

Bush Creek Church of the Brethren
4821A Green Valley Road
Monrovia, Maryland 21770
Address Service Requested



*What's Happening at Bush Creek
"The Bridge"*



*Bush Creek Church of the Brethren
4821A Green Valley Road
Monrovia, Maryland 21770
301-663-3025*

*office@bushcreekchurch.org – Church office
<http://bushcreekchurch.org/> - website*

*Sunday School – 9:30 – 10:15 am
Worship – 10:30 am – 11:30 am*

*Pastors:
Leo and Melissa Barnes*

*The Bridge – December **Volume 50**, Number 12*



**CENTRAL VISION FOR BUSH CREEK
CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN**

***Because of our commitment to Jesus Christ,
we are a spiritual family who loves all people.***



Ponderings by Pastor Melissa

Advent ...

As a high school student, I was blessed that Latin was still offered at our school. (Okay, so maybe I didn't think I was all that blessed, at the time ... my father had insisted that I take the class ... but in looking back, I can see that I was blessed!) We had an excellent teacher, one whom we all

respected – although there were those days when we were just a little scared of her. Latin was the class right after lunch, and there were many days we huddled around the lunch table, trying to work out that last bit of translation. But we persevered, and in most cases we succeeded. Miss Kemp inspired us to do our best. Our class was the last one she taught – she retired at the end of the school year. (I don't know ... did we “inspire” her to retire?) We appreciated her and came to love her. Most of our church youth group members were her students, so when we went Christmas caroling, we gave her the gift of singing *Adeste Fideles* (*O Come, All Ye Faithful* – but in Latin, of course).

I think if she knew, Miss Kemp might be pleased that when I looked at the word “advent,” I recognized its Latin roots. It is based on the preposition “*ad*,” meaning “to,” combined with the verb “*venire*,” meaning “come,” forming the compound word “*adventus*,” meaning arrival.

December 2nd is the first Sunday in the Christian season of Advent – that time leading up to Christmas Day, when we celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus the Christ – when we celebrate the arrival of the Messiah, the Promised One, the Anointed One of God. We have accounts of those who recognized *Jesus* as God's promised gift – the shepherds, after hearing the proclamation of the angels (Luke 2:15-20); Simeon in the temple (Luke 2:27-32); and the prophetess Anna (Luke 2:36-38). After He had been born, they recognized the fulfillment of God's word. But there was no “season of Advent” for them. There was no counting down to the time of His birth – no Advent calendar! The Jews had awaited the promised Messiah for centuries, and had no way to know when He might arrive.

Did you know that “Advent” also refers to the second coming of Jesus? In fact, here's what our minister's manual says:

‘The word “Advent” means arrival or coming, and in the Christian calendar refers to (1) Jesus' coming as the babe in Bethlehem, (2) his advent into the hearts of all who will receive him, and (3) his final coming as the Lord of all at the close of history.’

We spend much time and energy preparing to celebrate Jesus' first coming. Even without an advent calendar, most of us know exactly how many days there are until Christmas. It's a beautiful time of the year, filled with joy and hope, especially when we reflect on the ultimate meaning of His coming. But that “coming” is in the past. How about now? We have no “advent calendar” counting down the time until Jesus comes again. Will we be ready? Are we prepared? Has Jesus already come into our hearts? And so, will we be prepared for that day when Jesus returns, in all His power and glory? Will we say, “Amen! **Come, Lord Jesus!**”



Merry Christmas to our Bush Creek family of faith! We are grateful for each one of you – you bless us in ways you may not even realize. We pray that during this Christmas season you will receive God's blessings of His love, joy, peace and hope. We love you! Merry Christmas! ~ Pastors Leo & Melissa



Come, Let Us Adore Him..

***Join us for Sunday School
(9:30 – 10:15 am) and
Worship (10:30 am)
weekly during Advent.***

***Worship will be enhanced with an inspirational reading
each week as the Advent wreath is illuminated.
Messages from our Pastors Leo and Melissa
(see Preparing for Worship for schedule)***

***Children - youth - drama - special music - singing of carols -
Bush Creek Choir - will all be included in worship to bring joy to our hearts.
Come and worship in anticipation of the coming of our Lord and Savior.***



***Join us on Christmas Eve for worship at 7 pm.
Carols - special music - scripture readings - lighting of candles.
A quiet time to reflect on the birth of our Savior in the candlelight.***



Bush Creek Congregational Survey

A total of 65 congregational surveys were completed for the following six (6) key areas: Worship, Prayer, Ministry, Fellowship, Discipleship, and Evangelism. An all day workshop was held on Saturday, November 3, 2018. 23 participants attended the workshop to review results of the Congregational Survey and to seek to discern priorities for the next step. The workshop was led by Brother John Neff, assisted by Brother Fred Bernhard. During the workshop participants reviewed and proposed a shorter, renewed vision for Bush Creek stating: ***“Because of our commitment to Jesus Christ, we are a spiritual family who loves all people.”*** The Ministry Commission presented the proposed Vision Statement and the Workshop results to the Church Board and presented this information to the Fall Council on November 18, 2018. The Vision Statement and workshop results were approved by the Fall Council.

Workshop participants had reviewed the six (6) key areas from the Survey and then selected the top 1-3 areas for focus in each key area. Later, all participants were asked to individually identify what they sensed, through guidance of the Holy Spirit, to be the top five (5) areas of focus. The top areas of focus are listed below. This is not the entire list for the sake of brevity.

- Get youth and young people more involved in leading worship.
- More intense training in reading and interpreting the Bible
- Grow the program and ministry for children and youth.
- Embrace an emphasis on prayer as paramount in church, family, and personal life
- Create some specific events focused on inviting the community-at-large. (Note: an example of this is Breakfast with Santa on Dec 1st)
- Develop an intentional outreach strategy for reaching the community
- Embrace a diversity of music by blending traditional and “Praise & Worship.”
- Create an Evangelism Ministry Team to plan and facilitate all events in evangelism
- Seek ways to provide on-on-one discipling (Mentorship.)
- Define the demographic and geographic strategies for growth.
- Pastors to work with Music & Worship team to incorporate changes to the worship experience.
- Prioritize prayer through a message series on the power of the praying congregation.
- Establish Prayer Teams/Groups to regularly pray for congregation and ministries of the Church. (Note: A prayer team has been meeting for several weeks as of the date of this article. The Prayer Team has committed to pray for Holy Spirit guidance in implementing the focus areas within the life of the church. The team has committed to spend time each day for 21 days in prayer for the life and future of this congregation. Come join us.)



Be a Tigger – let the Holy Spirit energize you to greet your sisters and brothers in Christ with a smile and a bright outlook as we grow together in the Kingdom of God at Bush Creek. **Be the hands and feet of Jesus.**

Don't be an Eeyore - gloomy and displaying a negative attitude. Let your light shine always to encourage others.





***Board meeting, Monday, Dec. 3 @ 7 pm.**

***Deacon meeting – Fri., Dec. 7 @ 6:30 pm.** Please bring Deacon Caregiver Binder to meeting.

***The Prayer Warriors** will meet Mon., Dec. 17 at 7 pm in fellowship hall, and will begin reading and discussing "**The Circle Maker**" by **Mark Batterson**. All are welcome to join

***Two new Bible study groups are meeting weekly:** 1) **Tues. Dec. 4, 10 am**, at the church, studying "The Life of David" – contact: Wanda Embrey, 301.639.5472. 2) **Thurs., Dec. 6, 6 pm**, at Ricky Fullmer's, studying "Unwrapping the Gift of Advent" – contact: Nancy Pastor, 301.748.4950. **Additional participants are welcome** – please coordinate directly with the contacts.

***Advent Devotionals** are available on the program table courtesy of the Ministry Comm. Please help yourself.

***Poinsettia order forms are available at the sanctuary door and on the program table.** All orders for poinsettias to be displayed on Dec. 23 & 24 are **due by Dec. 16.**

***Roof Fund:** A fund has been established to set aside money toward ultimately replacing all the roofing on our facilities. If you are interested in making a monetary donation to this fund, please make check payable to Bush Creek Church and mark in memo line "roof fund". **Donations to date - \$30,513.** – Thank you – Trustee Commission

***Christmas Card Exchange** – The mailboxes in the middle narthex are available to exchange Christmas cards for **regular attendees of worship**. **New address directories are available on the program table.**

***MESSENGER Subscriptions:** If you would like to renew your current subscription, or request a new subscription, please see Anna Mae Poole by NLT **Sunday, January 13, 2019**. Payment is not due until later when we receive an invoice from MESSENGER. However, if you wish to pay now, please: Make the check out to Bush Creek Church, Put "Messenger" in the Memo section; and **Give the check to Anna Mae**. Anna Mae will make note that you have paid, and will forward the check to the Bush Creek Treasurer to process. The cost remains at \$14.50/year; or \$27/2 years. Thank you!

***In the event of inclement weather listen to WFMD (930 AM) & WFRE (99.9 FM) for a radio announcement; check your email for a message, and the church website (bushcreekchurch.org).** In addition, you will receive a call from your deacon caregiver to inform you of cancellations.

***Boy Scout Troop 268 will be selling Christmas trees, pine roping and wreaths in the lot located between McDonald's and Burger King on Old National Pike near New Market through Dec. 15 (or until sold out).** Please stop by the lot and support the scouts that meet in our fellowship hall regularly.

***Year End Giving Reminder** – Reminder that all offerings/donations to be included in 2018 giving must be received by **December 31, 2018.** Thank you – Stewardship & Finance Commission



NEWS FROM MISSIONS & SERVICE COMMISSION



Thank you for participating in the Christmas gift tags for needy families in our area. If you have selected a tag from the tree, please return gifts to the **COAT ROOM by Dec. 16.** Please put your name beside the gift tag and follow the instructions. Missions & Service Comm.

Jo Ostby (Greater Urbana Food Bank) extends a heartfelt thank you to everyone who donated coats. Winter brings increased hardships for families struggling to make ends meet, as parents must stretch their budgets to pay higher utility bills and provide warm clothing. Missions & Service is very grateful to everyone for the donations.



Matching Memorial Tree: With each \$10 donation, an ornament personalized with a name of your choosing will fill the special memorial tree that will be located in the main lobby. Choose to honor someone you love or to remember them. Your \$10 donation will be matched by a very generous anonymous donor. Fahrney Keedy will receive \$20 as a result of your donation. Ornaments will be on display until Jan. 4, 2019. You may pick up your ornament at the front desk from Jan. 8 – 15. Donations benefit "Our Next Chapter" Capital Campaign. Please see the donation forms located on the bulletin board. Please mail to Fahrney-Keedy Memorial Home, 8507 Mapleville Rd., Boonsboro, Md. 21713.

A Holiday Dinner, Fri., Dec. 7. \$50 per plate. An extensive 3 course meal will be served. Event will include Santa, fellowship and entertainment plus a delicious meal. Contact Rebecca Musser 301-671-5024 for tickets. **Fahrney-Keedy Luminaries - \$5.** Consider lighting the way with a donation to the Fahrney-Keedy Auxiliary to secure a luminary on **Dec. 7** that will be placed all around the campus. Visit the front desk at FK for more information.



*We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all who helped out with the bazaar this year as well as those of you who donated crafts, baked goods, produce, plants, food for the kitchen and items for the white elephant table. We sincerely appreciate the contribution of each person. The bazaar brought in **\$3,515.65**. We want to wish all of our Bush Creek family and friends a wonderful and blessed holiday season. The Bazaar Committee*

***Bazaar meeting, Wed., Dec. 5 @ 12:15 pm in fellowship hall.**

***Women's Fellowship Annual Christmas Lunch, Wed., Dec. 12 @ noon** followed by quarterly meeting. All are welcomed to attend. Bring a dish and dessert to share.

***Needed – English walnut shells, keys and thread spools of any kind (wood or plastic)** needed for craft projects by Phyllis Clarke. A basket for the keys is located on program table. Thank you

***Apple Butter** is still available to purchase. Half pint - \$2.50 – Pint - \$4 and Quart - \$7. **Please pick up apple butter in lower level kitchen and put money in Anna Mae Poole's mailbox in middle narthex.** Make checks payable to Women's Fellowship please.



Small packages, great things

The motto for Hershey's Kisses used to be "Big things come in small packages!" That also could be a motto for Bethlehem, for Baby Jesus and, indeed, for us. It's an important message to remember when we fear we're too weak to fix the world's problems, too small to fight the gigantic terror that threatens a loved one or too lacking in abilities we see in others.

"But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah," God declares through the prophet Micah (5:2, NRSV), "from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel." Bethlehem was a mere village. God's ruler for Israel started as an infant. His birthplace was a small stable, not a palace or temple. But size isn't everything. Big — that is, great — things can come in small packages. **And thanks to the tiny baby who grew up to share immeasurably huge love with the world, God can do great things through you, too!**





**Bush Creek Family
Christmas Meal
Sunday, December 9 after worship.**

**Please plan to come
for the fellowship and good food prepared by the
Fellowship Team.**

**Fried Chicken, Ham, Green Beans,
Succotash, Harvard Beets, Dressing
Mashed Potatoes and gravy
Cranberry salad and sauce
Cake – Coffee – Ice Tea**

**Please bring non-perishable food items
to be donated to the Greater Urbana Food Bank
to assist needy families in our area.**



**PLEASE SIGN UP ON PROGRAM
TABLE BELOW MAIL BOXES.**



Preparing for Worship
Sunday School: 9:30 am. – 10:15 am
Morning Worship: 10:30 am – 11:30 am

Date	Message and Scripture	Preaching & Advent Readers	Other Notes	Greeters
<p style="text-align: right;">2</p> <p>First Sunday of Advent</p> 	<p>God's Gift of Hope</p> <p>Romans 5:1-5</p>	<p>Advent Readers: Jim & Linda Walker</p> <p>Message: Pastor Melissa</p>	<p>Worship Assistant: Art Frank</p> <p>CCW: Beth Green</p> <p>Nursery: Jean & Elwood</p>	<p>Lou Gloyd & Mary Foster</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">9</p> <p>Second Sunday of Advent</p> <p>Family Christmas Meal after worship</p> 	<p>God's Gift of Faith</p> <p>Hebrews 11:1-3</p>	<p>Advent Readers: Ben & Claire Smith</p> <p>Message: Pastor Leo</p>	<p>Worship Assistant: Nancy Pastor</p> <p>CCW: Donna Nunn</p> <p>Nursery: Diana Frank</p>	<p>Rick & Nancy Pastor</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">16</p> <p>Third Sunday of Advent</p> <p>Children's Christmas Party during worship</p> 	<p>A Full Tank for the Journey</p> <p>Psalms 16:7-11</p>	<p>Advent Readers: Nick & Kelly Brown</p> <p>Message: Dylan Rinehart</p>	<p>Worship Assistant: Ben Smith</p> <p>No CCW due to children's party</p> <p>Nursery: Helen Roberts</p>	<p>Earl & Carolyn Kline</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">23</p> <p>Fourth Sunday of Advent</p> 	<p>God's Gift of Peace</p> <p>Romans 12:13-18</p>	<p>Advent Readers: Jeff & Jane Musselman</p> <p>Message: Pastor Melissa</p>	<p>Worship Assistant: Jane Musselman</p> <p>CCW: Sam Weinberg</p> <p>Nursery: Crystal Herbert</p>	<p>Judy Regnier & Wanda Embrey</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">30</p>	<p>One More Gift</p> <p>Matthew 1:18-21</p>	<p>Message: Pastor Leo</p>	<p>Worship Assistant: Anna Mae Poole</p> <p>CCW: Helen Roberts</p> <p>Nursery: Scott & Jeni Hipkins</p>	<p>Tom & Peggy Crichton</p>



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Christmas Caroling – Sun., Dec. 23 @ 4 pm – Gather for pizza, then go caroling and deliver plates of cookies. Will return to the church for refreshments. **Please see sign-up on program table to attend and also to donate cookies.** – Sponsored by the Youth.

December 2018						
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30	31					



January 2019						
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27	28	29	30	31		

December:

- 12/1 – Breakfast with Santa 9 – 11:30**
- 12/2 – First Sunday of Advent**
- 12/3 – Board meeting 7 pm**
- 12/3 – BSA leader meeting**
- 12/5 – Bazaar Comm. meeting @ 12:15 pm**
- 12/7 – Deacon meeting @ 6:30 pm**
- 12/9 – Annual Christmas meal**
- 12/9 – GSA in hall 5:30 – 9 pm**
- 12/9 – Second Sunday of Advent**
- 12/11 – 12/16 – Pastor’s Leo & Melissa vacation**
- 12/12 – Women’s Fellowship meal & meeting noon**
- 12/16 – Third Sunday of Advent**
- 12/16 – Children/Youth Christmas program in worship & party**
- 12/17 – Prayer Warriors meet @ 7 pm**
- 12/23 – Fourth Sunday of Advent**
- 12/23 – Caroling – 4 pm**
- 12/24 – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7 pm**
- 12/25 – Christmas Day – office closed**
- 12/26 – 12/31 – offices closed**

- Bible Study @ Hipkins home -Tues. Sept. thru June 6:00 pm**
- Bible Study every Tuesday 10 am at church**
- Bible Study every Thursday 6 pm @ Fullmer home**
- Bible Study @ 10 every Wed. September thru April**
- Quilting every Wed. @ 8:30 pm**
- BSA meetings every Wed. August – June @ 6:30 pm**
- Choir Rehearsal schedule to be announced**
- Wheat Gatherers Youth ministry –
every other week - Schedule TBD**
- Youth Coffee House during worship – schedule TBD**

