including shirt, if postmarked by December 7, 2026, $40 afterward including race day, shirts available while supplies last.

Online Registration: https://www.pretzelcitysports.com/onlineform1.php?id=1877



### Free Noon Meals

December 12, 2026: Christian Ed Cmte.
January 9, 2027

**Mission Spotlights:**
Dec - Tuna & Chicken Salad Kits
Jan - Canned Soups 24 oz. Low Sodium



**THE ANGEL TREE**

GIFTS FOR CHILDREN IN THE CARE OF
LEBANON COUNTY CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES AND OTHER CHILDREN.

**PLEASE RETURN UNWRAPPED GIFTS TO ST. ANDREWS BY DECEMBER 13TH.**

***DONATIONS OF GIFT BAGS AND TISSUE PAPER, ARE APPRECIATED.***

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

**MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!**




**DECEMBER**

1 Jeannie Tice
2 Shelby Lister
4 Jeff Muraya
6 Lisa Hamme
10 Steve Schulte
17 Marc Hamme
29 Penny Samuelson
31 Scott Stambaugh

**There are church directories in the Gathering Area and in the Workroom.**

**January Birthdays**

1 Sally Renda
Robert Lowrie
3 Timothy Sensenig
5 Rakim Allen
8 Ray Cochran
11 Carey Gerstner
12 Sharon Schulte
13 Nedra Embich
14 Jacob Overholt
18 Mary Reitz
19 Grace Hakkinen
21 Karen Fedder
Jonghoon Lee
25 Maggie Beatty
Sarah Flowers
Susan Strock
26 Jean Ditzler
IvaJean Conley
Gary Strock
28 Doug Lister
Karen Uhrich
30 Kate Tshudy

**February Birthdays:**

3 Benta Samuelson
5 Daniel Peelen
7 Jack Shuey
9 Ysatis (Izzy) Jimenez
10 Barbara Hains
11 Jill Kreiser
John Butler
15 Nansi Alexander
17 Louise Batdorff
21 Sarah Hamme
24 Louise Rahalewich
26 Rick Borger
Joe Prentice
27 Kaitlyn Mulligan
28 Carol Smith-Kilgore
Ken Gries





## Music Notes

**Chancel Choir, Handbells and Praise Team Wednesday Rehearsal Schedule:**

Praise Team at 5:45pm in the sanctuary, Handbell Choir at 6:30pm in the Music Room
Chancel Choir at 7:30pm in the Music Room

New singers & ringers are always welcome to join us in leading worship to sing & ring our praises to God. Our music groups share their love of God and music as they sing and play in fellowship with each other. Come join our music family!

*Singing brings your heart, soul, mind and strength together to focus completely on God.*

## Applause...Memorable Music at St. Andrews



The Concert Series Committee invites you to our next concert of the 2026-27 Season:
**Trio Caprice** will present an evening of beautiful music
Debra Ronning, piano, Dana Allaband, violin, and Sara Male, cello.
The concert will feature a program of varied musical styles to include chamber, classical, contemporary and solos by the individual performers.

**See you on Feb. 26th at 7:30 PM!**

**Calling All Our Faithful Bakers!! Goodies and treats are needed for our reception.**
Drop them off in the kitchen at the Gathering Area.
Questions – see Carole Haines or Ann Ormond. Your contributions are so greatly appreciated.

## WINTER WEATHER POLICY

Several years ago, we started keeping a digital service ready to be posted online in case of a weather or other emergency. As I write this article, we just recorded a new service to be used in case of a Sunday morning shut down. There is a particular joy and warmth to know that in case of a Sunday morning shutdown we have a time of worship and gathering ready to be shared to still gather us in spirit and worship.

### Church Cancellation Policy

In case of inclement weather or another emergency the pastor will consult with leadership of the church on closing the building for Sunday Morning Service. Check the website, social media and church phone systems for updates on the status for a church closure.

### Youth Weather Policy

If inclement weather cancels church on a Sunday all Epyc and Trailblazer Sunday activities are cancelled as well.

In case of a weather event that is projected to hit before or during an Epyc and Trailblazer event the youth director will consult with the Christian Education director and the Pastor to determine the safest course of action. If it is determined that Epyc should be cancelled notification will be sent out through social media, email, text messages, and phone calls. Every attempt will be made to provide a safe and accurate decision for the safety of everyone. If you have any questions please contact youth@standrewslebanon.org.

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Lee Moyer has been selected to receive
the 2027 Central Pennsylvania Musician's Hall of Fame
lifetime achievement award at a ceremony
March 25th, 2027 - 7 PM - Hershey Theatre






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**from 'Friends Of Old Annville' - Tom Shott received a Lifetime Community Service Award**

**Annville native, LVC grad, model railway hobbyist, longtime officer in the former A-C Kiwanis Club, longtime FOOA train station committee member, retired small business owner and leader in St Andrews Presbyterian Church Thomas Shott.**

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The Samuelson Family thanks you
for sharing the celebration of
Penny & Craig's
50th Wedding Anniversary.
It was a good time!



## Church Officers:

**Session**

**2026**

Rick Borger (Clerk / Worship)
Karen Fedder (Fellowship)
Ken Gries (Christian Ed)
Bill Mulligan (Worship)

**2027**

Gini Badger (Stewardship & Finance)
Bob Dowd (Pres. Of Corp / Property)
Fred Jones (Fellowship)
Tim Peelen (Christian Ed)

**2028**

Stuart Juppenlatz (Mission)
Paul Kilgore (Admin. & Pers.)
Rob Lowrie (Nominating)
David Overholt (Mission)

**Nominating Committee**

Sue Mechura
Carla Dowd
Cliffy Shiner

**Deacons**

**2026**

Deborah Casadei
IvaJean Conley
Astrid Santiago
Gwen Yordy

**2027**

Judy Borger
Jean Ditzler
Rita Solie
Sheri Timm

**2028**

Rosemary Birt
Lorna Everhart
Lorraine Lowrie
Diane Pomeroy

## Church Staff:

Ministers . . . . . Members of St. Andrews
Pastor / Head of Staff. . . . . Rev. Robin Morgan
Pastor Emeritus . . . . . Rev. Richard L. Cassel
Director of Youth and Children's Ministries. . . . . Robert Cochran
Coordinator of Music Ministries . . . . . Carole Haines
Organist. . . . . Lisa Meyer
Contemporary Music Leader/Digital Media Spec. . . . . Johnathan Shuey
Media Coordinator. . . . . Lew Sauerwein
Treasurer . . . . . Marc Hamme
Office Manager . . . . . Mary Lynne Mulligan




**Automatic Online Giving** may need to be renewed starting in January. Check with your credit card company or bank.

Church Office Hours
9AM—4PM, Mon–Thurs, 9AM—Noon, Friday
If you should have an emergency when the office isn't open, please leave a voicemail for Pastor Robin or email her at pastor@standrewslebanon.org.

*Please note: Minutes from Session meetings are available upon request through the church office.*

St. Andrews Presbyterian Church
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(717) 272-9933
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www.StAndrewsLebanon.org

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**St. Andrews Mission Statement**

Inspired by the love of Christ, we are building a community that invites our neighbors into a relationship with God and each other.

**Our Values**

**Christ First**
We will do all things as a reflection of Christ.

**Inviting**
We will extend Christ's welcome to all.

**Joyful**
We will vibrantly serve Christ with courage, enthusiasm, and a fun-loving attitude.

**Open-Minded**
We will embrace people and consider ideas with empathy and without judgment.