

HOLMES HERALD

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IN THIS ISSUE:

Message from Becky page 2

Christmas Peace cont'd page 3

Joy Offering/Birthdays page 4

Missionaries page 5

Youth News page 6

Please join us on
Sunday mornings for...

DECEMBER 2023

Adult Forum : 9:15 AM
Children's Sunday School: 10:30 AM
Traditional worship service: 10:30 AM



Christmas Eve

Christmas Eve Worship

It has been a long standing tradition at Holmes Church to celebrate the eve of our Savior's birth with two services. This year, we will be holdi a Communion service at 10:30 am, and a Candlelight Family service at 7:00pm.

Please mark your calendars to reflect this.

As you celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, may you feel renewed hope, tremendous peace, profound joy and the awesome love of God.

Special WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Last & First Worship

Our last Lord's Day worship of this year is Sunday, December 31st. As is our normal custom, worship will start at 10am instead of 10:30am and the service will be informal.



It is a tradition in our congregation to begin the new year with communion. On January 7, 2024 please join us at the Lord's table at 10:30 am.

CHRISTMAS PEACE

JUSTINE HWANG

"Peace on earth" is a phrase you see everywhere around Christmas time. For many of us, we have to wonder where that peace is. Whether we're trying to find peace in the chaos of our own lives or trying to wrap our heads around hope for political peace, "peace on earth" certainly seems elusive.

A quick glance around will remind us that we live in a far from perfect world.

In our own lives, we struggle to find peace with ourselves. We regret past mistakes, struggle with our present weaknesses, and worry about the future. We try to "find ourselves" in different ways and search for our purpose in life through relationships, work, leisure, and travel pursuits.

We seek and long for peace in our relationships with others. Some search for the perfect person to date. In our present relationships, sometimes we avoid conflict and run the other way in fear of doing something we'll regret. Other times we take for granted those closest to us and experience the not-so-nice daily realities living in close proximity with them. We become frustrated and angry over the mistakes of others.

We struggle with the uncertainty of tomorrow and the turmoil going on in the world around us. World news brings few positive reports, if any. We wonder if "peace on earth" is even a possibility.

Optimists would say that things are better now than they were even several decades ago. But why do we still long for a better world? Even when we long for it, no matter how hard we try, reality seems to get in the way and ground us quickly. Sure we are progressing, but if we as human beings have so much potential to be good, why are we not consistently living up to it? Even with the best of intentions, our human effort to be good and make this world a better place seems to fall short.

So where can we turn for hope of peace? Have you ever considered looking to see what Jesus Christ says as a solution for peace?

He taught people to love each other as they love themselves (not a self-serving kind of love, but a self-respect kind of love). He taught people to love their enemies. Imagine if every single person, group, culture, and country in this world learned to love each other and their enemies; there truly would be world peace.

Not only did he teach people how to be at peace with each other, Jesus himself served to make peace between people and God — a peace that was broken because of our imperfection, and our rebellion to go our own way and live life apart from God (otherwise known as "sin"). This separates us from God who is holy, perfect, and loving. It also prevents us from having access to the love and power from God that would enable us to truly realize and experience peace.

God revealed himself to people through the person of Jesus. Jesus came to earth in a peaceful way as a baby in a humble circumstance of a manger and proceeded to live a humble life (imagine being God and putting yourself into the limitations of a human body!)

Jesus came to restore our broken relationship with God so that we could first experience wholeness and peace with ourselves, and then extend it to others around us.

Through a personal relationship with Jesus:

- We find peace with God. He came to live life perfectly and died in our place to pay the consequence for our sin. His death made peace between our sinful nature and God's holy nature. His coming back to life gives us hope of living in peace with God.

(Continued on page 3)

Christmas Peace (Continued from page 2)

- We find wholeness and peace with ourselves. Our esteem is based on what God thinks of us — something that never changes — instead of on the fluctuating foundations of others' opinions, fleeting accomplishments, or changing circumstances. Our identity is based on who God has made us to be, not on the things that we do.
- We find wholeness and peace in our relationship with others because we begin to change and see people through God's eyes. We remember that God first loved us, and we grow in wanting to extend love to others.
- We can bring healing and wholeness to others around us, in the communities, the cities, and the world we live in. We begin to see hope for change in others and the world around us.

Coming into a relationship with Jesus by faith and following him does not mean a life free of conflict. But he offers a promise of hope of something better to come, and a power to bring some of that better world here and now. He offers a strength to persevere until that time a new world comes.

"Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled," is a line in a Christmas carol that gives a picture of Jesus as God's gift of peace to us. "Shalom" is a Hebrew word that signifies "peace" or "more than well." Jesus was the perfect example of "shalom" lived out. He demonstrated the kind of peace we all long for. Being the Son of God, Jesus was at complete peace and unity with God ("I and the Father are one," is a statement he made about himself). He always treated people with respect, wisdom and love. He brought peace to those around him, and he ultimately wants to bring peace between you and God.

As the ancient meaning of "shalom" as a greeting signifies, "May you live in anticipation of the day when God makes things whole again."

Take a look at your life. How would you describe it? Contented? Rushed? Exciting? Stressful? Moving forward? Holding back? For many of us it's all of the above at times. There are things we dream of doing one day, and there are things we wish we could forget. In the Bible, it says that Jesus came to make all things new. What would your life look like if you could start over with a clean slate?

YOU CAN RECEIVE CHRIST RIGHT NOW BY FAITH THROUGH PRAYER! (PRAYER IS TALKING WITH GOD.)

God knows your heart and is not so concerned with your words as He is with the attitude of your heart. The following is a suggested prayer:

Lord Jesus, I need you. Thank you for dying on the cross for my sins. I open the door of my life and receive you as my Savior and Lord. Thank you for forgiving my sins and giving me eternal life. Take control of the throne of my life. Make me the kind of person you want me to be. Amen.

FROM THE DEACONS



Dear Friends,

A cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930's, the Christmas Joy Offering is a special mission collected during Advent that supports the unmet needs of families who have devoted their lives to the mission of the church. The offering is split equally between the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and the Presbyterian affiliated racial ethnic schools and colleges. The Assistance Program of the Board of

Pensions provides many different individualized programs to ministers and church workers, both retired and current, when they are in need. The Board offers things such as income supplements, one time need offers for things such as hearing aids to continue ministry and for emergency needs.

Presbyterian affiliated racial ethnic schools and colleges receive the rest of the offering and use this to award scholarships to the students and help the schools with basic operating costs. This allows the students to pursue their education and the schools to stay current in these technologically evolving times. Our Joy Offering will be received on December 17th. Members have a Joy Offering envelope in your envelope box. There are also envelopes in the church pews.

Holmes Church has a wonderful record of generous giving to the Christmas Joy Offering. Let's continue to give generously and in "Joy!"

Thank you for caring for others!

Peggy Walter

Deacon, Special Missions



Christmas Offering

HAPPY BIRTHDAY:

- 4 Lee McFalls
- 5 Elizabeth Carpenter
- 15 Carol LoCastro
- 17 Isobel Beaston
- 20 Joe O'Donnell
- 29 Lynn Krauthaim



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY:

- 26 Mr. & Mrs. John VanGeyten

Annual Worship Service Project



On Sunday, December 10th, 2023, we will again hold our annual Worship Service Project where we make baskets for our shut-ins and our community partners.

Also, after we make the baskets, we will be preparing the luminaries that we beautify our church with on Christmas Eve. We will end the worship hour by having the Jesus Birthday

Small but mighty! Our community garden produced 242.2 lbs of produce for



Loaves & Fishes to bless others with and 41.6 lbs of produce for the community during our community giveaways. Few people know the work it takes to maintain the garden. We thank Elaine VanGeyten, Helen Pilgrene and their helpers for their dedication to the garden and willingness to help fight food insecurity in our community by providing fresh produce,



Thank you to everyone who donated canned goods and non perishable items to the Deacons Food Drive. This year

the music room table was overflowing with generous donations from our our church family. 15 boxes/bags were taken to Loaves & Fishes just in time to make Thanksgiving a little brighter for those in need.



MISSIONARIES

Below is the most current list of the missionaries we support and pray for. Would you please take a few minutes of your time this holiday season and send them a Christmas greeting? You could write just one or two, or you could send them all greetings.

Adam & Laura Atkinson
7204 Fairway Drive, Apt I-22
Miami Lakes, Fl 33014
(World Outreach Ministries)

Paul & Lori Dickason
PO Box 628222
Orlando, Fl 32862-8222
(Campus Crusade for Christ)

Mr. & Mrs. Daryl Van Dyken
39 Lakeview Court
Downingtown, PA 19335
carolvandyken@gmail.com
(Trans World Radio)

Mr. Paul Cruz
241 E. 51st Street
New York, NY 10022
(Chosen People Ministries)

The staff of Holmes Church is privileged to serve God and work with you in ministry! As we move into the new year, we pray that God will richly bless our work together for the growth of his kingdom. May God richly bless you and keep you in this sacred season and in the coming new year!

Helen Pilgrene

Angelo LoCastro

Thank you

FOR GIVING, SERVING
AND LOVING!

As this year ends, the realization sets in that Holmes Church would not be entering 2024 if it wasn't for the selfless, talented, generous people in our church family who joyfully serve the Lord and Holmes Church with all they have. We are so grateful for your time, talents and resources.

We thank all those people who faithfully reached out to help others this year and participated in our Compassion sale, Community garden, School supply collection, Trunk o' treat event, Food drive, and Christmas Outreach program. We also thank all those who allowed us to share food & pet food/supplies with those in the community in need by sharing your "extras". We thank God for allowing us to be vessels of hope and love during this very challenging, uncertain year. May blessings flow abundantly to all of you in the New Year!

As we enter the New Year and look to help others the Deacons recently decided to oversee our blessing box and the food boxes given out to the community to help those who are food insecure. On average in 2023, we gave out 2-6 food boxes monthly to help individuals (mostly seniors) who are having trouble making ends meet and the blessing box was used/filled daily for community use. We thank the Deacons and all the individuals who donated nonperishable items to the small food pantry that fills both. These programs are nourishing bodies and filling people with hope during a very difficult time.



YOUTH NEWS

The first two weeks of December will find our Youth Group participating in some wider-scale church family events: the annual Hanging of the Greens on Saturday the 2nd, the assembling of the Community Baskets on the 10th, and Painting (without) A Twist on the 13th. We will also be making the street-side luminaries on the evening of the 10th. This is going to be a very busy time for our young people, and give us multiple opportunities to learn more about the Good News of our Savior's birth.

We will be exchanging polyanthuses on December 17th, after we return from a trip to Rose Tree Park to see the Christmas Tree Lighting.

Of course the discussions will focus on the events surrounding the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the impact that this event had on the whole world, even to this day. Please pray that our young people will be open to the message of the gift of salvation, and the desire to live their lives for God. They have many distractions and temptations, especially from those they consider their closest friends.

As always, thank you so much for the love and support that we receive from the Holmes congregation. You have truly been a blessing to this ministry for so many decades. The work continues.

May you all have a very Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.

See you in 2024!

In Christ,
Mark and Becky

ADVENT COMMUNION

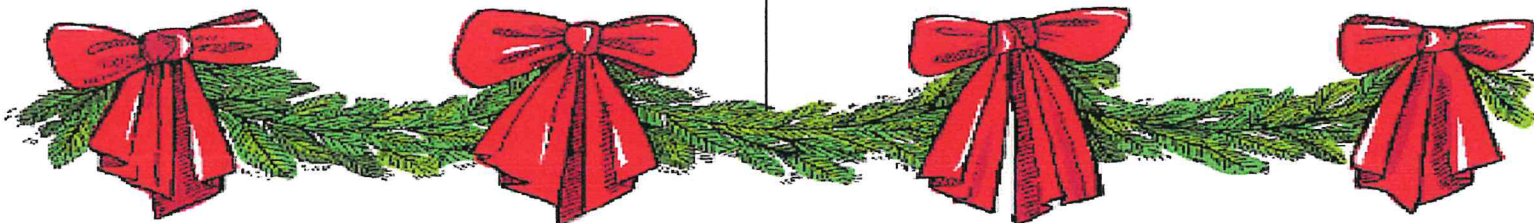


We celebrate the beginning of the Advent Season on December 3rd with the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Worship begins at 10:30 am.

The "Good Samaritan" offering taken during this service is distributed equally to each of our missionaries as a Christmas gift from our church family.



On Wednesday, December 13th, we will be hosting a Painting Without a Twist/cookie walk night. Dinner is included and will be served at 5:30pm, painting starts promptly at 6pm and lasts until 8pm. A cookie walk will follow afterwards until 8:30pm. A hot chocolate beverage bar will be provided during the event. If you registered for this event, payment is due prior to December 13th. Please see Becky or Amanda for payment/questions and don't forget to bring 2 dozen cookies and a container to put them in.



DECEMBER

Holmes Presbyterian Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																				
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Nov 2023</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Jan 2024</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td></tr> <tr><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> </div> </div>					S	M	T	W	T	F	S				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30			S	M	T	W	T	F	S		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31				<p style="font-size: 2em; color: red; margin: 0;">1</p> <p>8:00 P.M.A.A. Meeting</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; color: red; margin: 0;">2</p> <p>5:00 PM Hanging of the Greens</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Hanging of the Greens</p> </div>
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