

LINK 'N' TOWER

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and United Church of Christ
Rev. Melanie Lawrence-Caldwell, Pastor

Volume 116, Number 11

December 2016



We all know the story of the birth of Jesus: how Mary and Joseph had to travel to Bethlehem during her last month of pregnancy because of a census, that upon arrival they could find nowhere to stay, that Mary was getting very near her time of delivery so Joseph finally found an innkeeper who allowed them to take shelter in a stable; how some shepherds in the nearby hills outside of town saw an angel who told them such tremendous news that they abandoned their flocks of sheep to search the very overcrowded town; how three wise men decided to follow a bright star that appeared in the sky, not knowing where it would take them but knew it was important enough to bring gifts....have you ever wondered just how terrified Mary must have been to travel away from her home knowing her time was near? Here she was, in a strange town far away from her family and was about to give birth for the first time. Have you ever wondered how those shepherds could have left their flocks to wander the hills all because of some sort of vision? Have you ever thought about just how long and how far away those three wise men traveled through the harsh desert because of a bright light in the sky? Faith. Mary had faith that her baby would be born healthy, the shepherds had faith their sheep would not be harmed and the wise men had faith they would find a miracle at the end of their journey. Where does your faith lead you during this season of miracles?

Retired Clergy Funds (December Mission of the Month)

Do you remember your childhood pastor? Do you ever wonder whatever happened to him or her? When I was a child my pastor lived in the house provided by the church. His family lived there for many years. I grew up and moved away but I always wondered where Pastor Miller went when he retired? The house wasn't his, it didn't belong to him but to the church he served. Did he retire to Florida or Arizona as so many of my parent's contemporaries did when they retired? Was there some sort of retired clergy sanctuary or enclave they went to? Although this may sound a bit silly it really is something to think about. How many clergy actually had or have a retirement plan? What happened to the plan when a pastor went to serve another church? Did individual

churches provide a retirement plan or did it come from the denomination? If they had some sort of retirement, was it adequate to provide for that pastor and family?

Our pastors took care of their flocks: they baptized our children, they married our friends, they buried our parents. You knew you could call your pastor anytime, day or night, if needed. Our pastors never blinked an eye at a call at 3 am because someone was in the hospital; our pastors never hesitated to hold our hands, council us, pray with us in our time of need. This month think about your childhood pastor and ask yourself if he is able to pay his rent, does he have enough to eat? Is someone there for her in her hour of need? Think about your childhood pastor and give generously.

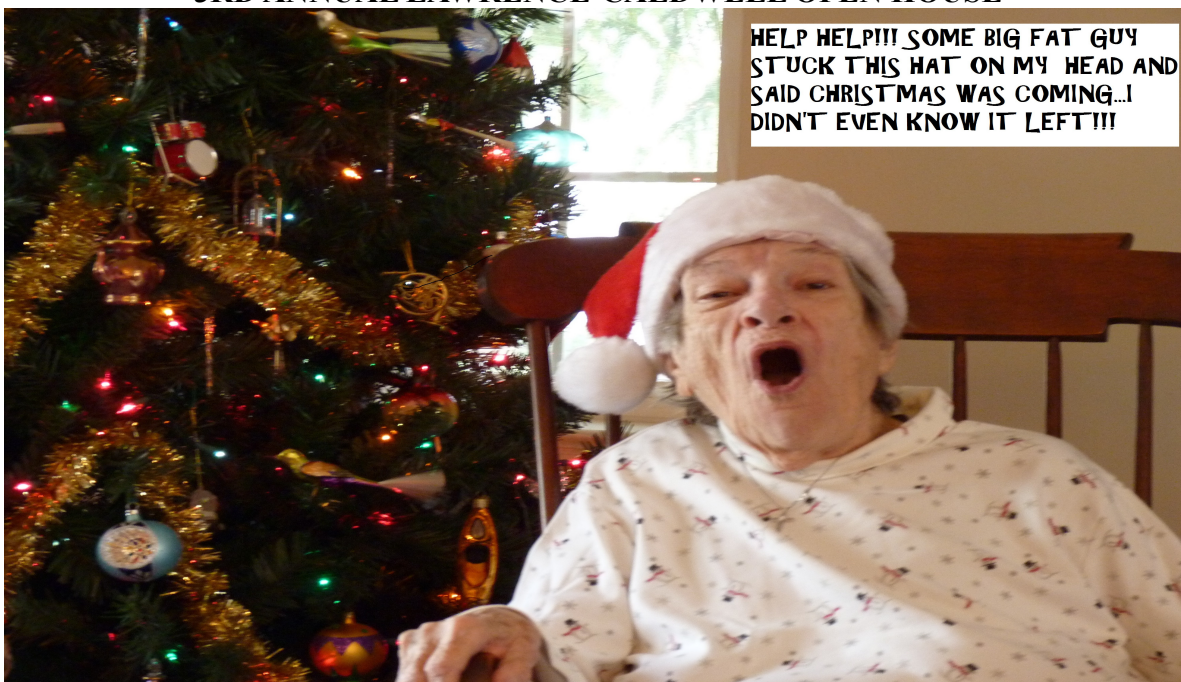
Advent Begins

Advent begins on the Sunday following Thanksgiving, **November 27th**. You won't want to miss a thing! We have so many exciting things happening! The choir is singing a *Christmas Cantata* on Sunday, **December 18th** entitled "Joy!" Our Advent Candle Lighting includes choir, bells and congregational singing. There is something for everyone so invite your family, friends and neighbors to worship.

Spare Change

Our spare change jug isn't even ¼ full! Bring your spare change every week and drop it in the jug. Every penny counts toward overcoming our budget shortfall. Let's see if we can fill it by December 31st!

3RD ANNUAL LAWRENCE-CALDWELL OPEN HOUSE



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Oh my! Helen needs your help! Come to her rescue on **December 17th** starting at 4 pm at Pastor Melanie's home in Wayne, PA. Directions are available at the church or just call Pat or Melanie. Please don't let Helen down!

Information on Joining our Collenbrook Family

Are you or someone you know interested in joining the membership of Collenbrook United Church? Please speak with Pastor Melanie as soon as possible as we're ready to host an introduction gathering soon. We're so excited to welcome you into our midst.

New Organ

Our new organ is being installed in the next couple of weeks. The old organ has been removed, the chancel is undergoing a change to accommodate the handbell choir and other musicians, a dedicated electrical line has been installed in anticipation of the new organ and a dedication concert is being planned to take place in January so we may all hear the full potential of our new addition to our worship experience so please keep an eye out for more information about that in the next several weeks.

Confirmation Class

After the holidays, Pastor Melanie will be starting a Confirmation Class for our youth. So far, she has five ready to begin this process of learning and discerning. If you know of others who may be interested, please speak with Pastor Melanie. This is an exciting time in the life of our youth, and we're looking forward to journeying with them.

December Community Dinner

The next dinner will boast beef stew and yummy sides. The date is December 29th starting at 5pm. We served over 100 people in November so make sure to bring family and neighbors to join in food and fellowship.

CHURCH INFORMATION - NEW

Pastor Melanie has changed her days off to Mondays and Fridays, at least for now. She was finding herself working many Tuesdays due to various meetings, etc. Therefore, Melanie will be in the office on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Please call the church or drop in during those days if you would like to speak with her. It is always a good idea to call ahead just to make sure she is available. Please remember there are times when she is out of the office during these days working on church or denominational business.

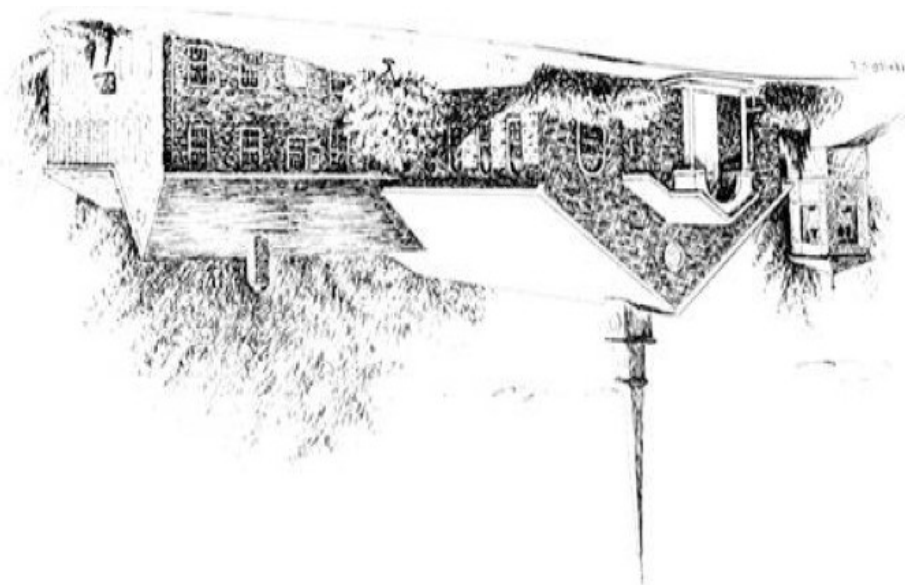
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COLLENBROOK UNITED CHURCH CALENDAR

DECEMBER 2016

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	1 7pm AA	2 7-10pm Podowan	3 3pm AA
4 9:30 Choir 10:30- WORSHIP 1-7 Podowan 7:30 AA	5	6	7 7pm Bell Choir	8 7pm AA	9 7-10pm Podowan	10 3pm AA
11 9:30 Choir 10:30- WORSHIP 1-7 Podowan 7:30 AA	12	13 7pn Council	14 7pm- Bell Choir	15 7pm AA	16 7-10-pm Podowan	17 3pm AA
18 9:30 Choir 10:30- WORSHIP 1-7 Podowan 7:30 AA	19	20	21 7pm- Bell Choir	22 7pm AA	23 7-10-pm Podowan	24 8pm Christmas Eve Service 3pm AA
25 10:30- WORSHIP 1-7 Podowan 7:30 AA	26	27	28	29 5-7 Community Dinner	30	31



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FIRST CLASS MAIL