

Women's Book Club—Page 4



IFF—Page 6



Missions —Page 9

## Edinboro United Methodist Church

# CROSS CURRENTS

***“Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.” (Heb. 13)***

Nov.-Dec. 2023

Dear Friends,

**That’s the funny thing about strangers, you never know who you might be talking to!** Jesus challenges us in his famous parable (Matt. 25), ***“just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”*** He’s talking about “God’s family.” That’s bigger than our definitions of: “my church,” “those with whom I feel comfortable,” “those who agree with me,” “those in my social status, gender, identity, or political affiliation.” They are God’s family. God created them, and sent Jesus to redeem them (and us with them). Our job as Christ’s Church is to carry on Jesus’ mission. That makes hospitality central to who we are called to be.

**In December we will begin to prepare to welcome “Emmanuel”, God come to earth!** How does the One who created heaven and earth come to us? As vulnerable infant, born to two young poor parents in a barn! I wonder if you and I were there, would we have realized that the very presence of God is in this child from the “other side of the tracks.” Would we have made these “strangers” welcome?

Robert Schnase in his book Five Practices of a Fruitful Congregations points out that vibrant congregations practice **“radical hospitality.”** **“Out of genuine love for Christ and for others, their laity and pastors take the initiative to invite, welcome, include, and support newcomers and help them grow in faith as they become part of the Body of Christ.”** The Apostle Paul tells us that the “body of Christ” is diverse and has been intentionally created that way. The Holy Spirit comes through each part of the body. Through our God given diversity we are challenged to see a bigger and truer picture of God, others and ourselves. God’s community challenges us to break out of the arrogance and self-centeredness of our egos and become “God’s people”; defined by the “Way of Jesus.”

**You don’t have to look hard at our world today to see how that “Way” of being together would set us apart in a world that is building walls of exclusion.** Walls justified by our own self-understanding of “rightness” or “our truth”. Walls to close out “others” who make us uncomfortable because of: race, culture, status, doctrines, sexual identity, or political agendas. Walls built by our fears, not our faith. The Hebrews quote above, and the story of Bethlehem remind us that when we wall out others, we can walk out the true presence of God. We block ourselves from God’s mission.

**My hope would be that every human being who enters EUMC would experience the hospitality and welcome that Jesus extended. To ALL.** Let us seek to be “God’s family” not just “MY” Church and give thanks for our God given diversity as we prepare to welcome the Child of Bethlehem anew in our hearts!

Holiday Blessings,

*Pastor Ed*



## Finance

Our church has continued to grow through this year in exciting ways with expanded programming both internally and in outreach to the community. We've also seen an increase in membership and attendance. However, most good things come at some cost and we're no exception. The increase in programming and activities has put some strain on our budget. Now, three quarters through the year we find ourselves starting to lag a bit financially. Our giving, that has not fallen off, is coming up short of our expenses by about \$1300 in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter. Pastor Ed will address by sending a Thanksgiving letter out soon that will address short term financial picture along with all the ways our church is moving forward in exciting ways.

The Thanksgiving offering this year will be applied to our Connectional Apportionments obligation to the Western PA UMC Conference. This annual giving is used to finance Church Missions throughout the world and cover administrative costs.

We have ordered new style Stewardship envelopes next year. The new envelopes will not have a number on them. The name of the donor on the outside of the envelope (or name on the check) will allow the counters to properly assign the donation to the donor. The name on the outside of the envelope will be important for cash donations. There will be significant savings with this change.

## SPRC Committee

The SPRC has been meeting monthly to discuss church staff issues and policies. We have recently hired two paid nursery/preschool assistants, and we officially reopened our nursery on December 3. Melissa and Nikki will staff our nursery for two hours every Sunday during worship.

We also recently met to review and recommend the 2024 salary package for Pastor Ed, and salaries for the rest of the paid church staff. We also met on October 18, just prior to the Church Charge Conference, with District Superintendent Dennis Swineford. He provided us with some guidance, and we updated him on our past year's activities.

As the 2023 year draws near its close, we thank Barb Bozman for serving on the SPRC for the past three years, and Linda Felker for serving for multiple terms. Cheryl Weigle's term is expiring, but she has agreed to remain one SPRC for another three year term! We will be welcoming Don Myer and Tamara Shepard to the team in 2024.

## IFF: Men's Book Club "Early Risers"

A diverse group of between ten and fifteen men meet every Wednesday morning at 7:00 a.m. for coffee, refreshments, and honest, challenging discussion on topics related to a book we are reading together. The meetings last one hour, but that hour makes a great deal of difference for each of us! We are an open group, and all are welcome to join in. You are free to just listen, contribute with your thoughts (even if you haven't read the book, although it helps), ask questions, even disagree if you wish (we like that the best).

Our current book is What Would Jesus See, by Aaron Rosen, a Jewish scholar of art and religion. We are moving through this one pretty quickly, so we will be selecting another book soon. We meet in the Wesley Room area near the back of the church. Some of us are retired, some working, and some are parts of other congregations. Please consider joining us, if you can manage the early hour, and are looking for some new friends. We'd love to read with you, and wake you up on Wednesdays!

### **IFF—Thursday Women's Book Club**

The Thursday Book Group meets every Thursday morning at 9 AM by Zoom to include previous members who have moved out of the area and those of us who travel a lot. This is an ecumenical group. You do not have to be a member of EUMC in order to participate. We love getting together and discussing books and actually seeing one another. The discussions are rich and varied. We finished The Fourfold Path For Healing Ourselves and Our World -The Book of Forgiving by Archbishop Desmond Tutu and his daughter, the Reverend Mpho Tutu on November 16th. They offered a manual on the art of forgiveness with four important steps to healing - helping us to realize that we are all capable of healing and transformation. Each of us has a deep need to forgive and be forgiven. The Book of Forgiving is both a touchstone and a tool, offering Tutu's wise advice and showing the way to experience forgiveness. Ultimately, forgiving is the only means we have to heal ourselves and our aching world.

Our plan is to read Dan Brown's book Origins (see page 4) on our own during December and on January 4th resume meeting to discuss it. We have not chosen a next book yet, but we always have plenty from which to choose. Our choices are designed to provide us with spiritual growth and knowledge. As soon as we've made a selection, we will have a sign-up sheet on the narthex table and we will also publish the selection and a summary in the Beacon and in the Sunday bulletin. Be on the lookout, There is always much discussion within this group. If you are interested, please contact the church office, and Junia will give you a link to the zoom meeting.

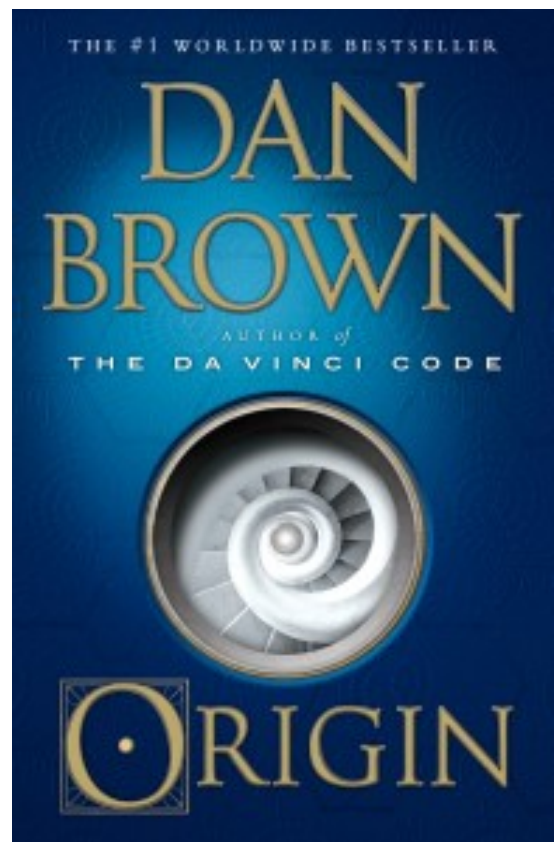


**Cleaning Church Library**



### Thursday Morning Women's Book Group (continued from page 3)

The TBG (Thursday Morning Book Group) has decided to read Origin by Dan Brown. It is not often that we read novels, but we have in the past and think that this book will prompt a lot of discussion. We have decided to read the book on our own and not meet during the month of December. We will start the new year by discussing the book on Thursday January 4, 2024, by Zoom. If you've been thinking about trying out the TBG or rejoining us, this might be the perfect opportunity. Below is a summary of the book. Robert Langdon, Harvard professor of symbology, arrives at the ultramodern Guggenheim Museum Bilbao to attend the unveiling of a discovery that "will change the face of science forever." The evening's host is Edmond Kirsch, a forty-year old billionaire and futurist, and one of Langdon's first students. But the meticulously orchestrated evening suddenly erupts into chaos, and Kirsch's precious discovery teeters on the brink of being lost forever. Facing an imminent threat, Langdon is forced to flee. With him is Ambra Vidal, the elegant museum director who worked with Kirsch. They travel to Barcelona on a perilous quest to locate a cryptic password that will unlock Kirsch's secret. Navigating the dark corridors of hidden history and extreme religion, Langdon and Vidal must evade an enemy whose all-knowing power seems to emanate from Spain's Royal Palace. They uncover clues that ultimately bring them face-to-face with Kirsch's shocking discovery...and the breathtaking truth that has long eluded us.





## C.A.R.E. Team

The C.A.R.E. Team focuses on HOSPITALITY AND LOVING SERVICE WITHIN OUR WALLS. Our purpose is to convey to parishioners and guests that they are welcome, and are being thought of and that their needs are important.

The CARE Team has been busy over the last few months with continuing the “Thinking of You” list. This involves a sub committee of the CARE Team to have assigned people in the congregation that are needing a little extra contact, those who are mourning, recovering in their health matters, or home bound.

The CARE Team are the key people who welcome visitors and new members to our church. We had an additional 5 new members join on November 19th.

The CARE Team are also the ones who will be heading up the new photo directory in 2024. Irene Smith is heading this venture with help from Cheryl Wiegler and Junia. They have been in touch with a representative from Universal Church Directories.

A Photo Directory of our church members and friends is scheduled for **Thursday May 30, 2024, Friday May 31, 2024 and Saturday June 1, 2024. Save these dates!** This does not conflict with Memorial Day Weekend.

In the planning of this directory, in the spring a committee will begin calling to verify phone numbers and addresses. **Universal Church Directories** will bring their own photographer. Each participant/family will receive a free paper directory and a free 8x10 portrait. The church will receive an digital application to add new members after June 1, 2024. You will have the opportunity to purchase additional photos.

We look forward to updating our church’s photo directory!



Chelsea House Orchestra



Washington DC Trip \*  
National Cathedral



## Intentional Faith Formation Team (IFF)

### ADVENT STUDIES:

#### SUNDAY EVENINGS WITH PASTOR ED: starting November 26-December 17

Pastor Ed is leading a Sunday evening study and a Wednesday morning study, of Adam Hamilton's *Prepare the Way for the Lord*, a book that looks at the life and times of John the Baptist.

### ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL:

We finished Adam Hamilton's book, *Luke: Jesus and the Outsiders, Outcasts, and Outlaws* which examines several chapters that look at people who were considered on the periphery of first century society in Palestine. Jesus encounters and welcomes those who are cast aside by others including lepers, Samaritans, and outlaws as he did on the cross. We finished in November and began an advent study by **Reverend Rachel Billups** of New Albany UMC in Ohio. Billups was formerly lead pastor at Ginghamburg/Tipp City UMC (Mike Slaughter's congregation) and has authored a new perspective on "unlikely" people to talk about in the advent season. Billups' book, *An Unlikely Advent: Extraordinary People of the Christmas Story* looks at the unexpected ways through which God worked in the first Christmas and continues to work in our lives today through others.

*"This four-week Advent study focuses on the experiences of four sets of often overlooked characters in the Nativity story. During this Advent season, Rachel Billups guides readers through the themes of hope, love, joy, and peace by sharing the stories of Elizabeth and Zechariah, Herod, the Magi, and the shepherds. Each set of unexpected characters has something to teach about living faithfully on the journey to Christmas." (Cokesbury)*

#### Rachel Billups BIO (from Abingdon Press)

"Rachel Billups is a visionary, leader, speaker and author. Currently she serves as pastor at New Albany United Methodist Church. She previously served as Senior Pastor at Ginghamburg Church multi-campus ministry in Tipp City/Dayton Ohio. Rachel draws on her love of people and passion to explore new venues for ministry and mission.

Rachel is an ordained Elder within the United Methodist Church and holds a Bachelor's Degree in Bible/Religion and History from Anderson University and a Master of Divinity Degree from Duke Divinity School.

Most days you can find Rachel reaching out – praying online, hosting Open Table gatherings in her home or enjoying moments with husband Jon and their four loves: Adeline, Christopher, David and Sarah. She also might be cheering for those Duke Blue Devils and The OSU Buckeyes.

Rachel is a popular speaker for national gatherings and has recently authored *BE BOLD: finding your fierce* as well as co-authoring *Down to Earth: Hopes and Fears of all the Year Are Met in Thee Tonight* and *Sent: Delivering the Gift of Hope at Christmas* – all published by Abingdon Press. You can find her on social media at: @rlbillups."

(Continued on Page 14)





## Church Council

The Church Council resumed their deliberations in August and has made some decisions regarding future church activities. First, the Council approved the sponsorship of Cub Scout Pack 177. The Cub Scout pack was previously sponsored by the Catholic Church. In our last meeting before summer, we had re-established our sponsorship of Boy Scout Troop 176.

Second, the Nominations and Lay Leadership committee has been working diligently to fill seats on all ministry and administrative teams. Their work was completed and approved by the Church Council at the October 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. During this time, a new Ministry team was formed – the Witness Team – which will be led by Kim Kennedy.

Also at the October 12<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Council approved the restart of Linger Longer events, but with a twist. Any group or individual at the church may “host” a linger longer event – only one per month – and this event should not be held on the first Sunday of the month due to Communion. “Hosting” will mean that the group/individual will be responsible for preparing the meals and cleaning up after the event. Two events have already been planned: one on November 12<sup>th</sup>, Mammoth games, and Food blitz for the PennWest student pantry (hosted by the Intentional Faith Formation and Outreach teams) and one on January 28<sup>th</sup>, Game On II (hosted by the Intentional Faith Formation team). A sign-up sheet will be available for groups/individuals to host future events.

The Council also approved the creation of a new photo directory for the Church. Stay tuned, as you will most likely be hearing more about the details associated with this in both this newsletter and future newsletters.

Finally, as the Church Council looks forward towards a new year, we will be reviewing our vision, mission, and purpose statements. This will allow us to better understand who we are and how we can more effectively focus our ministries.

## Linger Longer Luncheons

### **LINGER LONGER LUNCHEONS**



**Sign up your group now to be a  
Luncheon Host in 2024**

Linger Longer Luncheons hopes to be back monthly in 2024! What does the church need from you? Groups to claim a month to organize and execute a Linger Longer Luncheon. It is apparent that many of the congregation would enjoy having the opportunity to stay after worship for a bit and visit with one another. For some including an activity would be wonderful. January 2024 has been claimed by IFF team with a themed luncheon—Game On 2!.

Grab your group/committee/fundraising needs and choose a month. Some ideas: Spaghetti Dinner, Pancake Brunch, Soup (sell some Soup too—Red Bird Mission), Chicken & Biscuits or Pot Luck! How about a Pie Auction! Pasta Bar, Taco Bar or Potato Bar.



## TRUSTEES REPORT

A message from the trustees:

They have arrived! The big news is that we have new chairs for Grace Hall. The chairs are a deep, claret red with gold trim. This has been a long time coming, but we think we've purchased a good solid comfortable chair. Many thanks to Debbie Zahler for organizing the delivery and set up and to everyone who contributed to the chair project.

Our insurance agent from Church Mutual was here at the beginning of October and felt that our church building and grounds were in extremely good condition. We were looking at our church property in light of the fact that our premium had gone up significantly this year and she told me that just our church building alone is valued at a replacement cost of 5.8 million dollars and that's not counting the pavilion, the contents of the church building or the parsonage property. So we have a significant investment here.

At our September trustees meeting and followed by the administrative council in October, we voted to become the sponsor for Cub Scout Pack 177. This is in addition to our sponsorship of Boy Scout Troop 176. As sponsors, we will be providing a place for them to meet and supporting them and their programs throughout the year. After the legal issues of 2021, our Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi indicated that we were no longer allowed to charter scout troops, but we could be sponsoring organizations. Don Beckman will be the liaison with the troops and our own Aaron Glass, a former eagle scout himself, is heavily involved with both the troop and the pack, since his sons participate. We look forward to hearing from them in February on Boy Scout Sunday.

Also, at our September meeting, we had our annual parsonage visit. Each year we hold one trustee meeting at the parsonage to review any current or future needs of the pastor. The meeting is always held in conjunction with the chairman of the Staff Parish Relations Committee, who is currently Tim Rankin. As you may remember, in the spring, Dean Woods installed a new furnace and a new air conditioner at the parsonage as well as updated the ductwork in the basement. Dean donated his labor and expertise for that installation. This was the first opportunity for the remainder of the trustees to actually see it. There were a few gutter issues on both the parsonage building and on the garage. Ryan McCreary has agreed to address those when the gutters and downspouts are cleaned later this fall after all the leaves are down.

Earlier in this article, I mentioned that our agent from Church Mutual commented  
(continued on page 10)



**Homecoming Tent**

## Missions Team Report

Darla is grateful for the donations that came in for the “Food Blitz” and that continue coming in for the Penn West Food Pantry. The students have a continuing need for help with easy open, non-perishable items.

Tim has resumed the collection for diapers, and it has been very successful (his adorable helpers holding the baby bottle doesn’t hurt!).

Meg Gould headed up serving the CCO dinner that was hosted at EUMC. The students enjoyed their meal and fellowship on November 14th

We hope to be going to the Mission Barn in the new year. Please see Meg if you would be willing to do a day trip and volunteer at the Barn to make cleaning and hygiene kits.

We are currently participating in the Edinboro Festival of Trees at the Edinboro Mall. Stop by and see the tree! The theme for the tree this year is different types of birds.

Again this year, we participated in the gift tags for the Kiwanis for the local children at the Food Bank and others in need. The gifts were generous and a special thanks to Mark and Debbie Woods for numerous toys purchased throughout the year and brought to the church for distribution to the children.

We’re also considering missions to reach out through the holidays to folks in need of some holiday cheer. Please share if you know of someone in need.

Thanks for your support!

Meg Gould



## Linger Longer—Meatballs & Mammoth Games

November 12th— A food drive was held in conjunction with having a luncheon with meatball subs and entertainment of Mammoth Games throughout the building. The food drive was done as a food blitz—various groups brought non perishable foods and the most donations for a group won! We gathered a total of 1,670 items for the Penn West Edinboro Student Food Pantry. 1st Place—Children Sunday School—715 items: 2nd Place—Adult Sunday School—491 items and 3rd Place—Choir/Praise Band—288 items. Congratulations to the winners and thank you for supporting this mission.



**IFF—Elementary Subcommittee Update**

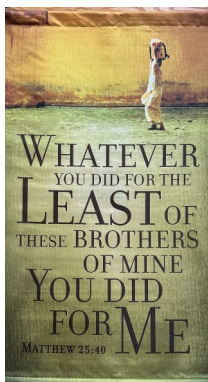
The children and youth participated in a Corn Maze at Wooden Nickel Buffalo Farm on October 29. Children and their parents enjoyed pizza prior to the Maze. Despite a cloudy day and a muddy corn field, it was a great afternoon of fun and getting to know each other a little better.

We are reaching out to Kurt Crays EUMA, to plan an Outreach Project for the children at EUMA. In addition, educate our children on how EUMA works with children and what we can do for these children during the Christmas season.

Bibles will be presented to the children in 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades. Historically Bibles were presented to the children in third grade. In recent years we have fallen behind due to covid. We are "catching up" with the distributing of Bibles assuring all children receive a Bible from our church. If you have a child/grandchild in these grades, please inform the church office. Bibles will be presented during the December 3<sup>rd</sup> worship service.

Christmas Eve Service at 7:00 p.m. children will participate with reading of scripture verses and wearing various costumes. Children visiting this service will have an opportunity to wear a costume and join in the Christmas story. This is unrehearsed and is very meaningful to the children.

Helpers are needed during Sunday School in the PreK – 3<sup>rd</sup> grades and 4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> grades. A Helper does not teach but keeps us in compliance with Safe Sanctuary. Both classes meet off the Narthex. Sunday School does not meet the first Sunday due to Communion. If interested, please let the church office know.



**TRUSTEES** *(continued from page 7*

on how well maintained our grounds were. A huge thank you to Aaron Glass of Glass Landscaping for a job well done. His attention to detail at both the church and parsonage are very evident and he makes every effort to make sure that the grounds look good for Sunday mornings. Many of the trustees donate their own time for projects at the church. As an example, John and Patti Snow worked with our custodian Lori Rutledge to clean the storage room in the basement. They were able to put some of the items that had been stored down there out for the rummage sale. The trustees continuously work to use your contributions wisely in maintaining our properties. Thank you for your continued support.



**Thank You!!**

Thank you to Mark & Debbie Woods for purchasing the set of banners used at the front of the sanctuary during November.

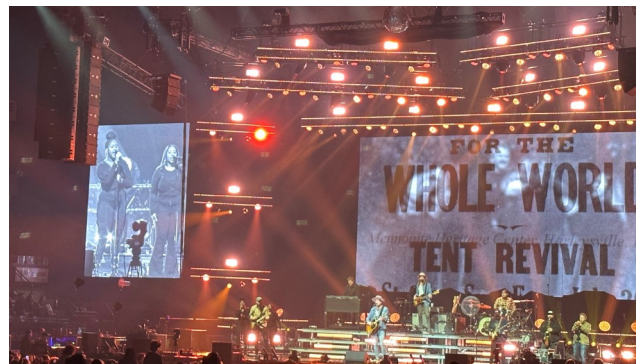
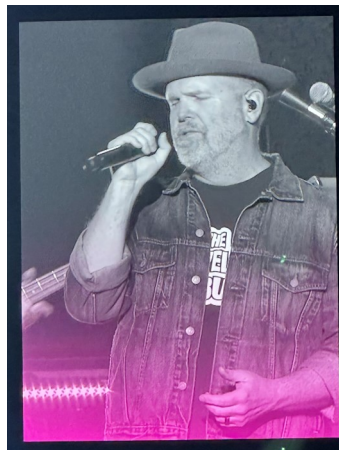
Thank you to Russ Walburn for making the large praying hands outside the narthex at the cross and the smaller praying hands in front of the alter.



### Children Sunday School Golf Outing



**Concert—Zach Williams, Mercy Me & Toby Mac—Nov 2023**





## IFF—Youth

Hello Church Family,

I wanted to share with you an update on the youth ministry. As many of you know I have been trying to assist where I can in various outreach events, as

well as running a youth Sunday School. As we move forward in youth ministry, it is important for us to be able to acknowledge and embrace our past. As I have shared with several of you, my home church disaffiliated. This choice broke my heart. This was compounded by the many students involved in that youth program that expressed concern that the disaffiliation would lead to changes in the Ministry. These students were fearing they would not be accepted in a place that they had been able to feel “safe” at and call “home.” Through the interview process for my current position with Edinboro UMC, it was communicated to me that the church and youth ministry were going through a difficult time. I can see the difficult time, and the pain this church is feeling. I feel the spirit of hurt that has settled. I don’t simply just want to do Youth and Family Ministry, or simply do fun events. I want to help bring healing to this house. I want to truly bring the Hope of Jesus to the Body of this church.

It is my vision that to truly push the Youth Ministry forward there is a need to have a one Day retreat, as a kickoff of sorts. This event has not been scheduled as soon as I initially intended, due to circumstances out of our control. I also have tried to balance getting to know the current youth, without coming across too strong, giving everyone some time to get used to me and having a new director around. With that said our Kickoff One Day Retreat will be held December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 11:30am, at EUMC. This is open to all current youth, and any teenager connected to this church.

Beginning in the New Year, we will begin meeting weekly on Thursday Nights at the church. This will begin on Thursday January 4<sup>th</sup>, at 6pm. All Teenagers are welcome, bring your friends. We will do a monthly Bible series, Discussion, Games and Snacks.

I’m asking that the Church be in prayer for this Youth Ministry. In particular, for our one-day retreat to be fruitful and productive. This retreat will be important for the Youth Ministry to be able to define its identity. I look forward to the healing and growth that God has in store for us all.

Thank you, and Peace be with You.

Tyler



**Blessing of the Animals—October 1st**

# December Worship 2023

## **Advent Series: Awake My Soul!**



December is a busy time when we are running ... Trees to trim, presents to buy... It can also be a difficult time. Empty chairs at the table, memories of times past. Our story of faith tells of God's love coming in the form of a child in the time of a busy census and to an oppressed people in darkness. Nothing will stop God's love from coming to us! Question is, will we see? Will we be awake? Will we be ready?

**Dec. 3: Share the Love Sunday – First Sunday in Advent**  
**“Awake My Soul: Awake!” (Romans 13:11-14)**

**Dec. 10: Second Sunday in Advent**  
**“Awake My Soul: Integrity” (Matthew 3:1-12)**

**Dec. 17: Third Sunday of Advent**  
**“Awake My Soul: Expectations” (Matthew 11: 2 – 11)**

### **Blue Christmas Service at 7:00 p.m. (Meal at 6 pm)**

**Christmas can be a painful time of year.** We may be missing a loved one who has recently died; it may be a time that has always been difficult; broken relationships, unemployment, ill health, or the pain of isolation - - all these can make us feel very alone in the mist of the Christmas season. We need a place and time to acknowledge our sadness and know that we are not alone.

**The Blue Christmas Service** offers that time and space for you. Come out and join with us in sharing and hearing prayers, scripture and music that acknowledges God's presence with us who mourn and struggle. Come and remember that ***“the Light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it”***.

**Dec. 24: Fourth Sunday in Advent**  
**“Awake My Soul: Trust” (Isaiah 7: 10 – 16)**

**Dec. 24: Christmas Eve**  
 7 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service



Pictures at the right: Old Testament Study



## **Intentional Faith Formation Team (IFF)** *(continued from page 6)*

### **DISCIPLE BIBLE: 2 groups**

**Wednesday night** Disciple III took a brief hiatus during summer but resumed Disciple III and have concluded their study. The group was engaged in study of the prophets and the writings of Paul, topics that have led to many enlightening discussions. After the summer break, we went to “hybrid” so some of us meet in person while others were on zoom. Plans for Disciple IV will be announced in early 2024.

**Monday night:** The Monday Night Disciple class is reading Adam Hamilton’s book, “John, the Gospel of Light and Life”. We just finished chapter 2, The Miraculous Signs of Jesus. Each of the 6 chapters explores John’s purpose of sharing who Jesus is so we can come to a deeper understanding of Him and see that God called him to shed a light on the world so we may experience new life in him. We read it considering how it speaks of what Jesus did, how it brings new life to us, and how we in turn can shed light and life to others.

We meet on zoom every two weeks. Our final meeting for 2023 will be December 18th. This study will finish before Christmas. Zoom links are shared from the office.

### **UPCOMING COURSES FOR NEW (AND CURRENT) MEMBERS:**

**Lent 2024:** The Art and Practice of Prayer - Pastor Ed will be leading

**Other Studies, 2024:** New Testament, Pastor Ed, date TBD

Herstory II: “Good and Bad Women of the Bible” - Jerra Jenrette will lead a summer (3-week study) on key women of the biblical tradition by doing in depth studies of 3-4 individuals including Lydia (seller of purple), Jezebel, Ruth-Naomi.

Additional studies TBD

### **SPRING 2024 ADULT TRIP:**

Twenty participants will travel to Lancaster, PA, to see the production of “Daniel” at the Sights and Sounds Theatre on Tuesday, May 14 for a 3:00 performance. On Wednesday, May 15, we will visit the Ephrata Cloister and other sites in the area in a large or small groups depending on the interests of participants. We will return on Thursday, May 16, 2024.

### **Member Authors:**

Our own Jan Brawn is an author and has a website where you can learn more about her work and find out about purchasing copies of her books.

Now available for sale: David and the Drainosaurs (book 1), David and the Missing Troll (book 2), David and the Midnight Unicorn (book 3), and David and the Foglinian Menace (book 4). <https://www.janycebrawn.com> for more information.

## **Youth & Children Sunday School—Corn Maze—October 2023**



## “Feeding the Hungry”

Edinboro UMC is committed to Jesus’s command to “feed the hungry” and take care of the poor. Indeed, perhaps the most familiar story in the gospels is the feeding of 5,000 (or 4,000), the crowds who had been following Jesus, hungry for the Word he brought. In Matthew 25: 40-46, Jesus recounts the story of the king who inquires about taking care of the poor. The scripture reads, “And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.’ Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘You who are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels, for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not take care of you?’ Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ And these will go away into eternal punishment but the righteous into eternal life.” (NRSV)

In addition to all the work of the Outreach/Mission team, there are several members who are involved in area food banks/pantries including Steve and Irene Smith in Albion. Steve is the director of the **Northwestern Food Pantry** which serves the area west of the Edinboro Food Pantry service area which includes the boroughs of Albion, Cranesville, and Platea and the townships of Conneaut, Elk Creek and Springfield, a total of 122 square miles. We are currently serving over 225 families representing 572 individuals. This food pantry is currently distributing monthly over 10,000 pounds of food and fresh produce, 420 dozen fresh eggs, over 450 rolls of bathroom tissue and other personal health items to supplement the family’s nutritional and personal health needs. Attached are photos of some of our loyal volunteers harvesting 22 bushels of fresh apples and about 25 bushels of butternut squash in October.

Prior to 2014, **Edinboro Food Pantry** volunteers worked out of the community social hall in the basement of Edinboro’s Municipal Building at 124 Meadville Street. The clients retrieved their food inside the building by wheeling grocery carts past tables loaded with food. They then pushed their loaded carts back to their cars, all of which were parked around the intersection of Erie and Meadville Streets as well as in the maintenance parking lot below the building near the dam. As the food pantry gained new clients, the congestion around downtown and in the parking lot increased. The food pantry was outgrowing its facility.

In 2014, the president of Edinboro University approached the food pantry’s board of directors and offered to let the food pantry use a series of dormitory rooms along a first-floor hallway in the south building of Lawrence Towers on Perry Lane. In July of 2014, the Edinboro Food Pantry relocated from the basement of the municipal building to its new facility on Edinboro University’s campus. The operation remained similar with food pantry clients moving their grocery carts through the hallway and selecting their food from the individual dorm rooms.

Six years later, the pandemic hit the United States and all things familiar drastically changed. In order to keep client families separated from each other and the staff, the volunteers began distributing food outside the building and placing the boxes and bags directly into the client’s trunks, asking them to remain inside their vehicles at all times. This distribution procedure has worked so well that the staff at the food pantry continues to follow this altered approach to food distribution.

Mary Weber, Distribution Coordinator, orders food from Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania twice each month. On the following two Tuesdays, a large truck from Second

(continued on page 16)

## “Feeding the Hungry” (continued from page 15)

Harvest delivers around 5,000 pounds of food.

On every Thursday morning, the day of distribution, another large truck from Second Harvest delivers fresh produce, milk and baked goods. Second Harvest charges for some of the food the food pantry receives on the major deliveries. The cost of some of the food is covered by a variety of grants. The food pantry gets charged a service fee for every delivery.

Kathy Montgomery and Janice Castro cook breakfast for the volunteers every Thursday morning. Kathy also is the treasurer for the Edinboro Food Pantry and pays the monthly bills to Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania and other vendors who supply and service the facility. Mary Weber is the Distribution Coordinator and is responsible for placing the orders to Second Harvest for the food that is delivered every 2 weeks. She also is responsible for the general operation of the Edinboro Food Pantry and oversees the work of more than two dozen volunteers. Debra McElroy oversees the preparation and distribution of the produce that arrives every Thursday morning prior to the pantry's distribution of food to over 200 families. Note that the food pantry operates every Thursday from 11:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. except during Thanksgiving and the Christmas/New Years Holidays (if they fall close to a Thursday). During the winter, it also is closed if General McLane School District is closed on account of inclement weather.

The Edinboro Food Pantry also accepts food from local businesses, individuals and religious and service organizations. Autumn and Spring food drives held by television station WICU, the U.S. Postal Service and Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity add significantly to the pantry's stock and financial resources. Frequently our Lady of the Lake Roman Catholic Church in combination with the church's Thrifty Threads shop provides holiday gift cards for the neighbor client families as well.

Donations may be sent to the Edinboro Food Pantry to help defray the cost of purchasing and shipping food, of purchasing and maintaining refrigeration and freezer units and acquiring boxes from S&S Packaging in nearby Albion as well as other supplies. Make checks payable to Edinboro Food Pantry and mail all donations to Edinboro Food Pantry, P.O. Box 631 Edinboro, PA 16412.

Edinboro Food Pantry volunteers distribute food outdoor year around. Boxes of food, bags of frozen items, milk and individual bags of produce are prepared inside the food pantry at 150 Perry Land on the Campus of Penn West University @Edinboro. A dozen or so volunteers spend hot summer days as well as sub-freezing winter days placing food into individual cars after the families have registered at an office inside the building. Based on 2022 statistics, the 200+ families who are “neighbor clients” of the Edinboro Food Pantry represent approximately 628 individuals who have food provided for them each week.

### The Garden of Edin

Garden of Edin Mission: The Garden of Edin Community Garden provides a place for gardening education, community gathering, sharing, and nourishment for both body and spirit.

(Continued on Page 17)





## “Feeding the Hungry” (continued from page 18)

The Garden of Edin Community Garden was initiated by a 2013 sermon that challenged First United Presbyterian Church members to serve our community by growing and sharing food. By 2015, the Garden of Edin Team built twenty raised beds for gardeners. By 2016 this number doubled to forty raised beds which were all in use! Four raised garden beds are set aside as “tithe beds” to grow produce for the Edinboro Food Pantry. This year the “tithe beds” of the Presbyterian Church, the Catholic Church, and two beds from the Methodist Church, donated a joint measure of 305 pounds of produce to the Edinboro Food Pantry. This season we actively encouraged individual gardeners to donate their excess harvest to the Food Bank as well.

Any community member may request one of the forty, 4' x 8' raised beds and 1' x 6' trellis beds for an annual fee of \$15. Also, there are four accessible, waist-high beds for gardeners who need to remain upright.

The Garden provides 500-gallon water tanks, watering cans, tools, compost, and double fencing to hopefully keep out critters. Hermitage House carpenters and Boy Scouts built two contemplative areas outside the garden fence, titled the “Peaceful Pergola” and “Serenity Circle” for the “community gathering & sharing” aspect of gardening. The Edinboro community has truly embraced the Garden of Edin garden project. The efforts to reach out beyond church walls has brought successful new relationships, bringing together novice and experienced gardeners that represent a wide range of socio-economic, age, and faith backgrounds. Quoting one of our gardeners: “The garden offered some peace to a hectic life. The kids gained an appreciation of what it takes to grow food and pride in seeing what their efforts produced.”

Edinboro UMC has been involved in the Garden of Edin since its inception nine years ago and our Tithe Bed team has worked to provide produce to the Edinboro Food Pantry. Each year, like with farming, is a challenge due to weather but we have harvested from 107 lbs to 165 lbs in the last four years. This year’s harvest netted 125 lbs. The Tithe Bed team takes care of two 4' x 8' beds and two 1' x 5' trellis beds

We are so appreciative of all the help members give (Trish, Susan Y, Gert, Don, Marla, Linda, Kathy, Heather Z, Deb Z, Jim, Christine). Dot Fleming, an original member, continues to support this with her prayers.

These efforts by members of our congregation to support the region attest to the response to Jesus’s instructions to help others.

If you are interested in helping any of these initiatives, contact the following:

Albion: [scubed70@roadrunner.com](mailto:scubed70@roadrunner.com)

Edinboro: [maryaweber@aol.com](mailto:maryaweber@aol.com)

Edinboro UMC Tithe Bed team: [jerrajenrette@gmail.com](mailto:jerrajenrette@gmail.com)

Garden of Edin: [h.mazim@gmail.com](mailto:h.mazim@gmail.com)



## NUMEROUS OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT MISSIONS

### IN OUR AREA

**SHOES (GENTLY USED OR NEW)** – Looking for a place for those old shoes? Worn out? Ragged? Too Small? Any condition – boots, sandals, sneakers, adults or kids. Bring them to church, tie or band the pair together and deposit them in the box located in the narthex. Funds derived from this collection fund mission projects.

**ALUMINUM CAN TABS** – Bring in the tabs from aluminum cans and place in the large jug on the desk in the narthex. These are used for the Bre Humble & Kind Fund which is a fund in memory of Breanna Elder. The fund is used to sponsor scholarships for teachers and students.

**DIAPER FUND** – This is a monetary donation and money can be deposited in the giant plastic baby bottle on the small table as you exit the sanctuary. Darla and Tim Elder use this money to purchase diapers for the families staying in EUMA housing in Erie.

**PENN-WEST UNIVERSITY FOOD PANTRY** – Bring donations of non-perishable food items and place them in the tub near the table in the narthex. Please check the expiration date of the items before donation!



**1st Annual Chicken Run**



### About Us

#### OUR PURPOSE:

We join with the Holy Spirit to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

#### OUR MISSION:

We are a dynamic community of doubters, dreamers and disciples on a life long journey of faith and action with Christ.

#### OUR VISION:

By embracing grace, we will engage heads, hands and hearts in the way of Christ to ignite a profound love of God in all.

#### WE WELCOME YOU:

Regardless of race, ethnicity, age, marital status, gender identity, sexual orientation, social or economic status, physical and mental ability or religious affiliation. All persons are of sacred worth. We are all God's beloved.





**CHRISTIAN COFFEEHOUSE**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22<sup>nd</sup>**  
**7:00 – 9:00 pm**

**Bagels & Scones!**  
**Desserts!**  
**Hot! Cold Coffees!**

**Plus: OPEN MIKE NIGHT!**



**FEATURING:**



**Koppes & Crowl**

500 WEST PLUM STREET,  
EDINBORO, PA, 16412,  
UNITED STATES  
814.734.8590



**Welcome New Members**



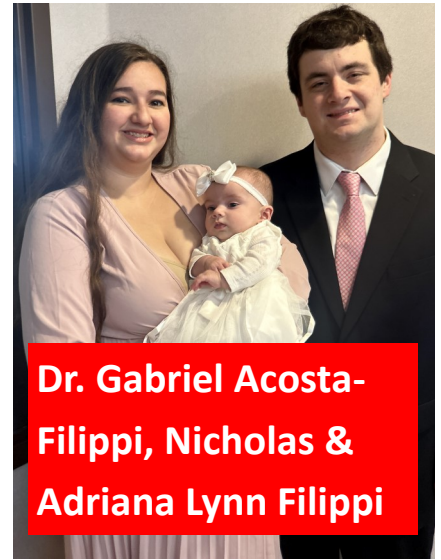
**Eva Ketchum**



**Chris & Jim Luce**



**Stephanie Berger**



**Dr. Gabriel Acosta-Filippi, Nicholas & Adriana Lynn Filippi**



**Edinboro United Methodist Church**

PO Box 764 ~ 113 High Street  
Edinboro, PA 16412

**Phone:** 814-734-3182

**E-Mail:** office@edinboroumc.org

Non-Profit Organization

U. S. Postage

**PAID**

Permit No. 22

Albion, PA 16401

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

*Prayerfully Prepared For...*

**Please Note:** If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter,  
please contact the church office to be removed from the mailing list. *Thank you!*

## Contact Information

### Edinboro United Methodist Church

P.O. Box 764, 113 High St., Edinboro, Pa 16412

814.734.3182

EUMC Website: [www.edinboroumc.org](http://www.edinboroumc.org)

**EUMC Social Media :** Facebook: Edinboro UMC      Instagram: EUMC113      You Tube: BoroUMC

## STAFF

**Ed Schoeneck, Lead Pastor**

[pastor@edinboroumc.org](mailto:pastor@edinboroumc.org)

**Dr. Jerra Jenrette, Pastoral Assistant**

**John Layden, Lay Leader**

**Junia Isiminger, Administrative Assistant**

[office@edinboroumc.org](mailto:office@edinboroumc.org)

**Tyler Volk, Dir. Of Youth and Family Ministries**

[youthandfamily@edinboroumc.org](mailto:youthandfamily@edinboroumc.org)

**Dennis Carner, Technology**

[technology@edinboroumc.org](mailto:technology@edinboroumc.org)

**Kay Jordan, Treasurer**

[treasurer@edinboroumc.org](mailto:treasurer@edinboroumc.org)