

First Presbyterian Church of Hawley

December 2026 Newsletter

Sunday Worship Service meets at 10:00am

Sermons:

December 6, 2026
Communion - Second Sunday of Advent
"The 24 Hours of Sun"
Isaiah 40:1-11

December 13, 2026
Third Sunday of Advent
"I Must Be Dreaming"
Psalm 126:1-6

December 20, 2026
Cantata
Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 24, 2026
Christmas Eve Service (7:00pm)
"How Long is Your Name?"
Isaiah 9:2-7

December 27, 2026
"Let's Magnify That"
Luke 1:46-55

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Worship online with Facebook Live:

https://www.facebook.com/ FirstPresHawley

From the Pastor's Desk…

"A voice of one crying out in the wilderness cries out,
Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."
Matthew 3:3

A man said to his friend, "I'm always prepared for anything!"
His friend asked, "Really? What would you do if the fire alarm went off right now?"
The man replied, "I'd grab my emergency kit, follow my escape plan, and get out safely!"
His friend said, "That's impressive! What's in your emergency kit?" The man answered, "I'm not sure. I haven't prepared it yet!"

The lesson: There's a big difference between planning to be prepared and actually being prepared!

I am beginning to think that we spend half our life in preparation, at least those of us who actually are prepared. We prepare a meal, we prepare to begin the day, we prepare for a meeting, we prepare for a test, we prepare for company, we prepare the communion table, and we prepare for the Advent Season. Well, sort of!

We do put up the tree, hang the lights on the house, purchase gifts, sing carols, and bake cookies. But that is not exactly preparing for the advent season, at least not the advent that Matthew was thinking about. Advent means **"arrival"** and in our Christian context, it is about preparing for the arrival and return of Jesus Christ. I think we would all agree that such an event requires more than placing an angel on top of a tree. Advent demands a different kind of preparation, a preparation of the heart.

In ancient Israel when a dignitary was passing through town, it was the people's responsibility to fix the road in front of their homes. They were physically preparing the way by filling in holes, smoothing over rough places, and laying down new stone. We can imagine what labor that took.

Likewise, preparing our spirits for the Advent of Christ takes some work. It means **clearing the roadblocks** to Christ's rule in our hearts. What are those obstacles, hidden sins, or character flaws that keep tripping us up? Can we pray that Christ would reveal the spots we need to work on? Will we **level the ground** by forgiving others and letting go of habits that take our focus off Jesus? Will we do acts of service that bless others? Will we **keep the Road clean** by daily acts of prayer, scripture reading, worship, and fellowship? Lastly, we are called to live with **expectant hope**, that with prepared lives Jesus has come and will come again?

Advent doesn't really happen in us unless we prepare the way. Don't let Advent be just a good thought. **Amen.**

By God's Wondrous Grace,
Pastor Mark Juengel

COMMITTEE NEWS

Committee Chairs

Finance – Bill Rockafellow
Christian Ed – Jill Juengel
Co-Treasurers – Karen Lutz & Jim Brewington
Deacons – John Ehlers
Mission: Jim Mould
Music & Worship – Ann Marie Grilk
Music Director - Matthew Rupcich
Parish Life – Kika Dyson
Session – Rev. Mark Juengel
Personnel – Joe Jauss
Nominating & Clerk of Session – Chris Caruso

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Mission Committee
Last Day to Return Gifts
December 6th

REMINDER: Angel tree gifts are to be returned unwrapped in a gift bag with the ornament tag attached. All gifts must be returned to the church sanctuary on or ***before*** **December 6th**. If you have any questions, please see ***Michelle Westbrook***.

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Avent Candle Readers

We are still in need of readers for lighting our Advent wreath. If you are interested, please see the Sign-up Sheet on the table in the Narthex.



12/6: Parish Life Meeting
12/8: 12:15pm - Worship & Music Mtg. ***(Cancelled)***
12/10: 9:00am – Finance Mtg.
12/13: Deacons Meeting
12/20: 5:30pm – Mission's Committee Mtg. ***(Cancelled)***
12/22: 4:00pm - Hawley Forward
12/22: 12:15pm – Personnel Committee
12/22: 6:00pm – Session Meeting ***(Cancelled)***

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Poinsettia Order Forms
Final Day to Order
December 13th



Final day to place your Poinsettia order will be **Sunday, December 13th.** We are offering 2 sizes - ***8" Poinsettia Plant @ $19.00 or 6" Poinsettia Plant @ $8.00 each.*** Both will be available in Red or White. Order forms will be available as an insert in Sunday's bulletin. If you have any questions, please see ***Ann Marie Grilk.***

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Annual Reports

All Committees and Staff need to have their reports in by **Wednesday, December 16th**. If you have any questions, please contact ***Pastor Mark.***

COMMITTEE NEWS (Cont'd.)



Parish Life
Annual Christmas Dinner
December 15, 2026
Last Day to submit your Reservation
Sunday, December 13th

This year's Christmas Dinner will be on **Tuesday, December 15th**. Meet & Greet at 6pm, Dinner at 6:30pm. **Cost is $15.00/pp**. It will be held at the church Social Hall and catered by Fiorelli's. A Reservation form has been included in today's bulletin. Reservations and Payments must be paid in full by **Sunday December 13th**. For more information, please see ***Kika Dyson***.

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Christmas Joy Offering
The Perfect Gift
Sunday, December 20th

When Jesus was born among us, he came as a helpless baby destined to bring joy, peace and salvation to his people. This child, God's Word made flesh — fully human and fully God — became one of us. One with us. One among us. In all of our vulnerabilities, struggles and triumphs, Jesus became one of us — leading us, knowing us, connecting us to himself and to each other, and offering us his gift of eternal life.

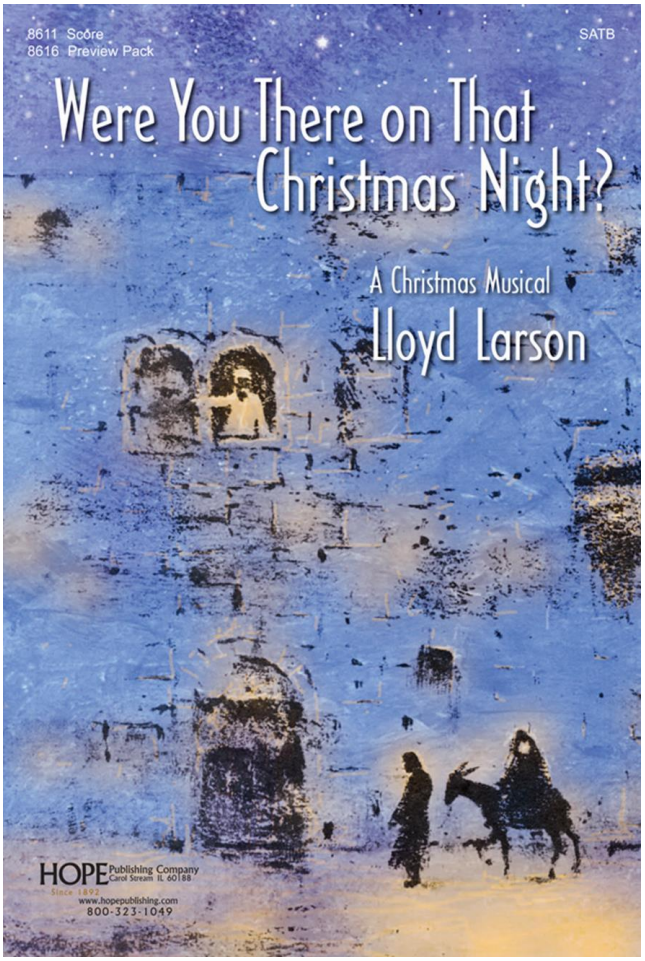
Through the Christmas Joy Offering, we reflect God's perfect gift to us, with generous support of church leaders among us — past, present and future — who have pointed us to God. We honor and celebrate leaders like retired pastors, church workers and their families who have faithfully guided and led us, but who now find themselves in critical financial need. We honor and celebrate emerging leaders like students in schools and colleges equipping communities of color, who develop leadership skills as they pursue their education and prepare to bring their gifts in service to the world God loves so much. Jesus' example as a child born to be among us and lead us to eternal life provides a pattern for us to follow as we celebrate those who have led us in the past and will lead us into the future. Through the Christmas Joy Offering, we come together to support past, present and future leaders, embodying God's perfect gift to us, Jesus Christ.

We will receive the Christmas Joy Offering on Sunday, December 20th.

WORSHIP INFORMATION

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services
Thursday, December 24th
at 7:00pm

Christmas Eve Service is one of the especial ways we celebrate the magnificent event of Emmanuel, God with Us. It is an evening to rejoice and be caught up in the mystery of the incarnation. It is an opportunity to lay aside our worries and weights to catch sight of the One who sets us free. For young and old saints, come and know Christ better. ***Christmas Eve services begin at 7:00pm***.



Worship & Music
Were You There That Christmas Night? – A Christmas Musical Celebration
Sunday, December 20, 2026, at 10:00am

On **Sunday, December 20th, at 10:00am**, our Chancel Choir will present *Were You There That Christmas Night*?, a beautiful and inspiring Christmas cantata composed by Lloyd Larson, during our morning worship service at First Presbyterian Church of Hawley.

Inspired by Natalie Sleeth's beloved Christmas anthem, this moving musical work invites us to reflect on a simple yet profound question: *"Were you there on that first Christmas night?"* Through scripture, narration, and beautiful choral music, the cantata transports us to Bethlehem, where ordinary people became part of an extraordinary story. From Mary and Joseph to the humble shepherds and visiting Magi, we are reminded that the miracle of Christ's birth was a gift intended for all people.

The Chancel Choir will be joined by a chamber orchestra including strings, flute, clarinet, trumpet, and percussion, bringing warmth, richness, and beauty to this musical retelling of the Nativity. Through tender melodies, familiar carols, and joyful expressions of praise, *Were You There That Christmas Night?* celebrates the timeless message of hope, love, and peace that lies at the heart of Christmas. Come and experience this special service of music and worship as we celebrate the wonder of Christ's birth and discover that, through faith and the enduring power of the Christmas story, we, too, were there on that holy night.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Lori's Corner Kitchen in Hamlin.
630 Hamlin Hwy., Lake Ariel, PA 18436
Wednesday, December 2nd
8:00am

Attention all men of the Church. We are organizing a Men's Breakfast for fellowship and a good meal in November. This will be a time to relax and enjoy one another's company. If you like the occasion, we can plan for further get togethers. You can invite a friend. If you have further questions, see ***Joe Jauss or Pastor Mark***.

- **When: Wednesday, December 2nd**
- **Time: 8:00 AM**
- **Cost: That is up to you - How many pancakes do you need?** ***Cash Only***
- **Place: Lori's Corner Kitchen in Hamlin. 630 Hamlin Hwy, Lake Ariel, PA 18436**

December Blood Drive
Wednesday, December 16th

The Red Cross Blood Drive on **Wednesday, December 16th** from 1pm-6pm. Register to give blood at: https://www.redcross.org/

To sign up for an appointment call 1-800-Red-Cross or Red Cross Blood.org or Download the Blood Donor App. If you have any questions, please see ***Melanie Tek-Visgilio.***

WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS – NOVEMBER

Volunteers Needed

If you would like to volunteer, please Sign-Up in the vestibule to be an **Usher and to host Coffee Hour. For Liturgists,** see ***Adele Harrison*****,** and **to help with Communion, see** ***Ann Marie Grilk.***

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December - Coffee Hour

12/6: CE Committee
12/13: The Bartleson Family
12/ 20: TBD
12/24: ***(Christmas Eve)***
12/ 27: TBD

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December - Flower Donations

12/6: TBD
12/13: Steve & Lorraine Bartleson in memory of ***Izzy Bartleson***
12/ 20: TBD
12/24: ***(Christmas Eve)***
12/ 27: TBD

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December Good News Café

The Café will be ***cancelled December 12th*** due to Cookie Walk and ***December 26th*** due to the Holiday season. The Café will resume on ***January 9, 2027.***

WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS – DECEMBER (Cont'd.)

December - Liturgists

12/6: Sherry Millikin
12/13: Heather Caruso
12/ 20: Grace Laird
12/24: Kathy Smith & TBD *(Christmas Eve)*
12/ 27: Jim Mould

December - Ushers

12/6: TBD
12/13: Chris & Heather Caruso
12/ 20: Janet Steifel
12/24: Jill Juengel *(Christmas Eve)*
12/ 27: TBD

December - Communion (December 6th)

Set Up & Clean Up: Alesia Burton
Servers: Alesia Burton
Jim Mould
Jill Juengel
Kathy Smith
Jane Jauss Roberts

CHURCH LIFE

Donate to FPCH

Thank you for your continued financial support. You may use the church's website or feel free to send a check directly to the church at ***815 Church Street, Hawley, PA.*** Your support is appreciated.. Thank You.

Our website link is: (https://www.fpchawley.org)

The books will be closed December 31, 2026
Please send in any year end gifts by that date.

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M&M Study Group

The M&M Study Group meets Monday's at 11:00am at the home of ***Betsy Yergey, 27 Lake Drive, Hawley.*** For a curriculum see the Study Sheet from the previous Sunday sermon. All are welcome.

Study group will be ***cancelled on December 21st & and December 28th*** due to the upcoming holidays.

The Study Group will resume on **January 4th at 11:00am.** For additional information please contact ***Betsy Yergey***.



The Book Club meeting is **cancelled for the month of Decembe**r and will resume in **January 2027** if you would like to know more about our Book Club, please contact ***Melanie Tek-Visgilio.***

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Joys & Concerns

For a most recent Prayer List, please go to the Church's website at https://www.fpchawley.org/

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Home Communion

Pastor Mark is giving Home Communion on the first Sunday of each month. ***If you are homebound and would like to receive communion please contact the church office the week before.*** Communion will be received in the afternoon following worship.

CHURCH LIFE – Cont'd.

Good News Café

The Good News Café will be ***cancelled on December 12th a due to Cookie Walk and December 26th due to the upcoming holidays.*** The Café will resume on **January 9, 2027**. A seated lunch meal is provided. The Café is open on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month from 11:30am–1:00pm. Please direct questions concerning signing up to cook a meal or helping to serve to ***Eileen Brewington, Pat Gemeinhardt or Karen Rockafellow***. Your help and support are much appreciated.

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Books

There is a bookcase full of books in the Social Hall. ***Please feel free to take them home.***

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12/20: Linda & Ron Kraft and
Albert "Chip" & Barbara Schariest

12/29: Rev. Mark & Jill Juengel



January 2027 Newsletter

Our next Newsletter will be in **January 2027**. Articles for our next monthly Newsletter need to be in the office by **Wednesday, December 16th**.

Any articles submitted after the 16th will go on the following month's Newsletter.

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Office Hours

Monday - Thursday
8:00am-1:00pm
Closed Fridays

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Bible Studies "the Psalms"

Our 11:00am Bible Study on the Psalms will **end for the year on Thursday, December 17th**. We will begin again in the new year on **January 14th**. In February we will focus on the Book of Job.

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12/1: Grace Laird
12/2: Nancy Vignau
12/5: Kenneth Smith
12/8: Clara Kelly & Rev. Mark Juengel
12/10: Stan Bartleson
12/12: Leslie Rugen
12/20: Dave Smith
12/21: Olivia Waszczak
12/22: Michelle Westbrook
12/28: - Rod Warner

COMMUNITY EVENTS

For those in need of support the church hosts **AA** meetings, **every Monday and Wednesdays at 12:00pm.**

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The Wayne Highlands Quilt Guild

The Wayne Highlands Quilt Guild **December meeting** will meet in Blough Hall on **December 14th from 4:00pm to 6:00pm.** We will have a short business meeting followed by 'sew and tell', a small project to work on, and time to visit with one another. Anyone interested in quilting is invited to join us. For more information contact Deb Jacobson at:
debszoo@gmail.com



The Lion's Club

The Lion's Club will not be meeting in December ***due to the upcoming holidays.*** For more information, please contact ***Pat Bartleson.***

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The United Methodist Church of Hawley
Road To Bethlehem Live Nativity
Winterfest
December 12th -14th



The United Methodist Church of Hawley is reaching out to all the local churches to ask for any help in filling our scenes. There's no rehearsals required, no need to read or speak, just a willingness to stand outside and share the Good News! We'll take everyone, of any age, but do ask that if the children are young, (less than 8 years), they have an adult willing to stand outside with them. Anyone interested can reach out Meredith L. Hellstern, MD at the church's office - 570-226-3875 or via email - meredith.hellstern@gmail.com

DECEMBER 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
		10am: Handbell Choir 11am: Chancel Choir	**8am: Men's Breakfast Lori's Corner Kitchen, 630 Hamlin Hwy Lake Ariel** **12pm: AA** **5-8pm: Cub Scouts** **6:30pm: Prayer Grp.**	**11am: Bible Study**	***Hanukkah***	**4:30pm: Black Bear Conservatory Recital at FPCH**
6	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**
Communion Sunday ***Angel Tree Gifts Due*** 9am: Chancel Choir Reh 10am: Worship **Parish Life Mtg.** **1:30pm & 3:00pm: Black Bear Conservatory Recital at FPCH**	11:am: M&M Grp. Mtg. 12pm: AA	10am: Handbell Choir 11am: Chancel Choir **12:15: Worship & Music** ***(Cancelled)*** **5:30-6:30pm: Cub Scouts**	**12pm: AA** **5-8pm: Cub Scouts** **6:30pm: Prayer Grp.**	**9am: Finance Mtg:** **11am: Bible Study**		**9am-12:30pm: Cookie Walk** **11:30am-1pm: Good News Café** ***(Cancelled)***
13	**14**	**15**	**16**	**17**	**18**	**19**
Final Day to Place Poinsettia Order ***Final Day to Turn in your Christmas Dinner Reservation & Payment*** 9am: Chancel Choir Reh 10am: Worship	11:am: M&M Grp. Mtg. 12pm: AA 2-6pm: WH Quilters	10am: Handbell Choir 11am: Chancel Choired 6:**00pm: Annual Christmas Dinner**	**Annual Reports Due** 12pm: AA **1pm-6pm: Red Cross Blood Drive** **6:30pm: Prayer Grp.**	**11am: Bible Study** 5:30pm-8pm: Lion's Club ***(Cancelled)***	**1pm: Book Club**	**Chancel Choir Dress Rehearsal for Cantata**
20	**21**	**22**	**23**	**24**	**25**	**26**
Choir Cantata ***Joy Offering Due*** 9am: Chancel Choir Reh 10am: Worship **Missions Mtg.** ***(Cancelled)***	11:am: M&M Grp. Mtg. ***(Cancelled)*** 12pm: AA	10am: Handbell Choir 11am: Chancel Choir **12:15pm: Personnel Mtg.** **6:00pm: Session Mtg.** ***(Cancelled)***	12pm: AA 5-8pm: Cub Scouts ***(Cancelled)*** **6:30pm: Prayer Grp.**	***7pm: Christmas Eve Candlelight Services*** **11am: Bible Study** ***(Cancelled)***	**Pastor Mark – Vacation – 12/25/2026 – 1/1/2027** ***Christmas Day (Office Closed)***	**&** **11:30am-1pm: Good News Café** ***(Cancelled)***
27	**28**	**29**	**30**	**31**		
Pastor Mark – Vacation – 12/25/2026 – 1/1/2027						
9am: Chancel Choir Reh 10am: Worship	11:am: M&M Grp. Mtg. ***(Cancelled)*** 12pm: AA	10am: Handbell Choir 11am: Chancel Choir	12pm: AA 5-8pm: Cub Scouts ***(Cancelled)*** **6:30pm: Prayer Grp.** ***(Cancelled)***	**11am: Bible Study** ***(Cancelled)***		