Dear Members and Friends of New Bedford Church,

Here is an article I read concerning Christmas that I want to share with you:

THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS
By Festo Kivengere

Christmas is a wonderful season in the history of the Church. I must say it has been badly commercialized and lost its Christian ministry and message. For me, Christmas is not just a season in the Church; it is a time when we are called back to look at how God entered the human history and situation.

What do we see at Christmas? A baby in a manger, in a little town in Judea? No, we see God in a manger. And we realize, perhaps for the first time, that this was God entering into human experience in poverty, therefore meeting not the respectable, but the poor, the hidden, the neglected, the forgotten.

That is what the manger is – a place not highly respected, rather despised in order that the despised may be encouraged to come. So in the baby in the manger at Christmas we meet men – weak, sinful and poor. More than that, at Christmas, we see God not only entering poverty and weakness but actually picking up those elements in human experience.

When God humbled Himself to become a baby, He was on a mission. Christmas is a mission. No wonder angels came singing and stirred the poor shepherds at midnight. Thus God said, 'I have come on a mission to those who are away from me.' For in the baby God is saying to every human being, 'You too can be My child.'

You do not have to change yourself. You can come as a shepherd and be accepted. You can even come in the weakness of a baby and you are accepted. You can come in the weakness of a poor person, limited in every way, not able to get what you want or to do what you want. This is the most encouraging good news! You come as you are. And in Jesus Christ in the manger you are not only accepted, but you are changed and made a child of God.

The light of Christmas shines into the darkness of humanity. Those who feel insecure like the shepherds at night, in the insecurity of a baby, hear the message: "God can make me secure." This is the message for us today. Many feel as helpless as a newly born baby, many feel as insecure as a dependent little child – all can, in the message of Christmas, feel the light from the face of Jesus which lightens the world.

A refugee walking alone feels he has the God of Bethlehem with him. A displaced person who has lost everything he ever worked for feels he too can be comforted because the God of Bethlehem accompanies him. This is why Christmas should be a time of rejoicing for all sorts of people.

To me Christmas is an invitation. Come and become a child of God in your brother Jesus Christ.

Kim and I join together to wish all of you a blessed and a Merry Christmas.

In Peace,

Doug

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

- **Reviewed Financial Reports.**
- **Received and approved 2019 Budget.**
- **Approved architect to design handicap bathrooms.**
- **Approved new Operating Manual for the church. This manual outlines the tasks of each Committee of the church.**
- **Called Congregational Meeting for November 25th.**
- **Announced beginning of "This is my Story".**
- **Accepted with regret resignation of Beth Kendall as a Deacon.**
- **Received report of Nominating Committee. Nominated as Elders; Donna Fox (2 yr. term), Collin Fulkman, Sam Jones and Judy Riethmiller. Nominated as Deacons; Sharon Book, Elaine Hepler, Larry Bluedorn, Sue Bluedorn and Renee Persky (2 yr. term).**
- **Approved vacation of Doug Runyan from December 26th to January 2nd. Lee will lead worship services on the 30th.**
- **Approved Christmas gifts for staff.**

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THANK YOU'S

- **Thank you to all the volunteers for Breakfast In Bethlehem.**
- **Thank you for all your prayers and words of support during my recent appendectomy.**
  -Doug
- **Thank you to the Nominating Committee for filling all the open positions.**
- **Thank you to the men and women who responded to the call of God to serve the church.**
- **Thank you to the men and women who decorated the church for Christmas.**
- **Thank you to everyone who purchased pies to support the Youth Group.**
- **Thank you to Terri Emery for arranging the Angel Tree. Thank you to everyone who took tags from the Angel Tree.**

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This years Special Christmas Offering will go to Hurricane Relief. The offering will be donated one half to domestic hurricane relief (Carolina's and Florida) and one half will go to the hurricane relief in Haiti.

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There is a Confirmation Class beginning on Sunday, December 9th for anyone that is in 7th grade or higher. This class will prepare you to become a member of New Bedford Church. It is also an exciting time to explore and discover your own faith walk. This class will continue until the end of May, when you will be invited to join the church. Please let Pastor Doug know if you will be attending this class.

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ADDRESS CHANGE: Ginny Huber
21504 Anns Choice Way
Warminster, PA 18974

Birthdays in December

12/01 – Adam Marshall
12/02 – Diana Halt
12/04 – Alexis Lambert
12/05 – Betty Komar
12/07 – Kyle Jones
12/09 – Chuck Bell
12/09 – Bob Bell
12/09 – Alexis Jones
12/11 – Carletta Doverspike
12/13 – Katee Paglia
12/14 – Evelyn Exley
12/14 – Jo Ruby
12/16 – Wanda Boyles
12/17 – Angela Houk
12/17 – Addie Moore
12/19 – Rebecca Halt
12/20 – Eric Keller
12/21 – Ruth Hunt
12/21 – LaVon Rogers
12/24 – Florence Allison
12/28 – Darlene Robison

Birthdays in January

1/01 – Jakki Gardner
1/03 – Bud Freeman
1/04 – Corigan Quinn
1/05 – Lois Adams
1/05 – Phillip Book
1/05 – Ashley Fox
1/05 – Shirley Janoski
1/05 – Jacob Taylor
1/06 – Nancy Bretz
1/06 – Joel Phillips
1/09 – Brenda Miller
1/11 – Marshall Whiting
1/12 – Linda Feil
1/12 – Diane McConnell
1/14 – Gary Geisinger
1/14 – Allen Jones
1/17 – Terri Quinn
1/19 – Rosie Moore
1/19 – Willie Moore
1/20 – Mikayln Duffy
1/21 – Amanda Miller
1/24 – Lori Smith
1/26 – Mike Duffy
1/26 – Mackenzie McCarthy
1/26 – Julie Whiting
1/27 – Joyce Goist
1/27 – Morgan Whiting
1/28 – Taylor Allison



Pray FOR *Healing*

Please remember in prayer the following persons who are hospitalized, receiving treatments, recuperating at home and those who have requested prayer.

Nancy Templeton----------Overlook Medical Clinic
Dot Jones----------Avalon Nursing Home
Gladys Barnhart----------Home
Jo Ruby----------Home
Pearl Reed----------Overlook Nursing Home
Art Spence----------Home
Lavon Rogers----------John XXIII Nursing Home



The Deacons are once again selling Poinsettia's. You may purchase one "In Honor" or "In Memory" of a loved one. The cost is $8.50 each. Linda Canami and Tim Pogozelec will be taking orders until December 12th.

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The Deacons are collecting non-perishable food items for their Christmas food baskets. There is a box in the narthex for your donations.



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BREAKFAST IN BETHLEHEM is on this coming Saturday, December 8th, 8:30AM – 11:30AM. Please invite your friends and neighbors. This event is FUN for children and adults of all ages! Breakfast will be served until 10:00AM. If you have never come, please try to come this year! The church is transformed into the streets of Bethlehem. There are live animals for petting, a Christmas movie, two craft rooms, face painting, and much more!

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Come one and all to the annual Christmas Dinner and Program on Sunday, December 16, 2018. The Children's Program begins at 4:30PM with a wonderful meal being served at 5:00PM. The Worship Committee is providing the ham, turkey, green bean casserole, new potatoes, and beverages. If you are able, please bring a side dish to share according to your last name:



A-F = Salad
G-P = Hot Dish
Q-Z = Dessert

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On Monday, December 24th at 7:00P.M., please plan on attending our Christmas Eve Worship Service. There will be Christmas Carols, music from our amazing Choir, Candle Lighting, and a Message of Hope and Joy. Please come and join us for a time of remembering the night that our Lord Jesus was born.

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The Church Office will be closed the week between Christmas and New Year's, we will be back on Wednesday, January 2nd. The staff here at New Bedford Church would like to wish everyone a very blessed and Merry Christmas and New Year's!

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LOOKING AHEAD……Annual Reports: All committee and board secretaries or chairmen should start thinking about getting their Annual Reports ready to be turned in. ALL REPORTS MUST BE TURNED IN NO LATER THEN SUNDAY, JANUARY 13 to be included in the 2018 Annual Report. There is a folder on my desk or you an email your reports to me at newbedfordchurch@verizon.net or addietwinstrips@gmail.com Thank You!! Addie



Women's News

December Circle Meetings

Deborah **~ Tuesday 12/11 at 9:30AM**

Ruth **~ Tuesday 12/11 at 9:30AM at Tanner's Restaurant**

Rebecca **~ Saturday 12/15 at 9:00AM at Bedford Trails Restaurant**

Lydia **~ Tuesday 12/18 at 1:00PM**

Elizabeth **~ Thursday 12/20 at 6:30PM**

Bazaar 2018 – Thank you to everyone that had a part in helping with the Bazaar! We all pulled together for a day of work, fellowship and shopping. It was a wonderful day ending up with more than $6,500.00 in profit.

Thank you for serving with a Christian spirit, ladies and men!

2018 Bazaar Committee ~ Nancy Bretz, Beth Kendall & Cindy Bell

Upcoming Dates

Next meeting – January 12, 2019 @ 9:00AM

Women's Retreat – April 5-April 6, 2019

Bazaar – November 2, 2019

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FIND YOUR FIRE

Below is a list of the upcoming December & January MOPS meetings. You can pick up a full list of meetings in the church entranceway or on our church website at newbedfordepchurch.org

December 12 The Nativity

Have you had Christmases that left you waiting for a more peaceful, joyful season than the one you were living? We will re-examine the Nativity story in a way that inspires us to face this season with courage and joy, knowing that Jesus didn't choose to love us from a distance.

January 9 Neighbor's Table

Lives are transformed when people gather around a table and share their stories. Community is powerful. What does going and being who God has meant you to be include for you?

January 23 Reclaiming Home

We will investigate the options for building our family homes in ways that encourage love, acceptance, communication, play, and presence.

there is only 1 MOPS meeting in December

New Bedford Evangelical Presbyterian Church
Awana Clubs-----Wednesdays
Age 2 - Grades 6 5:00-7:00

AWANA MISSION UPDATE Awana Clubbers collected items for the Thanksgiving Baskets that get distributed during the holiday to families in need. Thank you for the generous donation of food…..we collected 140 items for the City Rescue Mission.

Thank you for helping to provide this ministry with food for families in need.

AWANA Schedule for December

December 5th – Double Point Night

Clubbers will get double the points for attendance, bringing their Bible and Handbook, and completing sections.

December 12th – Regular Club Night

December 19th – Happy Birthday Jesus Party

Clubbers can wear Christmas colors, red and green, as we celebrate the true meaning of Christmas.
We will have pizza, chips, drink, and cake.

December 26th & January 2nd — **NO AWANA** – Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Awana will resume on Wednesday, January 11, 2019

Awana Leaders & Listeners Appreciation Dinner & Mid-Year Meeting
January 2nd at 5:00

All Awana helpers mark your calendars for this important meeting. You are invited to come to dinner and a meeting to share concerns, praises, & suggestions as we head into the 2nd half of the Awana year.



Puppet & Children's Christmas Program

Join us as we celebrate the birth of our Savior!
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16th 4:30
Followed by the Church Christmas Dinner
Practice is December 8th at 11:00 AM(after Breakfast in Bethlehem)
December 15th at 9:30 AM

Puppet Practices

December 8th 11:00-12:00 (after Breakfast in Bethlehem)
December 9th 5:30-6:15
December 15th 9:30



Family Ministry Events

◄ Nov 2018	December 2018					Jan 2019 ►
Sunday	**Monday**	**Tuesday**	**Wednesday**	**Thursday**	**Friday**	**Saturday**
						1
2 **Jr high 4-5:30** **Sr high 5-7**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	8
9 **Jr high 4-5:30** **Sr high 5-7**	**10**	**11** Senior Citizen trip to Columbiana for dinner and Christmas lights. Van leaves at 4pm. Bring $ for dinner.	**12**	**13**	**14**	15 **Youth trip to Oglebay** **Van leaves at 2pm** **Return around 11 bring $ for dinner**
16 **No Youth Group**	**17**	**18**	**19** **Pie Pickup Day**	**20**	**21** Youth group Christmas party Van leaves at 5:30pm return around 9pm	22
23 **Jr high 4-5:30** **Sr high 5-7**	**24**	**25** Christmas	**26**	**27**	**28**	29
30 **No Youth Group**	31	Looking Forward: Jr high retreat, January 18-20 Sr high retreat, January 25-27				

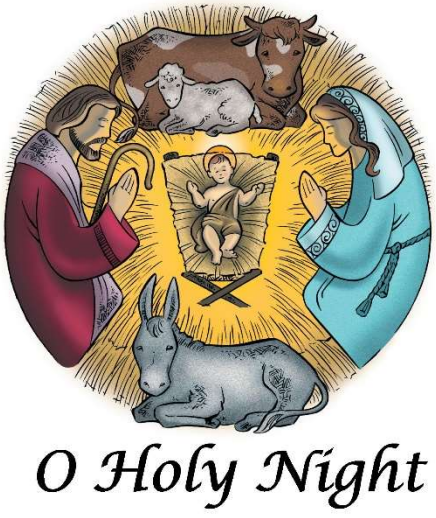
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Redeeming Times Newsletter
DECEMBER 2018

Church website: www.newbedfordepchurch.org
Church e-mail: newbedfordchurch@verizon.net



JOIN US FOR WORSHIP!
Sunday Schedule:

8:30a.m. – Contemporary Worship Service

9:30a.m. – Sunday School for all ages

10:40a.m. – Traditional Worship Service

Join us Christmas Eve at 7PM for our Candlelight Worship Service!
Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!