

Li'l Ripples

January 2024

Volume 24 Issue 1

A Publication of Lower Marsh Creek Presbyterian Church



A Message from Pastor Mark

In This Issue :

Church Life Events, Information:

<u>FUNnFITNESS</u>	2
<u>Birthdays</u>	2
<u>Thanks</u>	2
<u>Jamal Interview</u>	2
<u>The Legacy of Sharing</u>	
<u>Your Life</u>	6
<u>December 3rd Dinner</u>	8
<u>Guild Party</u>	9
<u>Music Ministry</u>	10
<u>Deacons</u>	10
<u>Mission Advocate's Corner</u>	11
<u>Have You Heard</u>	16
<u>Giving Corner</u>	17
<u>Clerk's Report</u>	18
<u>Financial Report</u>	19

The Season of Epiphany; The Season of Light

In Church time, the day of Epiphany is always January 6, the twelfth day of Christmas. The spiritual theme of the season of Epiphany is light: the light of the star that guided the Magi to Bethlehem; the light that is Jesus Christ defeating all the darkness in our lives; the light that is our calling to be examples of Christian righteousness. The Bible is filled with references to light and darkness. Light is a powerful spiritual theme:

“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.” (Isaiah 60: 1)

“Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5: 16)

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” (John 1: 5)

Do you pay attention to the light? In the natural world, December 21 is the day of the winter solstice, commonly known as the first day of winter. The winter solstice is the shortest day of the year in the northern hemisphere, where we live. There will only be 7 hours and 14 minutes of daylight; and each day until the summer solstice the light shines a bit more. The days get longer by an average of 2 minutes and 7 seconds every day after December 21. It will take about a month, around January 18, until our days will have a full hour of extra daylight. We will add a full hour of daylight every month until the summer solstice on June 21.

Do you pay attention to the light? The light that shines on us in the person and with the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. The light that we are supposed to shine on the world. Is our light muddled and obscure? Is our light brilliant and intense? Light may be comforting. Light may be illuminating. Light may be revealing. You are a light. Shine on. . .



NEXT LI'L RIPPLES

DEADLINE IS:

JANUARY 19th

In Christ!

Mark

HAPPY NEW YEAR from the **FunNFitness** group. Hope you had a safe and happy start in the new year. Many of us probably have overindulged in good food, etc. over the Holiday season and hopefully made some New Year's resolutions which included getting in better shape and taking care of ourselves. Now is the time to begin to act on these resolutions. Please join us at our FnF classes **every Thursday at 9 AM (for one hour)** in Fellowship Hall. We will **begin** our weekly sessions for 2024 on **January 4th**, so consider joining us for these **FREE** sessions - no need to sign up - just show up. Everything we do is low impact and can be done sitting, if needed. After a brief warm up to stretch those muscles, we then work on lower and upper body, core and leg strength before concentrating on upper body strengthening. You will not have to do anything you are not comfortable doing as we can adapt all routines to fit your comfort level. We then work on things that are very important for all ages: balance, hand/eye coordination along with concentration and reaction time. Remember, our group is called **FUNnFITNESS** so our goal is to have fun while working on getting fit for a better quality of life.

Please join and bring family, friends, and neighbors. This is an outreach program of Lower Marsh Creek Church and we all can benefit from it. Dave and Pat Diehl, your fitness leaders.

Help Is Here

Interested in learning more about the Holy Spirit. Join the **adult group** who meet in room 4 of Fellowship Hall **Sunday's at 9:45**. Learn who the Spirit is and how he can help you find true rest and peace as you let Him carry your burdens. Questions: Susan Nunamaker, Doyle Waybright

- 1 - Barb Schwartz
- 1 - James Bigham
- 1- Barbara Bigham
- 3 - Phyllis Smith
- 5 - Caleb Miner
- 5 - Ethan Miner
- 11 - Dirk Grove



- 14 - Michael (Mike) McDonald
- 18 - Frank Buhrman
- 23 - Franklin Orleski
- 26 - Mary Smith
- 28 - AJ Aldrich
- 30 - Robert (Bob) Williams
- 31 - R. Daniel (Danny) Shriner

THANKS

THANKS

THANKS

THANKS

THANKS

THANKS

November 2023

Dear Friend,

This summer, through area campership funds, a girl named Cindy, who is on the autism spectrum, was able to have an amazing week at our camp in upstate New York. I am beyond grateful . . . I am thankful for your support in helping us get all of our "Cindys" to the feet of Jesus.

In Christ for all kids,

Newt Crenshaw, President/CEO, **Young Life**

THANKS continued . . .

November 30, 2023

Dear Friends,

Thank you for partnering with us as we work diligently to make the life-changing wisdom of the Bible understandable and accessible to all. Your generous support has enabled us to work around the world, whether it is in faraway countries, difficult places, lonely spaces, or your home. Thank you for helping people develop a lifelong love of the Bible. We could not do this work without you.

Boldly unhindered (Acts 28:31),

Matt Lucas, D.A., President/CEO, **Our Daily Bread Ministries**

December 1, 2023

Dear Friends,

The **Adams County Community Foundation** gratefully acknowledges your gift on November 9 for the **2023 Giving Spree**. Donors like you made this one of the most successful community giving days in the country, with more than \$3.1 million supporting 100 nonprofits. Your generosity, combined with others, will be felt year-round as participating nonprofits have pledged that every dollar donated will stay in, and benefit, Adams County.

Sincerely,

Ralph M. Serpe, President & CEO

December 7, 2023

Dear Lower Marsh Creek Presbyterian Church

We would like to thank you very much for your generous donation in support of Ruth's Harvest-Fairfield. Your gift allows us to provide food for those who need it most, the children in the community. Ruth's Harvest-Fairfield relies substantially on the generosity of donors to continue the mission of our organization . . . which would be immensely more difficult without the support of caring churches like yours. By helping us, you are making a positive difference in the lives of many children.

With much gratitude and many blessings,

Ruth's Harvest-Fairfield

The following thank you was included in the ARM December newsletter:

*The residents/clients here at **ARM/Agape House** are often in desperate need, and our staff, along with myself, thank you all so much for your continued support as we serve the hungry, homeless, abused and addicted; the least, last, lonely and lost in our community with the purpose of restoration provided by the strength of Jesus Christ and your generous contributions.*

Pastor Will Hudson

THANKS continued . . .

The following thank you was included in the Christmas card received from SAT 7:

“You are like lights that God has lit up and placed on top of the mountain.” - A SAT 7 VIEWER

Thank you for being “lights” to the Middle East and North Africa.

Many blessings to you all. Looking forward to connecting in 2024.

Brian Nelson, Ministry Development Director, SAT 7 USA

Editor’s Note: The following article was provided to our Mission Advocate (Sandy Buhman) by Rayna Cooper.

Two Grads & Two Paths

May of 2023 brought the joyous occasion of having two brothers is our first Afghan family graduate from Gettysburg High School! The two brothers, separated in age by 23 months, had never been apart until the family made the journey to Gettysburg in February 2022. At that time, Baber stayed behind in New Jersey with the youngest boy, who was recovering from a medical procedure until they could re-join the family in Gettysburg. Another separation in their paths has occurred since graduation, as Jamal decided that college was for him, and Baber saw the trades as a career path he would enjoy. Their second parting happened in August 2023, when Jamal left for Elizabethtown College, while Baber began a full-time job with a regional construction company.

Here is an interview with Jamal, home during the holiday break from Elizabethtown College. Another interview will be done with Baber on a later date. Rayna Cooper, Coordinator, Refugee Resettlement Partnership of Gettysburg

Jamal: To set the stage: Jamal spoke up on his first day in Gettysburg, as he was meeting RRP volunteers. He voiced his earnest hope that he would be able to attend college and asked if there might be help for him in achieving this. His year in an Afghan Academy set the stage for his new role as the family interpreter – the Academy gave him a good grounding in the English language, which was honed during their 6-month stay in temporary housing in a New Jersey camp for Afghan immigrants. He was tapped by the camp administrators to serve as an interpreter. He said that when he found out the house in Gettysburg was so close to a college, he thought that was a good sign – no way would the opportunity to attend college escape him!

Q: What do you like about the college experience at Elizabethtown?

A: EVERYTHING! Everyone is the same age as you are, and they are all taking their first steps toward what their life will be! I love the availability of help and assistance when it is needed, and the fact that I am living in close contact with people who have become my friends – there is always someone to hang out with, and we are together a lot of the time when we are not studying. I love the food – I have an “unlimited swipe card” for meals at the campus café and all the food is ready to eat! You can go and eat there or get a “green box” to carry your meal out to a place you can study while eating. I try to get close to 5000 Calories per day to build muscle and that means 4 to 6 meals a day!

Q: Did you have goals when you went away to college?

A: Yes, two goals. One was to gain 20 pounds and one was to get 90 or above in all my courses. My schedule had 16 credit hours, with one difficult first year seminar that required me to write 20 long essays over the semester. I am studying pre-med with a minor in business. I think I achieved both my goals but am waiting for final grades! *(Jamal later disclosed that he made all A’s in his full slate of classes!!)*

Also, I promised myself that I would never lose courage and never feel embarrassed or ashamed about not knowing how to do things or about expressing myself. I remind myself that others are in the same boat. To illustrate, he tells of entering a classroom for the first time (Biology) after most people were seated. Seeing that the boys were all on one side of the room and the girls on the other, he walked in and seated himself in the middle of the girls. The boys took notice and stared pointedly at him – he said “What? I know the girls will help me when I need help with this

class!”, gaining a laugh. Later, some of the boys introduced themselves to him, wanting to know who he was, and he became friends with some of that group of girls. Friendships have developed with many of those classmates.

Q: How do you organize your time?

A: I received advice and assistance from several RRP Volunteers who helped me prepare for college work and the processes of college selection, applications, essays, scholarship applications, supplies and organizing the financial part of it. Three of those people advised me to never skip a class – the 50-minute lecture will cover 50 to 60 pages of detailed reading and will save time and also point out what the most important points are. I followed that advice, and one of those volunteers showed me how to set up phone reminders for the whole semester, alerting me 15 minutes prior to each class so I would not miss a class. This was very helpful.

I have a daily schedule: Wake up 40 minutes before sunrise to pray and worship; Practice writing about various topics for 20 minutes and then attend first breakfast at 7:30 am, go to class, attend brunch at 9:00, attend class/study and go to lunch and other classes. I work out in the gym 3 days a week for 45 minutes per session and sometimes go for a run. I have gotten to know many of the boys who are on various sports teams but enjoy having dinner with the wrestlers at 5:30 pm; they are great company. I am on the weightlifting team, but not other team sports. Then it is time to study from 6-10 pm.

Q: What did you miss about home?

A: My siblings, my baby sister, the food, the access to food when the weather is bad! Also, the ability to have the time and good location to be able to work and earn his way toward tuition payments.

Q: What surprised you about College?

A: I thought I might need some accommodations to be able to accomplish the work at college level, and asked a professor about it. He told me “Just keep working – everything will come to you! Never just sit – stay busy with reading and writing”.

Q: Did you have assistance you thought was helpful in achieving your dream of going to college?

A: I had no idea how to complete a college application. Visiting colleges to find the right match is very important to success, and it takes huge amounts of time to make appointments, drive there, spend the day, and return home. Applications to colleges, applications for scholarships, writing essays, preparing myself for college work during the summer, visiting colleges and making sense of the financial package to be able to attend are all the things that RRP volunteers helped me with. In addition, two volunteers helped me connect with scholarship opportunities I would not have been aware of and one of the scholarships (**Lower Marsh Creek Presbyterian**) allowed me to buy a laptop computer to use at college. I also received support from other RRP partners with the supplies and clothing I needed.

Q: Words of wisdom to leave us with?

A: A professor told me to get my ideas on the page first and then go back and make all the corrections and improvements. She said, “You’ve got to make errors to make success!” This helps me generally, in life, as well as when writing!

~~~~~

*Jamal tells of making contact with all the professors initially, to let them know that he did not have a typical education in America, having had only a little more than one year in U.S. schools. His professors made sure he knew their office hours, the ways to contact them by email and text and even some of their personal cell numbers. Many other people are available on campus to help as assistants and tutors. He feels fortunate to be in a college geared toward the success of their students.*



**Jamal -  
when he received  
his scholarship  
from LMPCP and  
at College.**



Editor's Note: The following biographical article was submitted by Kathy Megyeri, a friend of the LMCC family. In addition to her background material, it has many good points to consider for those of you who may be asked to write your biography for the newsletter in the future.

**DO YOU KNOW -**

### *The Legacy of Sharing Your Life*

by Kathy A. Megyeri

Each of us has a story to tell. Where we've been, what we've learned, what we've become, our values, our manners, our actions, our beliefs, our faults, and our strengths are all part of our legacy. How much do we really know about our own parents or children and their lives? Sure, we grew up together but was there time and energy for them to share more? Did they not think their stories worth telling? Were they afraid to do so? Did they know how to? Were they more comfortable speaking to you in a language other than English and therefore more reticent to share of themselves? Do your children know about your thoughts on your career, how you feel about your accomplishments, and how proud you are about them? Ruth Manning, editor of AMERICAN MOTHER magazine, asked 50 mothers what they really knew about their own mothers and fathers. After moments of thoughtful silence, most said, "In truth, not very much." Now is the time to share our lives before our stories are lost.

Years ago, when I was a secondary English teacher, one of the most powerful intergenerational writing projects we completed was for parents and their children to write their autobiographies together. Interestingly, some of the students' works added up to be over 100 pages long even though they had only lived 16 years. But they included awards, photos, letters and souvenirs from their school lives. Years later, I hear from both former students and their parents that this is the one school project they not only saved but passed down to their own children and grandchildren. Once a comfortable format was established, the parents too shared parts of their lives that their own children never knew or thought to ask about.

Another noteworthy project is that I took teenagers into area nursing homes where we recorded the lives of many residents and gave that record, both written and videotaped, to the residents' families, many of whom lived far away and had neither the time nor any motivation to sit with their family members and record their lives, secrets, dreams, desires, and moments of pain and pleasure. When we presented the stories to the children, they were most appreciative that they now had some record of their parents' lives to hold on to and pass to their own children. The point I'm trying to make is that not only must we pay tribute to our loved ones, but each of us needs to create a memory record for our children. In order to preserve your ethnic heritage and the story of your military career, your love for perhaps your second language, special moments, remembered recipes, oft-repeated phrases, treasured folk songs and musical favorites, family traditions, wedding customs, burial sites, insight into your personality and religious beliefs, you need to share it with your family now. If not, much will be lost, and as I've learned from my own father, time clouds even the most vivid of recollections.

Continued on the next page . . .

Continued from the preceding page . . .

If you desire guide questions that promote recall, discussion and elicit memories, moments and details that could be written down and given to your children for a lasting gift that will be treasured in years to come, consider the following:

1. What was the happiest moment in your life? The saddest?
2. Who was the most important person in your life? Can you tell a little about him or her?
3. Who has been the biggest influence on your life? What lessons did that person teach you?
4. Who has been the kindest to you in your life?
5. What are the most important lessons you've learned in life?
6. What are you proudest of in your life?
7. Are there any words of wisdom or advice you'd like to pass along?
8. How has your life been different than what you'd imagined?
9. How would you like to be remembered?
10. Do you have any regrets? If so, what are they?
11. Is there something you've never told others but would want to share now with your loved ones?
12. Is there something about you that you've always wanted others to know but have never been asked?

Then, in your own handwriting, perhaps in a journal or in a letter, written in English or in a second language, you could comfortably address topics about your early life and background, your own home and family, your friends, your education, your military service, your values and beliefs, your hopes and dreams for the future, and even offer advice or share lessons you have learned about life. You needn't worry about grammar or historical accuracy or input from others. It's the real YOU that loved ones want to remember. I assure you that this record of your life would be the most valued gift you could bestow on your family members. The story of your life is indeed your finest legacy.



**YOU HAVE THE  
POWER  
TO WRITE YOUR  
OWN STORY**

Editors Note: The following four photos, taken at the **Advent/275th/Scots-Irish Dinner** on December 3rd, were submitted by Jim Richardson. Jim also wrote the following caption:

*Our Scots-German pastor family, after costume help from Jane Bruss. And the little folks from the nativity scenes were very thankful for the wonderful dinner put on by the 275th Committee and the Deacons (in the background).*

Thanks to Jenny Waybright who provided the nativity scenes from her collection.



Judy Williams submitted the photo below of the *Stitchers Tree* that decorated Fellowship Hall. All the decorations are items made by the *Stitchers* to donate to the Coat Drive. The garland consists of 22 pairs of mittens, all made by Suetta Bechtel.



Also, if you are interested in a copy of the **recipes and/or Denise Lockwood's presentation** from this dinner, there are copies available in the narthex. Please help yourself to the December Li'l Ripples EXTRA.



Editor's Note: The following five photo were submitted by Therese Herlihy. They were taken at the Women's Guild Christmas party on December 19th at Perkins Restaurant.



The Women's Guild will not meet in January and February and will resume meetings in March. Happy New Year ! (Roz Santay)

Sing To The Lord

Music Ministry

A New Song

January is a time to focus on the future, as well as reflect on the past. This is a perfect time for me to express my sincere appreciation for the support of the LMCCP on a weekly basis. Special thanks to the Personnel Committee for my recent Christmas gift. It was very kind.

Another dedicated supporter of me and our music program is Kathy Megyeri. Her lovely gifts adorn my home and our church organ. Soon, a beautiful painting of "Amazing Grace" will grace our vestibule area. Thank you, Kathy, for your love!

I also have many singers to thank for their dedication throughout the year, but especially during our recent Christmas season. Since our 275<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Christmas Program was just one week before Christmas Eve Sunday, with three services, the Faithful Voices have been especially faithful!

This group includes:

Sopranos: Alicia Dehoff, Lynn Miller (WW), Phyllis Smith (WW), Nancy Cline

Altos: Roz Santay (WW), Suzanne Welsh (WW), Carolyn Speck

Tenors and Basses: Dale Williams (WW), Jim Welsh (WW), Dirk Grove (WW), Lane Speck, Tom Cline

The abbreviation WW indicates that these singers are also a part of Wires and Wood. Our congregation is blessed to have this core group of talented musicians who are also very dedicated to our music program. Additionally, many of these Faithful Voices also serve in other church responsibilities including Elders, Deacons, Women's Guild, Floral Coordinator, Bible study hosts, ushers, and lay readers. They are truly a very busy group and I feel blessed to work with them on a weekly basis.

Notice that some of our members have shared their musical talents for many years here at LMCCP. We are especially fortunate to have acquired several new members in the last few years. Unfortunately, Lynn Miller will be moving on to serve as Pastor of a Presbyterian Church in Camp Hill. Godspeed, Lynn. Your presence, and voice, and guitar will certainly be missed here!

*Linda Clark*

[www.pausestoreadbooks.webs.com](http://www.pausestoreadbooks.webs.com)

*"Outside of a dog, a book is man's best friend. Inside of a dog, it's too dark to read."* Groucho Marx

Serving God by

DEACONS' INFORMATION

Serving Others

TRANSPORTATION MINISTRY: Attendees of LMCC having a transportation need should call one of the following drivers directly to arrange for a date, time, and destination. If none of these volunteers can meet your need, please call Jim Welsh at 717 - 377 - 5370.

**VOLUNTEER DRIVERS:**

Lee & Jean Bentz 717 - 334 - 6064

Susan Nunamaker 717 - 642 - 9646

Sallie Sites 717- 334 - 8712

Roy Weaner 717 - 334 - 3376

Len Williams 717 - 642 - 0123

Ray Wright 717 - 549 - 2118

## Mission Advocate Mailbox - Recent Correspondence

### Adams Christian Prison Ministries

*From the December 2023 ACPM Newsletter:*

ACPM is very appreciative of all who participated in the Giving Spree on November 9. The 2023 Adams County Community Foundation Giving Spree was a huge success, and ACPM will be recipients of a percentage of what was raised.

ACPM will be coordinating various projects during the Christmas season for the inmates and the prison staff. A holiday dinner will be provided to the staff at ACACC to express gratitude for their service to the prison and the community. Inmates will be receiving Christmas cards, cookies, socks, and chocolate bars. Gifts for the children of inmates will be provided through the Angel Tree program and the Mission Bright Star program. Inmates will be given a blank Christmas card to fill out and send to their loved ones.

ACPM wishes to express its sincerest gratitude to both Randy Huber and Dale Williams for their many years of service since the conception of this ministry. Randy has served as Chairperson with Dale serving as the Vice-Chairperson. Both have contributed immensely to the development, growth, and sustainability of ACPM. Sadly, they both max out their terms at the end of December 2023. Pastor Carl Harris is welcomed back to the leadership, along with a new member, Billie Ward. The new chairperson and vice chairperson will be announced in the January 2024 newsletter.

ACPM has received approval to conduct an internship program within ACACC. Three seminarians from Mount Saint Mary's University will be participating during the 2023-2024 academic year.

### Adams Rescue Mission

*From the December 2023 ARM Newsletter:*

We have some amazing volunteers who spend hours each week on our trucks, in our sorting room, doing special pickups, writing thank you notes, cleaning, fixing vehicles, construction, leading Bible studies, and many other behind-the-scenes, unglamorous jobs: Ruth Blinn, Susan Czek, Gina Fiaschetti, Mike Flaherty, Linda Hagee, Richard Hagee, Ellen Hildebrand, Lex McMillan, Darlene Miller, Dave Myers, Dwayne Piper, Juliet Sharrow, Russ Stewart, and Drew Swinn.

We could not do the work we do without your donations. 22 men slept in warm beds in our men's shelter last night and will eat three hot meals today. 14 adults and 7 children slept in warm, secure apartments in our Agape House family shelter last night. Over 200 families from the community have received clothing, household goods, and furniture through our voucher program. Over 300 children will receive gifts for Christmas through our Adopt a Family Program.

We are looking for donations to purchase industrial type bed frames and bunks, hospital grade mattresses, and new sheets and blankets for each of our shelter beds. We plan to empty all the rooms, thoroughly clean and disinfect, repair any damages, and put a fresh coat of paint on the walls. Each man will have uniform sleeping spaces, and similar storage spaces for their personal belongings. Help us give these guys the blessing of a comfortable new atmosphere by making a donation to support this project. Checks can be mailed, or gifts can be given through our website at [www.AdamsRescueMission.org](http://www.AdamsRescueMission.org).

### Child Evangelism Fellowship

*From the November 2023 CEF Praise and Prayer Update:*

Continued on the next page . . .

Continued from the preceding page . . .

The first Tuesday of each month, CEF has a teacher training class for folks who work with the children. They would like to invite you to come and join them. If you are teaching children, or thinking about it, please consider joining them. You may even find that God is about to ask something great of you!

They meet at Bethel Mennonite Church on Biglerville Road, near Biglerville, from 9:30-11:30 am. If you have questions, just contact Miss Pam at the office (717-677-4797 or [pamelablankenship@cefa.net](mailto:pamelablankenship@cefa.net)).

Please pray for these Good News Club teachers: *Monday* – Vida Charter School (Carrie, Kirk, Sofia and Pamela); *Tuesday* – Alloway Creek, Bermudian Springs, Biglerville, and New Oxford Elementary Schools (Barb, Esther, Tracey, Sofia, Brenda, Linda, Emily, Debby, Alice, Dave, Fran, Bob and Pam); *Wednesday* – Conewago Township, Fairfield, James Gettys, and Lincoln Elementary Schools (Kristy, Linda, Kathy, Joyce, Ralph, Lori, Steve, Bob, and Pamela); *Thursday* – Conewago Valley Intermediate, and Franklin Township Schools (James, Ann, Bob and Pamela).

### **DiscipleMakers (Kevin and Maria Noyes)**

*From the December 2023 DiscipleMakers Newsletter:*

#### ***Why does a Muslim student keep coming to Bible Study?***

Over the past couple months "Oscar," a Muslim student, repeatedly joined us for Bible study. In prior semesters, he talked about faith, yet always refused to attend Bible study. Oscar seemed more curious and open. He responded differently to invitations from our student leaders. Eventually, Oscar sat down with us to examine the book of Ecclesiastes. And then he came back. And he kept returning week after week. Over the semester, we saw how Ecclesiastes points to our need for God, and ultimately to Jesus. But Oscar had many questions, and so I (Kevin) sat down with him for long discussions about faith and Jesus. . . . We tackled questions like: How can we trust the Bible? Hasn't it been changed? Why did Jesus have to come to earth as a man? . . . One of our deepest conversations focused on the questions; "Why did Jesus have to die for sins?" and "Why couldn't God just forgive them?"

As Oscar asked these questions, he grabbed a pen and paper. Quickly, he drew a diagram for me, comparing the Muslim approach to forgiveness to the Christian one. "Why do you need Jesus?" he asked. "The same thing is being accomplished. In Islam, God just makes forgiveness happen without Jesus." In response, I turned to Romans 3:23-26 - *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.* . . . Then I explained, "It comes down to justice. In Christianity, God is a God of perfect love, but also perfect justice. This means that sins can't just be forgotten and forgiven. That's not justice. They must be paid for."

Oscar didn't understand, so I continued, "Punishment must be delivered for injustice. If a human judge forgave a murderer with no penalty, they might be merciful, but they would *not* be just. And they would lose their job as a judge. In the same way, a perfectly just God cannot merely wipe away sins without payment. If God simply forgave sins with no payment, then oppressed men and women around the world could accuse God of being unjust. Of letting their abusers and oppressors off the hook unfairly. They could say God does not care about their suffering and abuse."

I pointed back at Oscar's diagram. "That's why you need Jesus. His death is the proof that God does care. That God is just. That no one ultimately gets away with anything. God is perfectly just, and every sin will be paid for. Either the punishment falls on sinners, or it falls on Jesus so that those who believe in him can be forgiven. Jesus pays for the sins - that's why he had to die!"

Continued on the next page . . .

Continued from the preceding page . . .

Oscar didn't suddenly decide to convert. However, he did concede that Christianity holds a higher view of the holiness and justice of God in this area. He also expressed appreciation and eagerness to talk more. Later, Oscar even agreed to read an excerpt from a book with me. I wanted to know if he would be willing to ask the same questions about the Quran's trustworthiness as he asked me about the Bible. The Lord moved him to agree, and we began to read. Together, we saw how the Quran had discrepancies between manuscripts and changes over the history of its compilation.

Please pray for Oscar, that God would show him that Jesus is truly the Son of God. Even considering giving up faith in Islam to follow Jesus is a huge step. Please pray for God to move Oscar to repentance and faith, and to give us further opportunities to share with him. (We recently discovered that Oscar accepted a job only 6 minutes from our house! We're praying for more conversations with him after he graduates!)

### **A Hindu student from India hears the Gospel**

An international student from India named "Navi", who identifies primarily as a Hindu, came to Penn State York with a group of friends from her school. But those friendships quickly fell apart, a romantic relationship turned sour, and she started failing a class. Alone, discouraged, and isolated from her friends, she checked out our fellowship on campus. Our students quickly befriended her and engaged her in spiritual conversations. She asked if she could meet with me (Maria) since I had met her earlier in the semester before Hope was born. So one Wednesday, while Hope slept in the middle of the Penn State York dining hall, Navi shared about her Hindu faith with me. She talked about the many gods, reincarnation, and Brahma. I asked her lots of questions to learn what I could. She asked questions about Christianity, and I did my best to explain the gospel in terms she could understand.

She wanted to meet again, so we planned a time to sit down again soon. In the meantime, she is going to read the gospel of John and I am going to learn more about Hinduism. Reflecting on our conversation, I left feeling even more confused about Hinduism. I'm honestly not sure I did the best job explaining the gospel to a student from an eastern culture. So I went home and began to read about Hinduism, watched videos on how to talk to Hindus about the gospel, and prayed that God would help me when I talk with Navi again. Navi is curious about Christianity but sees Jesus as just another god, which is common among Hindus who are very accepting of other beliefs.

Pray that God helps me speak in ways she can understand and that her heart would be open to see Jesus for who He truly reveals Himself to be in the Bible. Pray for our students who are continuing to befriend Navi, that they would show her the love of Christ.



### **Personal Update**

We can't believe that Hope is almost two months old! She is starting to smile (and not just because of gas) and saves her biggest smiles for Simeon. Simeon is an amazing big brother and continually finds ways to include Hope in what he's doing. Recently he was pretending to bake a cake so he helped Hope hold the rubber spatula he was playing with so she could stir the batter. Whenever Simeon is around, Hope's little head constantly turns so she can watch him. We prayed a lot for Simeon's transition to being a big brother so it's been a huge answer to prayer to see his love for her!

Continued on the next page . . .

Continued from the preceding page . . .

### **Gettysburg Community Soup Kitchen**

The increased cost of living, absence of affordable housing, cuts to medical coverage and food stamp support, continue to create a challenge for many. The Soup Kitch now serves 60-70+ guests who come to the Soup Kitchen daily to ceive a nutritious meal. This is an increase by20 each day from the past few years. Mos remarkable is the diversity among guests. There is also an increase in the number of families with children who are now dependent on the Soup Kitchen as a regular source of nutrition. The Soup Kitchen is open six days a week. A hot meal is provided on Saturday and a second meal to take along for Sunday. On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, pantry items, baked goods, fruits & vegetables, and hygiene products are distributed for guests to take. Did you know that a gift of \$400 will provide two hot meals for 60-70 guests; a gift of \$200 will pray for the additional bag lunch distributed each weekend, and a gift of \$50 will purchase bottled drinking water for one week?

### **Krislund**

As they celebrated 60 years of ministry with over 200 of their closest friends, staff reflected on the countless lives touched by the transformative experiences provided at Krislund. Your support has been instrumental in making this milestone possible. In 2023, Krislund impacted over 300 kids during the summer session and welcomed over 3,000 guests throughout the year.

This year Krislund is embarking on their Annual Fund Appeal to raise essential operating funds. With the obtainable goal of \$30,000, they can ensure Krislund continues to thrive as a place of growth and inspiration. Your donation directly helps cover maintenance and enhancement of the camp facilities, funding of their dedicated staff, and their efforts to bring more kids to camp. To contribute, please visit their website ([www.krislund.org/donate](http://www.krislund.org/donate)) or send a check to Krislund at P.O. Box 116, Madisonburg, PA, 16852.

### **Mission of Mercy**

*From the Fall 2023 Mission of Mercy Newsletter:*

In 1991, pharmacist Gianna Sullivan courageously answered a spiritual call to restore dignity and healing through Love by creating a non-profit called Mission of Mercy. At the time she wasn't quite sure how this new ministry would emerge, but things became clear when she met and married Dr. Michale Sullivan, an internist and cardiologist. In August 1994, they abandoned their lucrative medical careers and set off in an old 40-foot RV to begin offering medical care to the sick and suffering in rural areas of Pennsylvania and Maryland.

For three decades, Mission of Mercy has been at the vanguard of charitable healthcare, providing medications and integrated medical and dental care through a full-service mobile format. Using cost-effective, volunteer-driven program model, Mission of Mercy provides free care with no administrative barriers or restrictions. As a result, Mission of Mercy has become a community healthcare safety net, especially with sweeping changes in the healthcare system and a shifting population of those in need.

During 2023, Mission of Mercy has served over 2,500 medical and dental patients (during over 6,800 patients visits). Over 7,800 free prescription medications have been dispensed. Over 150 licensed medical, dental, and non-medical volunteers have provided free healthcare and dental care to patients. Nutritious fruits and vegetables have been provided to over 89,500 patients and members of the community through collaborative efforts of the Maryland Food Bank and community volunteers. Through Frederick Health, Mission of Mercy provided free bone density screenings and diabetes education. Through Mercy Hospital, over a dozen patients received free surgeries.

Continued on the next page . . .

Continued from the preceding page . . .

Recent research by Mobile Health Map, a program of Harvard Medical School, determined that the average return on investment for mobile health is \$21 for every \$1 invested.

### **Bob and Kristi Rice (South Sudan)**

*A note from Bob and Kristi:*

We send our greetings to you and prayers that God would renew your wonder at the miracle of our God entering and experiencing the brokenness of humanity. We are so grateful that our Creator loves us enough to leave the glory of heaven and enter the conflict and pain of our lives. Just as it happened 2000 years ago, we see God continuing to bring comfort and healing in the midst of suffering, displacement, and uncertainty in South Sudan, as people experience the power of God's love. Thank you for joining us in this journey of walking with our brothers and sisters in Christ in South Sudan to make the deep peace and love of God known in our broken world.

### **SAT-7**

*From the November 2023 SAT-7 Today Newsletter.*

Christmas is a season of hope and peace – a time when we come together with family to celebrate the birth of our glorious Savior. For isolated believers, Christmas looks quite different. Particularly in Iran, new believers cannot attend church, speak the name of Jesus, or share the Gospel with others.

Hany (name changed for security reasons), an isolated believer in Iran, says, "Because the Lord saved me, I trust in Him completely." Hany's faith has truly been tested over the years. He reached out to SAT-7 to tell them of a time earlier in his life when it seemed there was no hope left for him or his country. "On a cold winter day, I was forcibly taken into my town square, and like a defenseless sheep, was laid down in front of a crowd and had four fingers cut off." The violence Hany endured left him with terrible memories. But when Hany met Jesus, all the fear that tormented him left. "After years of misery, Jesus Christ, the God who I did not know, who came as the Sinless Lamb, saved me," says Hany. This is the life-altering hope you help SAT-7 share with millions of people like Hany.

Miram (name changed for security reasons), a viewer from Iran, watches SAT-7's programming in the safety of her home. But even if neighbors so much as overhear, she's at risk of being turned in to the authorities. "Since I come from a non-Christian background, I am forbidden to speak the name of Jesus and am at risk of persecution," she says. Miram will be celebrating Christmas in secret this year. But her hope is not dimmed. She's full of faith, fervently praying, and encouraged by the SAT-7 PARS programming your help make possible. "The spirit of the Lord is working everywhere, and in Iran, many souls are being saved every day" says Miram. Please continue to pray for Miram and Iran!

### **Ryan and Alethia White**

*A Christmas Greeting from Ryan and Alethia:*

Dear friends, Waiting is hard. I remember a comic hanging in the church office when I was young that said, "Lord, give me patience...and give it to me now!" Whether the waiting is done by children waiting for gifts, for family to arrive, or for the holidays to be finished, waiting is hard. What are you waiting for right now?

Continued on the next page . . .

Continued from the preceding page . . .

Advent is a time of waiting. Waiting for the arrival of one to come. The texts assigned early in Advent highlight the waiting for a second coming and as we draw closer to Christmas the texts shift to the waiting of the first coming of Christ. The early Christian community was waiting for the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecies. Many before the birth of Christ were waiting for a messiah. And after Christ, communities have continued to wait. Waiting for justice to be fulfilled. Waiting for restoration of peace and well-being. All of creation is "waiting eagerly for redemption."

We think of those we have encountered in Berlin as they wait in the asylum process and wait through the agonizing years it takes to try and start a new life. We think of others who have been displaced by violent conflict, temporarily relocated, and are waiting to return home.

Gazans wait for an end to the current conflict, not knowing what they will return to, and all Palestinians wait for a recognized homeland. Israeli families and others wait for hostages to be released, hoping that the names of their loved ones will be on the next list.

Those who have been wrongly imprisoned are waiting to be set free. And there are those who wait for justice and the end of practices of systemic racism and discrimination.

Loved ones wait for an organ transplant or other essential medical care. And others wait for test results that may change their lives forever. Waiting is terribly hard and often filled with moments of anxiety and stress, or moments that irreversibly change the course of life.

The Advent texts charge us to "be awake and alert," attentive to the world around us. They charge us to see and hear those who are waiting, to be attentive to the "groans and cries" around us (and our own), and to be with one another to comfort and seek justice together.

At the United Nations Climate Change Conference of Parties (COP 28) representatives from around the globe gathered to hear the impacts of climate change and take collective action to try and reverse the effects. Vulnerable communities worldwide have been waiting for concrete action as they watch their homes disappear. The passing of the "Loss and Damage Fund" was one step towards repair and restoration for communities who have waited so long.

You have journeyed with us over the 10 years of our time with the Presbyterian Mission Agency, listening to stories, sharing with us, praying for our family and the community in Berlin, and offering financial support. Thank you!

Waiting extends beyond the Advent season and we await with you what will come in the New Year. We hope to connect with many of you virtually and in person and we look forward to whenever that may be. Until then, we join you and all creation, waiting and seeking to be alert.

Merry Christmas! Ryan and Alethia

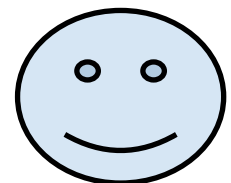
## HAVE YOU HEARD . . . ?

A father was at the beach with his children when the four-year-old son ran up to him, grabbed his hand, and led him to the shore where a seagull lay dead in the sand. "Daddy, what happened to him?" the son asked.

"He died and went to heaven," the dad replied.

The boy thought a moment and then said, "Did God throw him back down?"

(Thanks to Kathy Megyeri for this contribution.)







## The Giving Corner

### Happy New Year!

It seems like only yesterday we were wondering what January 1, 2000, would bring – Y2K!!

Here we are beginning the year 2024!! Where does the time go! Now more than ever we pray for peace in our troubled world, prosperity for everyone, good health, and the true joy of knowing our Lord, Jesus Christ! We hope for a year filled with love as we open ourselves to God's guidance and we say thank you for the Holy Spirit dwelling within us!

After the hustle and bustle of the holidays let us reflect on how we want to spend our time over the next year. Let us consider how we can give of our time, our talents, and our treasures; how we can get connected with our church family; how we can reach out and make a difference.

Remember everything we have has been given to us by God! These gifts from God are resources for us to use and invest for him. It is our way of showing our gratitude for the amazing gifts of grace and his abounding love. When we invest what God has given us in his work, we will be rewarded with even more to give in his service! As Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 9:12:

**“This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God’s people  
but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.”**

Let us not put off responding in love and thankfulness to our God. Now is our time to act! Don't wait!

Remember this short poem by Etienne de Grellier, a Quaker Missionary:

#### I Shall Pass

I shall pass through this life but once.

Any good, therefore, that I can do,

Or any kindness I can show;

let me do it now.

Let me not defer or neglect it.

For I shall never pass this way again.



# From the Clerk's Desk

Even though Session did not meet in December here are a few business items to close out the year 2023.

- Membership as of 12/15/2023: Active Members (AM = CA): 161, Baptized Members (BM = FP): 57 and Family Members: 51.
- The Interpretation and Stewardship Team continues to monitor all church finances. Please see the monthly report in this issue for November. We thank you for your continued generosity and financial support!!

### ***News from the Home Ministry Team – maintains the church properties including the cemetery***

Team Members: Dirk Grove, chair; Ron Milhimes and Jim Richardson

- Saturday, November 18, 2023, was chosen as the second cleaning of headstones at the cemetery.
- Session approved the quote received from Erie Insurance. The annual costs are as follows: Property Insurance: \$13,630.00 and the Umbrella: \$594.00. The van insurance will be with Progressive at a cost of \$610.00 annually.

### ***News from the Interpretation and Stewardship Team – manages church finances and missions***

Team members: Ray Wright, chair; Lane Speck and Doyle Waybright.

- The Church Operating Fund Budget was approved at \$325,986.00, an increase of 4.7%. Because of your amazing generosity the Mission Opportunities/Missionaries Fund Budget was approved at \$91,700.00, an increase of 17.8%!!

### ***News from the Clerk of Session:***

- Ordination and Installation of new officers will be held at both services on January 14, 2024.
- Session Team assignments for 2024 are as follows:
  - ~ Home Ministry Team: Elders Doyle Waybright, chair; Ron Milhimes and Lanny Winters.
  - ~ Spiritual Life Team: Elders Cathy Michaliga, chair; Susan Nunamaker and Lynn Orner.
  - ~ Interpretation & Stewardship Team: Elders Ray Wright and Lauren Neely, co-chairs and Lane Speck.
- Elders Susan Nunamaker and Lanny Winters will serve as co-chairs of the 2024 Nominating Committee.
- Elder Lauren Neely will serve as the Chair of the Personnel Committee.
- Elder Lynn Miller was elected Commissioner for the Presbytery meeting held on December 5, 2023. Elders Susan Nunamaker and Lauren Neely were elected Commissioners for the Special Presbytery meeting to be held in January at which time our own Lynn Miller will be presented to the Presbytery for examination and approval for ordination.

Session wishes all members and friends of the Lower Marsh Creek Presbyterian Church family  
a Happy, Holy, and Healthy New Year!

**FINANCIAL HEALTH UPDATE – NOVEMBER 2023**

**Church Operating Fund Income**

| <b>Account Description</b>            | <b>November—2023</b> | <b>Year-to-Date<br/>2023</b> | <b>2023<br/>Budget</b> |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Offering Income                       | \$16,440.00          | \$264,873.40                 | \$252,298.00           |
| Other Income                          | \$1,009.94           | \$63,087.89                  | \$58,357.00            |
| <b>TOTAL INCOME</b>                   | <b>\$17,449.94</b>   | <b>\$327,961.29</b>          | <b>\$310,655.00</b>    |
| <b>Church Operating Fund Expenses</b> |                      |                              |                        |
| Spiritual Life                        | \$231.26             | \$9,997.11                   | \$14,600.00            |
| Education & Nurture                   | \$0.00               | \$3,686.31                   | \$3,400.00             |
| Interpretation & Stewardship          | \$383.79             | \$5,602.76                   | \$6,022.00             |
| Home Ministry                         | \$1,315.47           | \$68,427.70                  | \$77,600.00            |
| Church Administration                 | \$20,488.22          | \$184,051.96                 | \$209,033.00           |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>                 | <b>\$22,418.74</b>   | <b>\$271,765.84</b>          | <b>\$310,655.00</b>    |
| <b>INCOME minus EXPENSES</b>          | <b>-\$4,968.80</b>   | <b>\$56,195.45</b>           | <b>\$0.00</b>          |

**Church Operating Fund Checking Account Balance as of 11/30/2023: \$109,868.85**

**Mission Opportunities/Missionaries Fund Income**

| <b>Account Description</b> | <b>November—2023</b> | <b>Year-to-Date<br/>2023</b> | <b>2023<br/>Budget</b> |
|----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Offering Income            | \$3,864.00           | \$77,552.60                  | \$76,800.00            |
| Other Income               | \$253.23             | \$3,650.99                   | \$1,000.00             |
| <b>TOTAL INCOME</b>        | <b>\$4,117.23</b>    | <b>\$81,203.59</b>           | <b>\$77,800.00</b>     |

**Mission Opportunities/Missionaries Fund Expenses**

|                              |                    |                    |                    |
|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>        | <b>\$12,464.19</b> | <b>\$80,305.48</b> | <b>\$77,800.00</b> |
| <b>INCOME minus EXPENSES</b> | <b>-\$8,346.96</b> | <b>\$898.11</b>    | <b>\$0.00</b>      |

**Missions Checking Account Balance as of 11/30/2023: \$889.41**

**Notable expenses for November: \$3,750.00—Employee Christmas Bonuses**

Lower Marsh Creek Presbyterian Church  
1865 Knoxlyn Road  
Gettysburg, PA 17325

*Li'l Ripples*      January 2024



Pastor

Rev. Dr. Mark Englund-Krieger



Sunday Morning Worship

Early Worship 8:30 AM  
Sunday School 9:45 - 10:45 AM  
Late Worship 11:00 AM  
Nursery 8:30 AM - 12:15 PM

Church Office Information

Monday - Friday  
9:00 AM - 2:00 PM  
Phone Number - 717-642-5332  
Email address - office@lmcp.org  
Website - www.lmcp.org

Lower Marsh Creek Presbyterian Church Mission Statement

To glorify GOD, deepen and enrich the spiritual life of the family of believers,  
And reach out to the community with the love of Jesus Christ.