DECEMBER 2026

MOUNT NITTANY NEWS

The Newsletter of Mount Nittany Church

Pastor's Ramblin's

BY PASTOR MIKE



HAPPY NEW YEAR!
I know for some of you that may seem a bit premature, but for the church, Advent is the beginning of a new year. I also think that many of us could benefit from more than one new beginning. So when January 1 rolls around we can begin anew once more for our lives. So many opportunities to start a new year, a new chance, a new beginning.

I appreciate that our faith offers new beginnings any time we need them. That is the beauty and hope of repentance and forgiveness. Additionally, it points to the love that God has for us. It is often easy to forget the hope we receive in Jesus. When we forget why Jesus did what Jesus did, we fall into the trap of trying to earn salvation, save ourselves, or become despondent in the belief that we are beyond hope.

During this New Year, I would like us to remember the joy and excitement that comes with the birth of a child. I would like us to remember the fear and uncertainty that also comes with the birth of a child. You see, life is full of juxtapositions: love/hate, fear/courage, light/dark, joy/sadness. The all or nothing expectation that the world would have us buy into is false.

Our faith and hope in the salvation we receive in Jesus does not exclude us from the realities of life. Just like Jesus, we will experience laughter and tears, we will have love and betrayal, we will have celebrations and hardships. In the midst of all that life will send our way, Jesus affirms that he will be with us always. We will go through nothing alone.

So, HAPPY NEW YEAR! We are setting out on a new journey around the sun with the Son of God. We will climb mountains, pass through valleys, we will find green pastures and rest by still waters, we may find out selves passing through valleys of loss and death, we will laugh and we will shed tears; through all of that, Jesus is right there beside us. Talk about a Christmas Gift that sets the tone for a New Year.

MNUMC WE BELIEVE IT IS OUR MISSION TO...

NURTURE ALL IN THE JOURNEY TO BE DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST

TO FULFILL OUR MISSION, IT IS OUR VISION...

TO BE A WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE FAMILY MEETING SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL NEEDS FOR ALL THROUGH TEACHING, WITNESSING, SERVICE AND MISSIONS.

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CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRY

by Patty Decapria

Sunday Education

Our children have been learning lessons about Moses and the Israelites. When Caleb and Joshua went into the Promised Land, they knew they had to trust that God was with them. Balaam had to trust that God was responsible for his donkey talking listen to what the donkey had to say. Samuel learned to listen to God and trust God's plan for his life. We have been learning, like Caleb, Joshua, Balaam, and Samuel, that we need to trust and listen for God's voice. Sometimes God uses loud noises (or a donkey) or a small whisper to lead us in the right direction. The difficult part is stopping to listen for God's guidance.

We will spend the next four Sundays focused on Jesus' birth: the events, how it impacted those at his birth, and what it means for us.

Parents Night Out

In November, we shared how the same seed can produce different colors of kernels in Indian Corn. We are all created in God's image like the seed, but we all have unique gifts and talents that show our "different" colors like the kernels. God creates us this way so we can be blessings to everyone. Our differences help us become "one" in Christ.

We also experimented and made a lava lamp.

To get ready for Advent, we colored, taped, and stapled a chain. Each day we break off a chain and read the verse of scripture to prepare our hearts and remind us of what Christmas really means.

Our December gathering will be Friday, December 11, from 6-7:30 pm. We will have some snacks, games, and crafts, but most of all, we will focus on the fun we have with each other.

Elevate Youth

Our Elevate Youth group has been planning our calendar for the New Year. Mission projects, concerts, and fellowship are our main focus for the upcoming year. A survey to parents of youth will come shortly. We want to know what parents and your youth would like to see in a youth program. Please watch for it in the upcoming weeks. Our meetings for the rest of the year will be sporadic, as there are so many activities to fit in during the month of December. We will keep sharing when we gather again.

It is hard for me to wrap my head around the time of year. It has been filled with Sunday morning Bible lessons, Friday night fun, and fellowship with youth. Throw in an Easter Egg Hunt and Breakfast, Vacation Bible School, and Trunk or Treat, and I realize how blessed we are. Thank you for your support and prayers this past year. Thank you to our wonderful Christian Ministry Team: Heather Zalno, Heather Swimley, Pastor Mike, Darria Dixon, Chloe Klinger, Jessica Bickle, Georgie Hillard, Naomi English, Judy Smith, Emily Gregory, Everett Gregory, Dorian and Gerry Dunn, and Sheri Tressler. Thank you to all who have stepped in to paint, decorate, teach, hide eggs, decorate trunks, and just be part of a ministry that celebrates God in our lives and how we share God with each other and our community.

Blessings for a wonderful and joyous Christmas!
Patty

DECEMBER HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Michelle Yohn	Dec. 01	Amy Williams	Dec. 17
Allie DeCapria	Dec. 04	James Weaver	Dec. 19
Joyce Kerr	Dec. 04	Kelly Clemons	Dec. 21
Mary Ann Hower	Dec. 05	Robert VanDruff	Dec. 21
Susan Santos	Dec. 07	Lorna Yoder	Dec. 22
Guyla Alwine	Dec. 08	Christopher Knepp-Hill	Dec. 24
Francie Brown	Dec. 09	Marty Mondock	Dec. 25
Patricia Kidder	Dec. 09	Scott Williams	Dec. 26
Joyce Fellows	Dec. 10	Rachel Klinger	Dec. 27
Claire Svitana	Dec. 12	Terry Knepp	Dec. 28



Money Counters

December

Dec. 06: John/Louisa Shawver Lem/Marty Warner
Dec. 13: Cathy/John Rideout Chris McCann
Dec. 20: Pat Weaver James Beatty
Dec. 27: Lee/Ellen Copper Tom/Ginny Kline

Liturgists

December

Dec. 06: Judy Smith
Dec. 13: Chris McCann
Dec. 20: Cathy Rideout
Dec. 27: Kooper Knepp



Angel Tree Grocery Gift Cards

In the last few years, we have recognized a need to provide food for families when the schools are on break during the Christmas holiday. In response, we partnered with 2 Elementary Schools to provide grocery gift cards. These gift cards are purchased with money we receive for this mission. We then share the cards with students identified at the schools who may struggle to provide a holiday meal or food when school is not in session. Last year, we were able to provide 54 Grocery Gift Cards to families within these two elementary schools. We will again be partnering with these schools to provide grocery gift cards and will be collecting money through December. Please visit our display in the lobby area for our donation box as well as check out our "Angel" tree. If you write a check, please make the check out to Mount Nittany and list Angel Tree in the memo section. If you would like an envelope to place a check or cash, there are some located in this display. Please prayerfully consider how you may contribute to this ministry and share our love with those in need in our community.

Patty DeCapria

FOCUS ON MISSION DECEMBER

DECEMBER 06: UMCOR - U.S. DISASTERS

UMCOR responds to natural or civil disasters of such magnitude that they overwhelm a community's ability to recover on its own. Through UMCOR, United Methodists extend loving care to people within the United States. When disaster strikes, it is local churches that provide the first response to their communities. This basic understanding—that disaster response is local—forms the foundation for UMCOR's US disaster training and response. When responding to a disaster in the United States, UMCOR provides training, financial assistance, expertise, community collaboration to churches and partners making them more resilient to disasters.

DECEMBER 13: CONFERENCE BENEVOLENT SHARES

Our benevolent shares help support the entire mission of the Susquehanna Conference UMC. Shares are used for administrative needs and the numerous ministries that the Conference oversees. Camp Penn, Green Hills, Mount Ashbury and Wesley Forest are the camp retreats that the Conference maintains. The Conference is also directly involved with numerous other ministries such as Mission Central, The Neighborhood Center, Walk to Emmaus, Mission U and The Center. You can learn more about the Susquehanna Conference UMC at https://susumc.org

DECEMBER 20: CHRISTMAS OFFERING

One of two annual special offerings collected by the Susquehanna Conference of the United Methodist Church (SUSUMC) to support its affiliated senior living and benevolent care communities. This offering takes place during Advent, alongside the Golden Cross offering held in May.

DECEMBER 24: MIRACLE OFFERING (FOOD BANK)

The State College Food Bank has a mission to provide food security, directly or indirectly, to people in Centre County, thus ensuring that no one in Centre County goes hungry regardless of age, race, color, ancestry, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, creed, or ability. We are committed to making our community a better place through our mission and programs, and our primary focus is to ensure access to healthy and nutritious food for anyone who is in need of our support and assistance.

DECEMBER 27: CENTRE SAFE

The vision of this organization is safety, equality and respect for all individuals and a community free of relationship and sexual violence.It is the mission of Centre Safe to empower survivors of sexual violence, relationship violence, and stalking and to work toward the elimination of such violence.

HAPPENINGS DECEMBER

Bakers Needed for the Holiday Craft Fair

The Holiday Craft Fair is coming up on Saturday, December 5 and we need your help. We are looking for bakers willing to share their favorite homemade treats for our baked goods table. Baked goods may be dropped off Friday, December 4, from 6:00 - 8:00 pm or Saturday, December 5 no later than 8:30 am. We are also seeking volunteers to assist during the event. If you can help in any way, please contact Wendy with questions or to sign up. Thank you for helping make this event a success!



District Day

The Mountain Valley District will be having a day apart at Woodycrest UMC on December 5th from 9 am-2 pm. The focus for our time apart will be Congregational Care. If this is a topic of interest to you, please let Pastor Mike know so that he can get a group registered.



Adult Luncheon

'Tis the season to celebrate friendship, fellowship, and holiday cheer! Please join us on December 9 at 12pm for a special Holiday Senior Luncheon. Meal will be completely provided. Enjoy a wonderful time of food, laughter, and fellowship as we celebrate the joy of the season together. Please sign up on the signup sheet located on the bulletin board outside of the FLC if you plan to attend.

Thank you from the Trustees

The trustees would like to thank everyone who has helped us with the security measures for our exterior doors during worship services. We continue to need volunteers who are willing to help with securing the doors and assisting persons who arrive after the doors have been locked. If you feel you can help be a part of this ministry that helps ensure the safety of children, vulnerable adults, and worshipers, please see Gerry Dunn.

Holiday Craft Fair

Stop by the Holiday Craft Fair on Saturday, December 5, from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm and get a head start on your Christmas shopping or find that special item to complete your gift list. Shop from a variety of local vendors offering unique, handcrafted gifts you won't find anywhere else. Delicious food and baked goods will also be available for purchase. Come out and support local businesses while enjoying a fun day of shopping and fellowship.



The 63rd Annual Presentation of

"The Search for Peace"

Curwensville United Methodist Church
602 State Street, Curwensville PA



Friday, December 4, 7:30 PM
Saturday, December 5, 4:00 & 7:30 PM
Sunday, December 6, 4:00 PM

Call 814-236-1976 for more information.
Free-will offering taken at each performance.
Large group reservations required.
Email: curwensvilleumc@verizon.net or find us on Facebook.

FROM MUSIC MINISTRY

James Beatty

So Let it be Written, So Let It Be Sung

Song O come, O Come, Emmanuel

Happy New Year Church, I am grateful for the opportunity to start sharing again. This is The Season of Waiting and anticipation for The Coming of the Messiah. Each year The Church Celebrates This Season of Preparation; But what exactly are we waiting for?

We know in The Church today The Messiah has come, we know and have heard the stories. In this time we like the ancient past are still Singing "O Come, Emmanuel." The difference is we are waiting for His return as promised.

Prophets foretold it. Creation showed it and yet they missed it or they missed what they thought they were looking for. Today prophecy is found in the last Book of God's Word "Revelations" John wrote what to look for and what is to come, much like the prophets of Old Testament.

The Prophet Micah wrote, here shall be a sign he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth. In todays world we refer to the earth as she and the birth pains are what is happening in nature as you read this. I'm not a foresier or prophet of when his return is. we are to watch and be ready. The scriptures tell us no man knows the time or hour or the son of man knows the time of return so we wait and watch. Today the church is blest in knowing what is to come and we know exactly what we are looking for. In reading Revelation its not hand to see signs and wonders, so today church when singing "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" know that in this very time and place we to are waiting for the promise to be fulfilled. So to the church sing, sing robustly Come Emmanuel. We are the children of God, and we are waiting.

O Come, Desire of Nations bind, all peoples in one heart and mind! Bid any, strife and quarels cease, fill our world with heaven's peace.

Rejoice, Rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to Thee, O Israel.

Happy Christmas to all
James

Financial Reports January - October 2026

CHURCH BUDGET

General Fund Income 2026	$301,605.13
General Fund Expenses 2026	$298,846.85
Mission Fund Income 2026	$21,822.77
Mission Fund Expenses 2026	$21,827.77

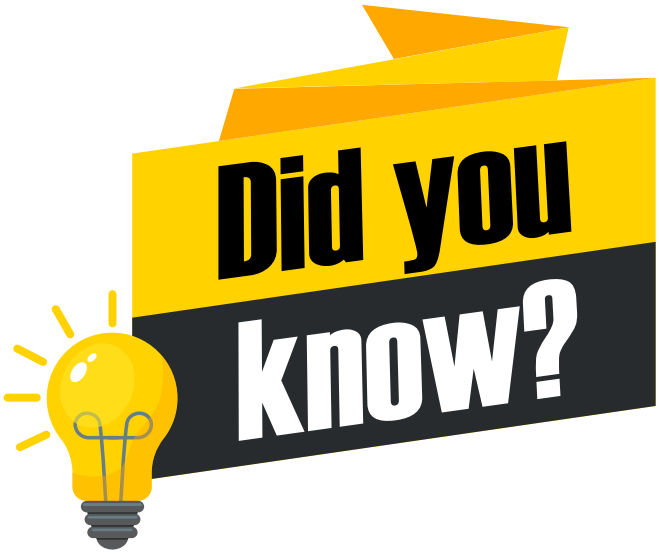
MISSION GIVING

Mission Fund Income	Monthly Total	Yearly Total
January 2026	$1,381.00	$1,381.00
February 2026	$3,387.00	$4,768.00
March 2026	$2,823.00	$7,591.00
April 2026	$1,188.00	$8,779.00
May 2026	$1,813.00	$10,592.00
June 2026	$3,422.00	$14,014.00
July 2026	$1,753.00	$15,767.00
August 2026	$1,705.00	$17,472.00
September 2026	$2,417.00	$19,889.77
October 2026		
Angel Tree	$ 390.00	
Food Bank	$ 20.00	
Trunk Or Treat	$ 115.00	
UMCOR	$ 65.00	
Veterans Assistance Fund	$ 610.00	
Volunteers in Mission Sunday	$ 235.00	
World Communion Sunday	$ 498.00	
Total	$ 1,933.00	$21,822.77

December Awareness Month

Focuses on:
Health and Wellness

- HIV/Aids
- Universal Human Rights
- Safe Toys and Gifts
- National Drunk & Drugged Driving Pervention
- International Sharps Injury Prevention
- Worldwide Food Service Safety



Key Awareness Days

- December 01: World AIDS Day
- December 02: International Day for the Abolition of Salvery
- December 03: International Day for Persons with Disabilities
- December 05: International Volunteer
- December 09: International Anti-Corruption
- December 10: Human rights
- December 11: International Mountain
- December 20: International Human Solidarity







12 DECEMBER 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 PSU Usher 1:30pm Hits & Mits 5-7pm	3 Craft Fair setup	4 Craft Fair Setup	5 Craft Fair 9am-2pm
6 Pack 367 12-4pm	7 Soccer Shots 5:30- 7:30pm	8	9 Adult Lunch 12pm Hits & Mits 5-7pm	10	11 Parents Night Out 6-7:30pm	12 Soccer Shots 10am-12:30pm
13 Church Pot Luck Ballroom Dancing 2-5pm	14 Soccer Shots 5:30- 7:30pm	15	16 Hits & Mits 5-7pm	17 Blood Drive 12-5pm	18 Family Fun Night 6:30- 8:30pm	19 Soccer Shots 10am-12:30pm
20	21 Soccer Shots 5:30- 7:30pm Longest Night 7pm	22	23	24 Children's service 5-6pm Regular Servi ce 7pm	25  Office Closed	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Pastor Hours 9-11am
every Mon. & Tues.

Every 1st thru third Wed
Bells 6:30-7pm followed
by Sanctuary Choir 7-8pm

1st Tuesday of the Month
Scout Leader 7-9pm
Boardroom
Quilting Every Tues. 9:30am
Every 2nd-4/5th Tuesday Scouts 5-8:30

Karate every Thurs 5:30-6:30pm