



Lewinsville Presbyterian Church

www.lewinsville.org

December 2023

DECEMBER WORSHIP

DECEMBER 3, livestreamed at 11:00 a.m.

1st SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Celebration of the Lord's Supper

Isaiah 64:1-9; Mark 13:24-37

"Keep Awake"

Rev. Layne Brubaker

Alternative Gifts

7:00 p.m. Advent "O" Antiphons Contemplative Service

DECEMBER 10, livestreamed at 11:00 a.m.

2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Isaiah 40:1-11; Mark 1:1-8

"Comfort to the Afflicted"

Rev. Dr. Scott Ramsey

Alternative Gifts & Fair Trade Sale

2:00 p.m. Community Christmas Caroling

DECEMBER 17, livestreamed at 11:00 a.m.

3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Luke 1:46-55

"Good News to the Oppressed"

Rev. Dr. Scott Ramsey

9:30 a.m. Intergenerational Christmas Event

Alternative Gifts & Summer Mission Bake Sale

DECEMBER 20, LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE, 7:30 p.m.

Isaiah 40:1-8; Psalm 121; Matthew 2:1-18; Rev. 21:1-5

Rev. Layne Brubaker

DECEMBER 24, livestreamed at 11:00 a.m.

4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT/CHRISTMAS EVE

- 11:00 a.m. Family Service-Choristers and Jr. Choristers present "The Light Before Christmas"
- 7:00 p.m. Candlelight & Communion with Baroque Orchestra & Choir
- 9:30 p.m. Candlelight & Communion with Jazz Quartet & Young Adult Alumni Choir

Isaiah 9:2-7; Luke 2:1-20

"Our Vulnerable and Authoritative King"

Rev. Dr. Scott Ramsey

Alternative Gifts

DECEMBER 31, livestreamed at 11:00 a.m.

Service of Lessons and Carols

Rev. Jen Dunfee

Christmas Eve at Lewinsville



11:00 AM FAMILY SERVICE

FEATURING THE JOSEPH MARTIN
MUSICAL,

"THE LIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS"

PRESENTED BY THE LEWINSVILLE
CHORISTERS & JUNIOR CHORISTERS

FESTIVE MUSIC WILL BEGIN AT
10:55 AM

COCOA & COOKIES IN ST. ANDREWS
HALL FOLLOWING THE SERVICE


7:00 PM

CANDLELIGHT & COMMUNION
FEATURING BAROQUE ORCHESTRA
& CHOIR

LEWINSVILLE'S CHANCEL CHOIR WILL
PERFORM JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH'S
'WACHET AUF' CANTATA

FESTIVE MUSIC WILL BEGIN AT 6:30 PM

9:30 PM

CANDLELIGHT & COMMUNION
FEATURING A JAZZ QUARTET & YOUNG
ADULT ALUMNI CHOIR

(RETURNING COLLEGE STUDENTS ARE INVITED
TO JOIN THE CHOIR)

FESTIVE MUSIC BEGINS AT 9:15 PM

REV. DR. SCOTT RAMSEY PREACHING AT
BOTH SERVICES

"OUR VULNERABLE AND AUTHORITATIVE KING"
ISAIAH 9:2-7; LUKE 2:1-20

FROM THE PASTOR

Dear friends at Lewinsville,

The festival of Christmas, towards which we are moving in the month of December, is a deep, profound, and thick announcement. Christmas is the announcement that *the newborn King has come*. That is to say, Christmas is a royal celebration. It is a celebration of the kingdom of God, in which Jesus Christ is revealed as the true King. Christmas, then, joins up with the acclamations of Psalm 93, 95, 96, 97, 99, and others, which proclaim, "The LORD is king!" Christmas joins up with the first words of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark, where he proclaims, "The kingdom of God is at hand!" (Mark 1:15).

This announcement of the arrival of Jesus and the establishment of his kingdom means that the *other kingdoms of the world*, kingdoms of violence and fear, no longer can claim our ultimate loyalty. They are, at best, penultimate. Wherever those kingdoms are organized in opposition to the will and the reign of God, we are invited to depart from them in some way. As we say at Easter, we no longer need to be afraid, of anything, or anyone, anymore, because Jesus is our King, and his merciful Kingdom has been established.

However, in the midst of all of these claims of Jesus' sovereignty and royal authority, we must not miss the deep and abiding vulnerability that marks Christmas. Jesus did not come as a dread warrior, slaying his enemies with a loaded weapon. Jesus came as a vulnerable child, whose parents fled from the slaughtering menace of King Herod, and the Holy Family became refugees in Egypt (Matthew 2:13-15). Just as the end of Jesus' life was marked by vulnerability and suffering, so was the beginning of his life.

The festival of Christmas is a celebration of Jesus' royal authority *that is marked by enduring vulnerability*. You and I are summoned to live our lives with a similar mix of humility and confidence, vulnerability and strength, honoring our weakness while receiving power from God's grace.

Where in your life do you experience great strength? Where in your life do you experience great weakness and vulnerability? How are those areas related to each other?

Blessings for your journey,

Pastor Scott



ADVENT "O" ANTIPHONS CONTEMPLATIVE WORSHIP DECEMBER 3 AT 7:00 PM

The Lewinsville Cantorum and Bell choir will help lead Lewinsville's monthly Contemplative Worship. The Christian Church has been singing the "O" Antiphons since at least the eighth century. They are the antiphons that accompany the Magnificat canticle of Evening Prayer from December 17-23. They use ancient biblical imagery drawn from the messianic hopes of the Old Testament to proclaim the coming Christ as the fulfillment not only of Old Testament hopes, but present ones as well. Their repeated use of the imperative "Come!" embodies the longing of all for the Divine Messiah. Join us for a restorative worship experience as we prepare for the coming of the King.



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2

9:30 AM-1:00 PM

Join the Flower Committee as we gather to decorate the exterior of the church for Advent and Christmas. We need help decorating outdoors, including hanging wreaths, roping lampposts, potting plants and stringing lights outdoors. Service hours are available for students. Bring work gloves and wire cutters. This event is for adults and youth, age 13 and up.



Registration is now open for the Hanging of the Greens Ornament Making Party. Children in grades 1-5 and their families will gather in Fellowship Hall to create a variety of handmade ornaments for their Christmas decorations. To register, please contact Allison Lineberger at alineberger@lewinsville.org. Registration closes on Friday, December 1.



Families with children ages 2-5 are invited to kick off the Advent/Christmas season at our popular Preschool Angel Breakfast. Families will create Angel crafts, share in a breakfast of star shaped pancakes, play a game of A*N*G*E*L for prizes and hear the Christmas Story presented by the Lewinsville Puppeteers. The Angel Breakfast will be held during the Sunday morning Education hour, 9:30-10:30 a.m. Children may bring Mom, Dad, Grandma, Grandpa or other adult relative. Contact Allison Lineberger at alineberger@lewinsville.org to sign up. Registration closes Dec. 1.



ALTERNATIVE GIFTS OPPORTUNITY DURING ADVENT (DEC. 3, 10, 17, 24)

The Mission and Service Ministry Group invites you to participate in the annual **Alternative Gifts** program. This is an opportunity to give a gift that honors someone and, at the same time, supports one or more LPC mission projects. Look for additional information at the **Alternative Gifts** table outside of the church office each Sunday worship during Advent.

An **Alternative Gift** is a wonderful and easy way to honor loved ones, friends, teachers, neighbors, service providers, and others on your Christmas gift list and simultaneously provide a tax-deductible gift to support one or more Lewinsville mission projects. Make a list of the people you wish to honor in this meaningful way, identify the organization(s) you wish to support with your charitable contribution, obtain one of the beautiful **Alternative Gift** cards for each person you are honoring, and write one check (payable to Lewinsville Presbyterian Church) for your selections. You may also donate on line at the LPC website.

The Mission and Service Ministry Group is highlighting the following organizations for your special support: **Friends of The Lewinsville (Lewinsville Retirement Residence's social services support organization), Chesterbrook Continuing Care Fund, United Orphanage and Academy (Kenya), Falls Church Homeless Shelter, and Second Story (formerly Alternative House)**. You may also support any of the other organizations/projects listed in the LPC Mission Handbook. To learn more about these organizations and reference the Mission Handbook, visit the Alternative Gifts table in St. Andrew's Hall each Sunday during Advent.





Thousand Villages as well as knitwear designed and created by Parasto an Afghan Refugee our congregation supported. According to Ten Thousand Villages Fair Trade is doing “business differently, putting people and planet first.” That means you can trust that every purchase and donation you make directly impacts the life and community of its maker in a developing country. Together we break the cycle of generational poverty and ignite social change.

The date is Sunday, December 10th, before Adult CE and after the 11:00 a.m. service, in St. Andrews Hall. Checks, cash, and credit cards are accepted. Beautiful hand-crafted products from around the world will be available for purchase.

WESTGATE GIFT COLLECTION: NOVEMBER 26- DECEMBER 10

Choose an ornament on the Christmas tree in the Saint Andrews Hall. On the Christmas ornament

will be gifts to purchase for children at Westgate elementary school. All gifts need to be purchased, wrapped, labeled with the family’s number and child’s name, and delivered to the church by Sunday December 10th. There will be a box next to the Christmas

Tree to deliver gifts. Please sign the list next to the tree letting Mission and Service know the ornament you took.

Thank you so much for supporting this mission partner!



FAIR TRADE SALE DECEMBER 10 9:00-12:30 ST. ANDREWS HALL

Our annual Fair-Trade Sale is Sunday December 10th! The sale will feature products from Ten

ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES ADVENT MODULE DEC. 3 & 10



ILLUMINATING ADVENT SUNDAYS DECEMBER 3,10,17 9:30-10:30 AM MONDAYS DECEMBER 4,11,18 7:15-8:30 PM CHAPEL

LED BY DAN THOMAS

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the lighting of the National Christmas Tree. Light is also an important symbol of the Advent/Christmas season. Dan Thomas invites you to join him for a class entitled “Illuminating Advent.” In this class we will explore the illuminating biblical and theological themes of Hope, Peace, and Joy and consider how these themes help us see more clearly and deepen our faith more intentionally to welcome Jesus, our Savior and the Light of the World this Christmas. This class will dovetail into the *Intergenerational Christmas Event* on Sunday, December 17 focusing on the Advent Wreath and the Jesse Tree.

(A repeat of this class will be held on the Mondays following the Sunday presentation).



MATTHEW 25 AND LEWINSVILLE: CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION SUNDAYS DECEMBER 3 & 10

9:30-10:30 AM

ROOM 102A & ZOOM

ORGANIZED BY CATHY SAUNDERS

During the Advent Adult Education Module, as part of Lewinsville’s ongoing Matthew 25 commitment, we will continue a series of conversations among Lewinsville members about the ways in which the effects of systemic poverty and/or structural racism have (and perhaps have not) been visible in their professional experiences. Each week will feature one or more Lewinsville members reflecting on these questions, and a chance for other participants to ask questions and engage in discussion.



Join the choir as we 'Carol in the Community!' We'll meet in St. Andrews Hall on Sunday, December 10 beginning at 2:00 p.m. There will be cocoa and cookies afterwards. Participants are invited to wear a Christmas-themed sweater or Santa Hat. Please RSVP to sing by Sunday, December 3.
Please contact John Nothaft or Jen Dunfee if you'd like to join.



Intergenerational Christmas Event Illuminating ADVENT Sunday Dec. 17 9:30-10:45 a.m.

All generations are invited to explore the meaning of the Advent Candles in the Messy Church style of worship AND learning through activities. We begin our learning journey in the Chapel at 9:30 a.m. to hear about the Advent themes of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. Then move to the stations in Fellowship Hall where we will create Jesse Tree ornaments while learning about the Prophets Candle; craft a panorama of Bethlehem for the Bethlehem Candle; form an angel candle holder for the Angel Candle and play shepherding games as we learn about the Shepherd's Candle.

In addition to these activities we will have caroling led by John Nothaft and Evan Ayars while learning the history of the carols; play a challenging game of Christmas Jeopardy and enjoy Christmas Cookies and Cocoa.

Advent/Christmas Reading

The word Advent means "coming." This season invites us to prepare our hearts and minds to welcome each year the coming of the Christ child each Christmas. There are many ways to help us prepare for this Christmas miracle, but one excellent way is through reading books and devotional centering on this season. A table of such reading resources from our church library will be made available on a table in the church foyer on Sundays December 3 and 10. We invite you to check out and take home one of these spiritual resources to enrich your preparations for the coming of our Savior this Christmas.





The annual **HOLIDAY BAKE SALE** will be held on **Sunday, December 17**. The Summer Mission Project Team will be selling delicious goodies in St. Andrews Hall before and after the 11:00 worship service. All profits will go directly towards expenses related to our mission project next June (details still TBD). We look forward to greeting you and thank you in advance for your generosity.



Young Adults from Lewinsville, Immanuel, and Redeemer are invited to a retreat January 12-14, 2024. The retreat will be in Leesburg, VA. Our time together will be focused on getting to know ourselves, one another, and God better. A portion of the retreat will be centered around learning more about the Enneagram. The retreat will begin on Friday evening January 12th at 6:00pm and will end on January 14th at 11am. Folks are welcome to join for the whole weekend or just a portion of the retreat. Reach out to Pastor Layne with any questions: lbrubaker@lewinsville.org

Sign up at this link: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfI3wMYYYh2kgr5UoiatUN5v9arqqWM27wftMODY634PCuSfjw/viewform>



YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTY
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17 6:00-8:00 PM

All Youth are invited to our Christmas Party Sunday, December 17th 6:00-8:00 in the youth room. We will have copious amounts of food and treats and play holiday themed Minute to Win It games.

Please bring a \$5 or less silly Christmas gift for a white elephant gift exchange. All are encouraged to wear an Ugly Christmas Sweater.



YOUTH AND COLLEGE CHRISTMAS TEA
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21 1:00 PM ROOM 102A

Lewinsville Youth and College Students are invited to attend our first annual Christmas Tea! Wear your festive best and come ready to have a good time. Thursday December 21st 1:00pm room 102A



REV. LAYNE BRUBAKER SPIRITUAL FORMATION & MISSION

Advent is one of my favorite times of year because I love joining together with my faith community with anticipation and hope preparing our hearts for the birth of our Savior. Advent is a time of waiting, but it is not a passive waiting. It is a season to actively prepare for the arrival of Jesus in our lives. In the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, it can be easy to get caught up in the external trappings of Christmas. The decorations, the parties, and the gifts are all important aspects of our celebration, but let us not forget the true reason for our joy—the arrival of Jesus Christ, the Light of the World.

As a community, let us commit to living with expectation this Advent season. Let us create space in our lives for prayer and reflection, allowing the Holy Spirit to speak to our hearts and draw us closer to God. Let us open ourselves to the possibility of encountering Christ in unexpected places—in the faces of those in need, in the quiet moments of solitude, and in the joy of fellowship with our church family.

I encourage you to consider incorporating Advent practices into your personal and family life. Advent calendars, daily devotions, and acts of kindness are all wonderful ways to cultivate a spirit of expectation and anticipation.

As we live with expectation this Advent season, may our hearts be open to the transformative power of Christ's love. May we be a beacon of hope in our community, sharing the joy of the Gospel with those around us. Together, let us prepare our hearts to welcome the newborn King with open arms and grateful hearts.

Grace and Peace,
Layne



Longest Night

*The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light -Isaiah 9:1*

LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20

7:30 P.M.

You may think it odd to have a somber service in the middle of the Christmas season. However, if you have experienced loss in the last year all the holiday festivities can make your grief even more poignant. Grieving the loss of a loved one, or coming to terms with so much loss happening in our world will be centered in this worship service.

This service will intertwine music with scripture, candlelight and reflection. Join us Wednesday December 20th at 7:30pm



CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING DECEMBER 3-24

By giving to the Christmas Joy Offering, you honor God's gift of Jesus Christ by providing assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and developing our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.



To donate to this offering, go lewinsville.org and click on the **GIVE ONLINE** tab and select the **Christmas Joy Offering**.





REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT MINISTRY UPDATE

FINAL UPDATE ON THE H FAMILY

We are pleased to report that the H family twins were born on October 27. They are healthy, and mother Zarlisht is well but very tired! We have delivered three carloads of gifts for the babies from the congregation—cribs, car seats, stroller, clothing, diapers, baby bottles, toys. The family is very grateful for the generosity of our church.

The congregation has provided many tangible goods to the entire family. We have fully furnished their apartment, and we have provided a television set, a laptop computer, a sewing machine, clothes, toys, a portable clothes dryer, and an automobile. We have offered extensive assistance in many ways to help the family become integrated into the community.

A recent meeting was held with the Refugee Resettlement Team (RRT), the H family, and representatives from Lutheran Social Services (LSS) (the refugee resettlement agency that sponsors the family). At that meeting LSS reported that Lewinsville Presbyterian Church has provided more support to the H Family than any other church they have worked with in refugee resettlement.

At the end of our six-month initial commitment, we decided to help pay the family's apartment rent for six months, because the husband was not fully employed. The agreement we had with the family was that this support would continue if the husband found a full-time job. This was done in order to motivate Hamid to find full-time work which he has been reluctant to do. When it became evident after a month that he was not going to seek such employment, we decided to terminate our relationship with the family. This decision was made with the support of LSS. LSS will continue to support the family, and Hamid and Zarlisht

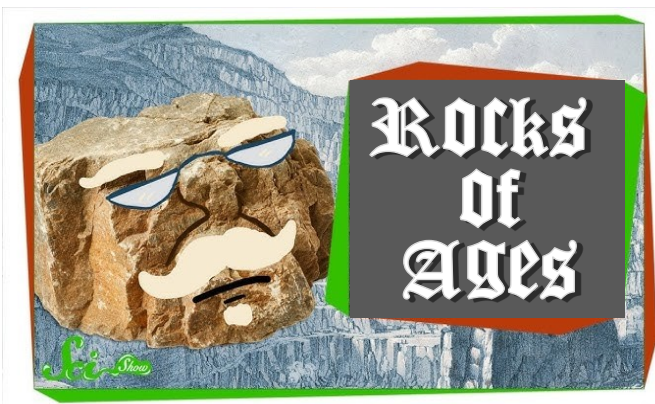
have extended family in the Northern Virginia area that can provide help.

The RRT has concluded that we have accomplished our goal of being good neighbors to this family. We have fulfilled our commitment and have gone above-and-beyond the expectations of our partnership with LSS. We are looking forward in the new year to assisting another refugee family and welcoming them into our community.

The RRT continues to be amazed at the generosity of this congregation. Thank you for the many, many ways you support this ministry.

Refugee Resettlement Team (Layne Brubaker, Jack Calhoun, Connie Church, Phil Church, Betty Douglass, David Foster, Siobhan Grayson, Harriet Hopkins, Rob Hunter, Don Lu, Pat Matheson, Augusta Niday, Doug Smith, Karen Steel)





NEW SENIORS GROUP - "ROCKS OF AGES"

DECEMBER 8 1:30 PM CHAPEL

Join us for a Christmas Carol and Songs of the Season Sing-A-Long — December 8, 1:30 in the Chapel, Lary Bender and John Thomas will be on the keyboard. Please note the time change, usually 11:30 but in December 1:30 for cookies/dessert and coffee, no lunch this month.

Please let either Wendy Maiwurm at 703 622-1659 wmaiwurm@gmail.com or Lois Dokken at 703 789-0617 manpadokken@aol.com know if you can come. Not essential but it helps for planning purposes.

SECOND SATURDAY SET

SECOND SATURDAY SET Dec 9 6:30pm

Please join us for the Christmas Party at the home of Jim and Wendy Maiwurm on Dec. 9th. Diane Wachtel is the co-host. The address is 1429 Harvest Crossing Drive, McLean at Evans Farm. You can park at the church and walk over. Please contact Wendy if you need to park close by as there are a few places on the street.

You need to confirm your participation by calling Wendy at 703-759-6705 or email at wmaiwurm@gmail.com. Be sure to let her know what dish you'll be bringing. And bring your own adult beverage. Since this is the Christmas Party, the attire is "dressy" or black tie optional, as we voted on in November.



NEWS FROM OUR LEWINSVILLE FAMILY

MEMBERS IN INDEPENDENT LIVING, NURSING HOMES & CARE CENTERS:

ASHBY PONDS:

Quinn and Celia Morrison,
Evelyn Jones, Richard Rager
Nancy Miller

CHESTERBROOK RESIDENCES:

GOODWIN HOUSE, FALLS CHURCH:

Charles and
Mary Hutchison
Joanne Field, Sarah Larson
Fran Pearce,
Bob and Beverly Johnson
Janie Waldrop

GREENSPRING, SPRINGFIELD:

THE JEFFERSON, ARLINGTON:

THE KENSINGTON, RESTON:

LARMAX, MCLEAN

LEWINSVILLE RETIREMENT RESIDENCE:

Bert Wolfe
Tirza Edwin, Jane Gardner,
Lurleen Ogle,
Lucille Quinn,
Mina Sulaiman

LOUDOUN NURSING & REHABILITATION CENTER

VINSON HALL, MCLEAN:

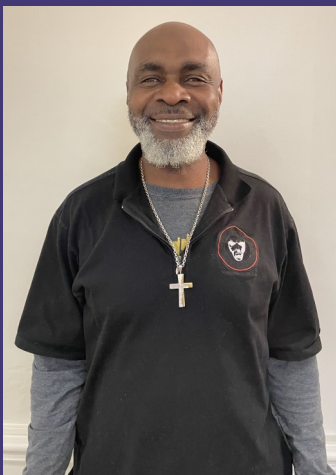
Lois Rorex,
Saundra Leslie
Jean and Charlie Mertz,
Bill Richardson
Don Robb

THE VIRGINIAN:

ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to ALL Lewinsville couples celebrating DECEMBER wedding anniversaries. The following couples are celebrating a milestone occasion:

- Paul and Rosalind Phillips—53 years (December 12)
- Doug and Christina Colley—55 years (December 14)
- Victoria (Cook) and Tyler Skinner—10 years (December 28)
- Phil and Connie Church—57 years (December 30)
- Bruce and Betty Douglas—59 years (December 31)



INTRODUCING CECIL ALLEN EVENING SEXTON

Many of you have already met Cecil Allen, our Evening Sexton. Cecil ordinarily works on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday evenings, offering hospitality to those who meet in the building on those evenings, as well as helping with security and other tasks around the building. Cecil was part of the team that completed the recent building renovation and so is deeply familiar with our facility.

Please introduce yourself to him when you see him, and welcome him to our congregation!





GROWING OUR MINISTRY OF HOSPITALITY

At Lewinsville, hospitality holds a vital role in fostering a welcoming, inclusive, and supportive environment that encourages spiritual growth and strengthens the bonds of the community. As a church, we are committed to following Christ's example of embracing all individuals, regardless of their background or life experiences. By practicing genuine hospitality, we create a safe and nurturing space where newcomers and long-time members alike can feel valued, find a sense of belonging, and engage in meaningful connections with one another. This spirit of warmth and openness not only attracts new members but also fosters their continued engagement, allowing us to grow and thrive as a faith community united in our shared love for God and one another. Whether we are at Lewinsville or in the community, we continuously have the opportunity to extend the gift of hospitality and look forward to growing our community through sharing this gift.

SMP HOSTS ABUNDANT LIFE DECEMBER 15-17



Lewinsville will be hosting youth from Abundant Life for their annual Christmas trip in

Washington DC!

This summer youth and adults volunteered at Abundant Life during our Summer Mission Project. For many our time with Abundant Life was a very meaningful experience. It is incredibly exciting that we are able to continue this relationship and host them here. Youth and Adults from Abundant Life will be with us in worship on Sunday, December 17th.



REV. JEN DUNFEE CARE MINISTRIES

Although *O Little Town of Bethlehem* is not one of my top favorite Christmas Carols, it includes one of my all-time favorite Christmas lines in the second half of the first verse, "Yet in thy dark streets shineth the ever lasting light; the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight." The image of dark streets shining with everlasting light connects the past historical event – the bright light of Jesus and his star arriving in the night – with the present reality that Jesus still comes into our darkest street, or season, or moment, as a bright and everlasting light. Jesus was the promised messiah who came in glory fulfilling all hopes and comforting all fears, and he continues to come in glory to meet us in our current circumstance and complicated mix of hopes and fears each year.

Lewinsville Presbyterian Church recognizes this complicated mix, the possibility of dark streets, in its celebration of Advent and Christmas. One way is through the Longest Night service, here at Lewinsville at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 20th, where we worship the God who is always present, especially when we may feel significant sadness or grief, causing a gulf of distance from the surface happy presentation of Christmas we see around us in our culture.

Another is through our visiting Christmas Carol teams, who drive to visit people who might have had a recent loss, or be homebound or experiencing a medical challenge this season. If you are interested in joining a car/team for an afternoon of travel Christmas-Carol singing on December 10th, let me or John Nothaft know. If you have a suggestion for a person who might appreciate a Carol visit, we'd love the suggestion as well. We give thanks to God for the gift of Jesus, and we pray as *O Little Town of Bethlehem* concludes, "O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel."

Pastor Jen



EARTH CARE DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Family gatherings, fellowship and good cheer are treasured aspects of the holiday season but they are not always earth-friendly. With care, we can enjoy our traditions while being good stewards of God's creation. Here are some suggestions:

- ♦ **Start each day with a short earth care oriented meditation.** Presbyterians for Earth Care is offering an "[Advent Daily Devotional](#)" written by Presbyterian pastors and lay people. The daily reflections bring an earth care perspective to Bible passages selected from the Revised Common Lectionary, and point to actions we can take.
- ♦ **Shop at Lewinsville's Fair Trade sale on December 10.** Purchasing fair trade certified products helps reduce poverty, encourage environmentally friendly production methods and safeguard humane working conditions.
- ♦ **Take advantage of Lewinsville's Alternative Gift Sale (Sundays during Advent).** Many folks don't need, or want, more 'stuff' and a thoughtful donation to one of our mission partners can be the perfect solution.
- ♦ **Give fewer gifts** (draw names for a gift exchange in large extended families) and give quality gifts that will last a long time.
- ♦ **Give 'experiences' instead of 'stuff'**, e.g., fun classes (cooking, exercise, pottery); event tickets (music, theater, sports, movies); memberships (parks, museums, gyms).
- ♦ **Choose gifts from brands that prioritize sustainability and ethical practices.**
- ♦ **Choose sustainable stocking stuffers.** See [Zero Waste Memoirs](#) and [Earthhero](#) for ideas.
- ♦ **Buy from local providers and crafts people whenever possible.**
- ♦ **Use reusable gift bags and boxes;** save wrapping paper/bows/ribbons in good condition for reuse.
- ♦ **Use LED lights and light timers to save energy.**
- ♦ **Reuse decorations from past years,** buy second-hand, or obtain through free exchange groups, such as Buy Nothing and Freecycle (a great way to dispose of unwanted items as well).
- ♦ **Engage the family in making decorations from natural materials.**
- ♦ **Include more plant-based foods at holiday gatherings.** Fruits, vegetables and grains offer healthy, delicious alternatives to meat, and are less impactful on the environment. Plan carefully for meals to avoid [food waste](#), a major source of greenhouse gas emissions. If possible, compost unavoidable waste.

NOVEMBER SESSION MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:

1. Pastor Scott reported to the Session the exciting news that Jackie Hager had been approved by National Capital Presbytery as a Young Adult Advisory Delegate to the 2024 General Assembly. Pastor Scott also reported that Madison Kloster had been approved by National Capital Presbytery as an alternate Ruling Elder Commissioner to the 2024 General Assembly.
2. Finance Committee Chair, Phil Cooke, reported that October revenue was strong for the month, and expenses for October equaled revenue. Phil is cautiously optimistic as the year end approaches.
3. Stewardship Committee Chair, elder Spencer Deese, reported that 141 pledges had been received to date, of which 93 were increases over last year and 9 were new pledges. The committee has begun contacting members of the congregation who have not yet pledged, reminding them to do so as soon as possible, in order to have the most realistic budget conversation at the December Session Meeting.
4. Jim Maiwurm and Lori Gray made a presentation to Session about the Lewinsville Foundation; it's history, investment principles current funds, and plans for the future.
5. Session received a report from the Personnel Committee that two search committees had been formed and had begun to meet – one to fill the position of Director of Christian Education being vacated by Allison Lineberger in 2024, and one to fill a new position of Director of Communications.

If you ever have any questions, feel free to reach out to any of the pastors or to me.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Bender, Clerk of Session

SEARCH COMMITTEES UNDERWAY!

Lewinsville has begun two search committees for new staff positions. Please keep these committees – and the candidates whom they will be considering – in your prayers:

Communications Director

Dave Smith, chair; John Gale, Bettie McElroy, Deirdre Ramsey

Christian Education Director

Rob Hunter, chair; Craig Flemingloss, Emily Foster, Barbara Gibby, Karen Hager



Lewinsville

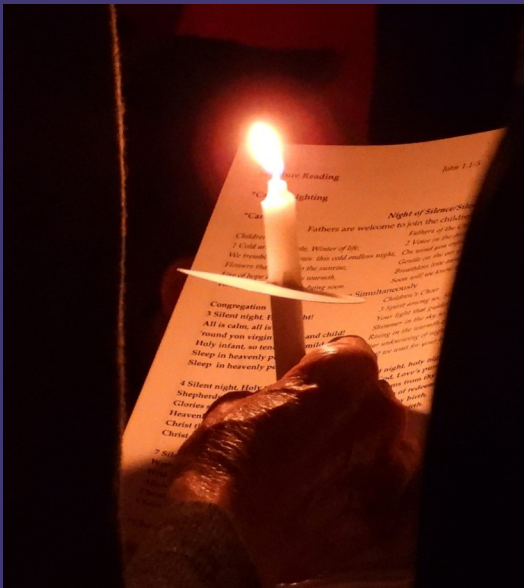
Presbyterian Church

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STORY OF NIGHT OF SILENCE

"Cold are the people, winter of life, we tremble in shadows this cold endless night."

We are all pilgrims on a journey and sometimes we find ourselves in places we'd rather not be. It is through ritual that our journeys may be deepened and enriched. We live from one season to the next, through cyclical traditions that help us mark time, that ground us to the familiar while connecting us to our past and to those with whom we share our pilgrimage. When I composed Night of Silence I cleared a space for what now feels like a fountain that never runs dry. I continue to be filled by connections with amazing people, and the blessings of new and surprising experiences. That is the power of Advent. It first calls us to a spiritual presence grounded in quiet emptiness and expectant hope, and then asks us to trust in this silence. Night of Silence is my expression of this. Beginning in the darkness it guides us to that moment when dawn breaks and a morning of endless possibility awaits.

– Daniel Kantor

Night of Silence came to composer Daniel Kantor while he was on a religious retreat as a junior in college at St. Thomas University, Minnesota in 1981. Lonely for his hometown, he was trying to follow the holy practice of patient waiting. Night of Silence is an Advent carol and reminds earnest souls that they must prepare for wonder; that the rose blooms after the snow.

Lewinsville's tradition of singing 'Night of Silence' in partnership with Silent Night goes back many generations. May we continue to keep our traditions alive as our community of faith gathers together in unity for the hope, peace, joy, and love brought by Jesus.