



# HOLMES HERALD

HOLMES PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, PO BOX 117, HOLMES, PA 19043

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**Treasurer:** Angelo LoCastro

**Organist; Choir Director:**

Mark Kalbach

**Youth Director:**

Rebecca Kalbach

**Custodian:** Helen Pilgrene

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*Please join us on  
Sunday mornings for...*

**February 2023**

**Adult Forum :**

**9:15 AM**

**Children's Sunday School:**

**10:30 AM**

**Traditional worship service:**

**10:30 AM**



Following worship on February 12, 2023, all members are invited to attend the annual meetings of the congregation and the corporation. These are the informative meetings at which the officers and organizations report the stewardship of the leadership in 2022. The Nominating Committee and Auditor for 2023 are elected. We value your presence at this important meeting. **YOU ARE HOLMES CHURCH!!!**

## **Presbyterian Mission Support Fund**

During the month of February, members of Holmes Church are asked to make your Presbyterian Mission Support offering. Each member should use the blue envelope provided in your General Fund envelope box. The Philadelphia Presbytery, The Synod of the Trinity and the General Assembly ask all churches to submit \$32 per member in order to support the administration of our Presbyterian mission program. This offering will be received on February 5th.



## **From the Deacons**

**Christmas Joy Offering update**

The Deacons would like to thank everyone for their generosity to the Christmas Joy Offering. The final collected total for 2022 was \$578. Thank you again to everyone who contributed!

# Staying Steadfast

If many of you aren't aware, the pandemic wreaked havoc on the Christian Church nationally. Here are a few interesting statistics to share with you:

In 2021, Gallup shared that for the first time ever, church membership dropped below 50% nationally. Among Millennials, only 36% identify with a church.

Similarly, a decade ago only 22% of Millennials said they have no religious affiliation. Today, that number has risen to 31%. For Gen Z, 33% now say they have no religious affiliation.

At the same time, attendance keeps dropping across the board.

A survey by FACT (Faith Communities Today) over 15,000 churches conducted just before COVID shows that between the years 2000 and 2020, median church service attendance dropped from 137 people to 65. It found that mainline Protestants suffered the greatest decline over the past five years (12.5%), with a median of 50 people attending worship in 2020. Evangelical congregations declined at a slower rate (5.4%) over the same five-year period and had a median attendance of 65 people at worship. Catholic and Orthodox Christian churches declined by 9%. Surprisingly, the only groups to boost attendance over the past five years were non-Christian congregations: Muslim, Baha'i and Jewish.

So what can we do with this sad news? Do we bail on the Christian church and Holmes Church as statistics show? Or do we hold steadfast, trusting in God to lead us and Holmes Church? What does the Bible teach us about being steadfast? Here are three verses to examine:

**1 Corinthians 15:58** states:

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

**Galatians 6:9** states:

And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.

**James 1:2-4** states:

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

Holmes Church is in a state of change—a time of transition. This is a time where we need to stay steadfast and look to the Lord to lead and guide His church. As the hymn, Be Thou My Vision states:

"Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;  
naught be all else to me, save that thou art.  
Thou my best thought, by day or by night,  
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light..."

Thankfully, Holmes Church has been a witness to our community for 116 years, and we will continue to do so if we let God be our vision! I am grateful to be part of this church and this wonderful church family. Yes, we are in a time of change, and for some, change isn't easy. Furthermore, we are living in a post-Christian culture. People are more interested in finding reasons NOT to go to church or make their faith a priority. Yet, I am honored to serve God here at Holmes Church. I am excited to see what the future, and more importantly, what God has in store for this special church.

In Christ,  
Elder Becky Kalbach

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE HOLMES PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

In the late 1800's, southeastern Delaware County was composed mostly of farms. One of the main farmers was Richard Holmes. Mr. & Mrs. Holmes had three daughters and two of them, Mary and Margaret were members of the Media Presbyterian Church. These sisters were concerned that there was no Sunday School for the residents of their community. With the help of their pastor, the Rev. Dr. David Tully, and the Presbytery of Chester, the Rev. Dr. McKinney, pastor of the Chambers Church in Rutledge, was directed to investigate the need.

So it was, in God's Providence, on Sunday, October 17, 1897, at a meeting in the Holmes sisters' home attended by 23 residents, and under the direction of Pastor McKinney, the Holmes Presbyterian Sabbath School was organized. At first, meeting in homes (and a tent in the summer months), the attendance increased. A Board of Trustees was formed and a lot was purchased and on November 18, 1905, ground was broken for a chapel. A half-basement-ground floor building was constructed and the first formal worship was celebrated a year later on November 16, 1906. It was a day remembered as a quartet from the huge Chester Third Presbyterian Church sang and many clergy from neighboring Presbyterian churches brought greetings.

On February 13, 1907, five Sabbath School members applied at the Media Courthouse for an incorporation Charter for the envisioned Holmes Presbyterian Church. Subsequently, they applied to the Presbytery of Chester to be formally organized as a particular congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA). That was granted and celebrated in worship on February 18, 1909. There were 21 charter members representing thirteen families. Two Ruling Elders from the Chester Second Presbyterian Church were appointed as Session of the new church. One of those, Mr. Frank Innis, was later ordained to the Christian ministry on November 17, 1912, and was installed as the first Pastor of Holmes Church.

After Pastor Innis left in 1915, the Church had no installed pastor until 1926. With the arrival of the Rev. Dr. James Earl Jackman as Pastor, the Church moved to a new, larger frame building on the MacDade Turnpike. It was the home of the Church for the next 28 years. It was a time of great struggle-especially through the Depression years. There were a few, brief pastorates. From time-to-time, it received Presbytery mission funds to sustain it life. Nevertheless, it was a center of community life. The stage of the Social Hall was often used for plays and musicals. It sponsored the historic Boy Scout Troop #355 which was chartered in 1933.

The larger community developed significantly during the World War II years both with industry and housing. In 1948, the young Rev. E. Bradford Davis was called as Pastor. During his tenure as Pastor-the post-war years--the community and neighboring areas experienced the great suburban housing expansion. Many young families moved into Holmes (Ridley Township) and Secane (Upper Darby Township) and the membership of the Holmes Church began to grow and grow.

The old frame church building could no longer accommodate the Holmes Church family. So, after careful planning, a new building was constructed and on February 7, 1954, the Holmes Church family followed a band, with horns blaring and flags waving, and marched down Holmes Road to its new and present home. By God's grace, the Church continued to grow and flourish.

Reflecting the rapid growth of the community, Holmes Church was awash with children. Under the leadership of the new pastor, the Rev. Gilbert J. Ward, the Church built a Christian Education building and dedicated it on February 17, 1963. The Church continued to grow in the mid-60's reaching its peak membership of nearly 600. Filling an educational void in the community, the Church began the first and popular preschool program in the area housed in our new educational facility.

The Rev. Dr. J. William Carpenter was called as the eighth Pastor of Holmes Church in the Fall of 1969. During his long pastorate, many events have been celebrated and changes occurred. Filling a community need, the Church established a very successful Holmes Leisure Club for senior citizens in 1972. In 1975, it established its noted Memorial Handbell Choir. From time-to-time, the Church has hosted four Holmes Community Days on its campus. Through its long successful Youth Ministry, it hosted a community floor hockey league for youth and parents. For more than 50 years, our Church women have hosted an annual Women's Ecumenical Tea attended by women from some 25 community churches. For more than 50 years, we have hosted an important annual Vacation Bible School for our church and community children. We are pleased to sponsor our historic Boy Scout Troop #355, a Cub Scout and a Girl Scout Troop. (Continued on Page 5)



# YOUR CHURCH OFFICERS FOR 2023

It is with grateful hearts that Holmes Church expresses their deepest appreciation to the following people for their commitment and willingness to lead us in the new year. We pray that God will bless their efforts giving them courage in their leadership, compassion in their service and wisdom in their decisions.

The following persons are your elected leaders for 2023. You are encouraged to contact them if you have a question, suggestion, or a concern about the church, or a particular need.

## **SESSION**

Becky Kalbach, Mark Kalbach, Angelo LoCastro, Bruce Moffatt, Ed Taylor, Elaine VanGeyten, Bob White.

## **DEACONS**

Leeann McCullough, Sue Mulhern, Debbie Oliver, Eileen Stevens, Amanda Taylor and Peg Walter.

## **TRUSTEES**

Joe Lucas, Lisa Taylor, John VanGeyten, David Struck, Bob Vincent and Dyan White (1 year).

## **SESSION'S MINISTRY TEAMS**

In our Presbyterian Church, government of the local congregation generally rests in the Session--the Elders elected by the members of the church.

*For information regarding the following ministry team members, please see any Session member*

## **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

## **FINANCE**

## **WORSHIP**

## **COMMUNITY/OUTREACH**

## **BOARD OF DEACONS**

Responsible for ministry to sick and needy and benevolence (mission) giving.

President	Leeann McCullough
Vice President	Helen Pilgrene
Secretary	Leeann McCullough
Treasurer	Amanda Taylor
Flowers	Debbie Oliver
Cards	Sue Mulhern
Special Missions	Peggy Walter
General Missions	Helen Pilgrene
Communion	Eileen Stevens
Teas	Helen Pilgrene/All

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

The Trustees and Officers of the corporation of Holmes Church for 2023 are:

President	Not filled yet
Vice President	Not filled yet
Secretary	Lisa Taylor
Treasurer	Angelo LoCastro



## A BRIEF HISTORY OF HOLMES CHURCH

(Continued from page 3)

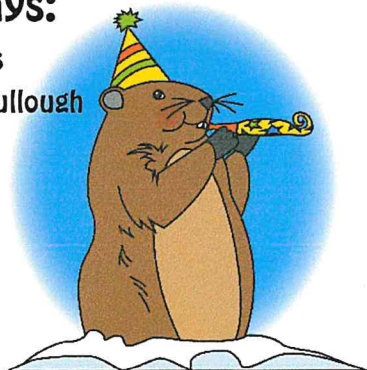
We are grateful to be able to host an Alcoholics Anonymous support group and a Heroin Anonymous support group for our community.

On October 21, 2021, Pastor (Rev. Dr.) Carpenter retired from his office after serving fifty-two years. In that change, the Philadelphia Presbytery, which owned the Manse, sold it to Dr. Carpenter. The Presbytery also appointed the Rev. Jesse Garner, retired Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, to serve as Moderator of the Holmes Session during this interim time. The Presbytery chose to leave the pulpit vacant until the Church could call a new Pastor, so the Session asked Dr. Carpenter to lead worship, when needed. In this interim period, the Session (elected Elders) has continued to lead the congregation. A Mission Study Committee has been appointed and is working to evaluate our life and mission as we live into God's future for Holmes Church. On February 19, 2023, we will celebrate our 116th anniversary as a confessing Church serving our Lord Jesus Christ in Ridley Township, Delaware County, Pennsylvania!

During our 116th year history, the Holmes Church has seen incredible cultural and community changes, but its call to witness and share the Gospel with our community remains the same. Like the larger Church, Holmes Church has seen many changes as we have tried to adapt to the ever changing world around us but continue to present the unchanging message of salvation through our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ. As we move into our unknown future, we do so in faith that God will graciously continue to use us in this community for its welfare and for his honor and praise.

### February Birthdays:

- 9 Eileen Stevens
- 15 Brandon McCullough
- 24 Monica Ferry



## Holmes Presbyterian Church 116th Anniversary (1907-2023)

Early in the 20th century, on February 18, 1907, Holmes Presbyterian Church was organized with 21 charter members. So, in 2023, we are grateful that we can celebrate our 116th anniversary on February 19th. Please join us in worship as we thank God for allowing us another year of ministry in Holmes.

After worship, The Deacons will host a fellowship hour with a light luncheon and dessert fare. We hope you will join us as we celebrate this historical milestone of our church.

## LENTEN COMMUNION



It is hard to believe but we will soon start our Easter preparations by observing Lent. The Lenten season which starts with Ash Wednesday, February 22, and ends on April 8th, is a time for spiritual growth, and reflection on Jesus Christ - his suffering and his sacrifice for us. What does his life, death, burial and resurrection mean to us and the rest of the world? It is a tradition at Holmes Church to observe the beginning of Lent with the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. We will observe this on Sunday, February 26th. Please join us in this privilege as we gather together as a church family in reflection and gratitude for the gift we've been given.

### Amazon Smile Program

We were notified on January 18th that the Amazon Smile program will end on February 20th. Amazon is investing in specific area and focusing their philanthropic efforts where their employees live and work in an effort to have a "more significant and lasting impact."

Thank you to all the people who purchased items on Amazon and chose Holmes Presbyterian Church as your charitable recipient. We are grateful for all monies earned for the church through this program



# YOUTH NEWS

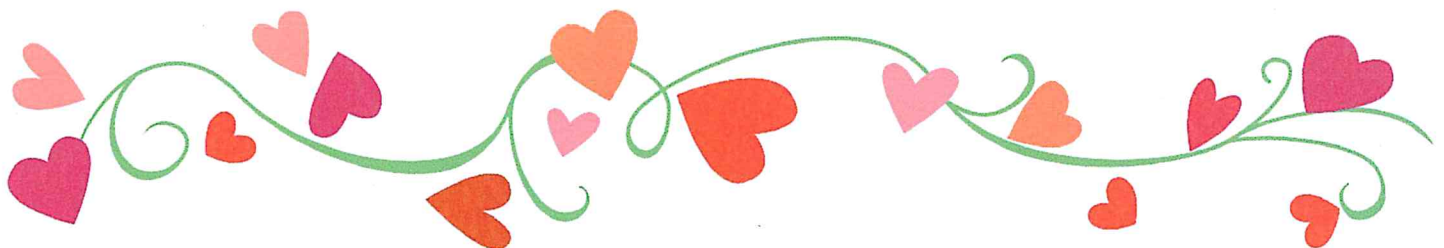
December was an extremely busy month for the Holmes Youth Group. The members (and yes even post youth group members!) came together and helped out with the Hanging of the Greens, the Christmas Mission Church Project, Family Movie Night, the Christmas Music Worship Service, helped run the Christmas Eve Program (and also several songs for the service), prepared and lit luminaries, and we also went to Rose Tree Park to see the trees and grounds lit up for Christmas.

Mark and I are so extremely grateful for the youth and post youth-groupers who are ever so willing to help and participate in the many activities at church-whenver we ask. They are a special group of kids! We appreciate their excitement and enthusiasm.

In January, the youth were able to participate in the popular Paint Nights. We focused on Bible verses centered around love and their art work will be on display shortly. Group discussions have focused on choosing the right kind of friends and behaving in a way that is honoring to God. We also discussed how to avoid being drawn into situations that would not be pleasing to God.

As always, Mark and I appreciate you upholding us and our youth in prayer. It is certainly not easy being a youth in today's culture and climate.

In Christ,  
Mark and Becky



# FEBRUARY

Holmes Presbyterian Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																				
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