Dear Members and Friends of New Bedford Church,

We keep all the Redeeming Times in a file in the office. I went back to the Redeeming Times from December 1997. I had been the Pastor here for 4 months. Allow me to share the message I shared 23 years ago. I quoted an article written by Festo Kivingere. It states…

Christmas is not just a season in the Church; it is a time when we are called back to look how God entered human history and situations

What do we see at Christmas? A baby in the manger? No, we see God in a manger. We realize, perhaps for the first time that this was God entering into human experience in poverty.

This is what the manger is—a place not highly respected, rather despised that the despised may be encouraged to come.

When God humbled Himself to become a baby he was on a mission. No wonder angels came singing and stirred up 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 every human being, "you too can come to the child."

You do not have to change yourself. You can come as a shepherd and be accepted. You can come in the weakness of a baby and you are accepted. You can 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."

This was the invitation I shared 23 years ago… Come to Jesus and discover a Savior and a Lord. This is the invitation I have shared every year since then. This is the message I share today. Come to Jesus… as you are…. And discover a Savior and a Lord

Truthfully, this is a bittersweet year in the life of the church. Because of the pandemic many church activities have had to be cancelled. This is especially noticeable in this Christmas season. There will be no Christmas Dinner. This, of course, is the biggest dinner we have all year. We will miss the food. We will miss the fellowship. We will greatly miss the Children's pageant. We will also not have Breakfast in Bethlehem. The crowd is just too great and social distancing would be impossible. This is possibly the greatest outreach event we have all year. For many families this is the only Christian input they have in the Christmas season.

We will have our Christmas Eve service. See the Session Notes for the modifications that are necessary for this service.

Here is my challenge. Remember the meaning of Christmas as a family this year. Because many church events have been canceled replace them with family Christ centered events. Have your family devotions. Have your family Advent Candles. Have your Daily Advent Calendars. Have your prayer times as a family. As a family put out your nativity set and tell the Christmas story as you are doing this. More so than any other year, stress the true meaning of Christmas… not the secular alternatives. Once again, the Runyan family want to wish you a very, very, Merry and Blessed Christmas. Doug

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

- **Noted that giving remains strong. Also wished to remind the congregation that online giving is available. Please go to the Church website and click on the link provided to make a gift.**
- **Approved contract with A & L Lawn care for snow removal in parking lot.**
- **Discussed continuation of Awana and Sunday School. Decided to continue at this time but understand that evaluations based on safety and volunteers will be continual.**
- **Approved continual ministries of Youth Group and Children's ministries (see their reports).**
- **Cancelled Breakfast in Bethlehem. Do not believe we could recruit enough volunteers to have even a modified event.**
- **Changed Mission Budget for 2021 from the ministry of Matt and Stacey Ayers to the ministry of Emmaus Seminary in Haiti. (this change was requested by Matt and Stacey)**
- **Discussed Christmas Eve Service. Decided to have one service at 7:00. Fellowship Hall will be fully set up for additional seating. Social Separation will be observed (as it currently is on Sunday mornings). Mask rules will remain the same. Masks must be worn at all times in the Fellowship Hall and by all entering and leaving the church. Congregational singing will be minimized (we will sing a Congregational opening song and closing songs). Soloists and duets will sing additional carols. To maintain social distancing, we will use all battery powered handheld candles. Dismissal will be by pews. We will live stream this service.**
- **Approved the budget for 2021 and sent it to the congregation.**
- **Communion will be observed on December 6th**
- **Received documents to help in the search process for a Transitional Pastor.**



MERRY CHRISTMAS

Birthdays in December

12/01 – Adam Marshall
12/02 – Diana Halt
12/05 – Betty Komar
12/07 – Kyle Jones
12/09 – Chuck Bell
12/09 – Bob Bell
12/09 – Lexi Jones
12/11 – Caroletta Doverspike
12/13 – Katee Paglia
12/14 – Evelyn Exley
12/16 – Wanda Boyles
12/16 – Hannah O'Brien
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 – Olivia Eppinger
1/04 – Corigan Quinn
1/05 – Lois Adams
1/05 – Phillip Book
1/05 – Edie Dougherty
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 – 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



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

Pray FOR *Healing*

Pearl Reed----------Overlook Nursing Home
Lavon Rogers----------John XXIII Nursing Home
Larry Pence----------Shenango Home
Dot Shillingburg----------Home
Erma Gorley----------Nugent's Nursing Home



CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP: On Thursday, December 24th at 7:00P.M., please plan on joining us, in person or online for our Christmas Eve Worship Service. There will be Christmas Carols, music from our amazing Choir and a Message of Hope and Joy. Please see additional information above under the Session Notes regarding our Christmas Eve Worship Service.

CHRISTMAS OFFERING: This years Special Christmas Offering will go to the ministry of Autumn Marshall in Haiti. This Offering will go towards an upgrade for her solar power. There will be Special Envelopes in your bulletins on 12/20 and 12/24.





FOOD BOXES: The Deacons are collecting canned goods and monetary (Cash) donations for Christmas Food Boxes. This is to help out the parishioners of New Bedford Church. There will be a box in the Church entrance until December 13th for donations.
The Deacons will be meeting on Saturday, December 19th at 9:00A.M. to pack Christmas boxes. If you are a Deacon, please come to the church on this morning to help pack and distribute.

ANGEL TREE: Once again this year we have the opportunity to help local families with Christmas gifts. If you would like to help with this mission, please take an ***Angel Tag*** from the tree in the entryway, and please mark on the paper your name and what number your tag is so that we can make sure that all tags are accounted for. Please return the wrapped gift with the ***Angel Tag*** attached no later than Sunday, December 13th. If you have any questions, please contact the church office.



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The Church Office will be closed beginning on Christmas Day, the office will re-open on Tuesday, January 5th . **Please have all information and/or announcements for the 12/24, 12/27 and 1/3 bulletins submitted no later than 10:00A.M. on Wednesday, December 23rd** . The staff would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year!!

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OFFICER TRAINING 2020 – On Saturday, January 9th from 8:30AM until NOON. All Officers, Elders and Deacons, returning and new, are encouraged to attend this training. This training is required by our Book of Order and is also a great time of fellowship and for making goals for the upcoming year.

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IMPORTANT - 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 MONDAY, JANUARY 18 to be included in the 2020 Annual Report. There is a folder on my desk or you can email your reports to me at newbedfordchurch@verizon.net or addietwinstrips@gmail.com Thank You!! Addie

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SAVE THE DATE – JANUARY 31



There will be a commemorative service on January 31st honoring Pastor Doug and Kim as they begin retirement. There will be one combined service at 10:30A.M. on that day.

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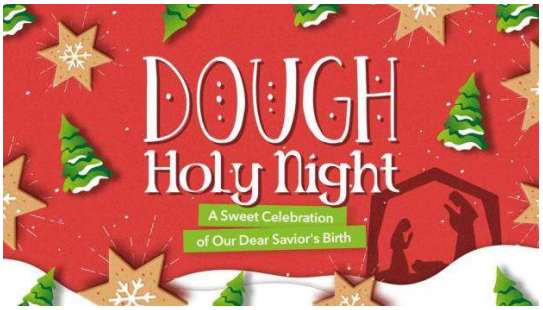


The Women's Association will have a take-out Soup Sale on Saturday, February 20th. Details to follow after the first of the year.

UPCOMING PITTSBURGH FOOD BANK DISTRIBUTION DATES….

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4TH & FRIDAY, JANUARY 8TH

3:00PM UNTIL 4:15PM



REGISTRATION INFO

Register through the Survey Monkey link

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BPXFVXV

OR calling the church office during office hours.

Deadline to register is Sunday, December 6th

JOIN US FOR A Deliciously-fun family experience with the true meaning of Christmas.

DETAILS

What is Dough Holy Night?

With the help of David and Casey (a.k.a. The Cookie Crew), families will bake cookies while discovering the ingredients what made the first ever Christmas so sweet. It's so simple, any family can do it!

How does it work?

When ready, families gather together in the kitchen, then press play on the "Dough Holy Night" video. The Cookie Crew then walks them through the entire baby Jesus baking experience. The "Parent Portal" makes it easy for parents to access the materials. With minimal preparation, easy to follow instructions, and a video that leads families step-by-step through the entire experience, "Dough Holy Night" is a truly unique way to celebrate the birth of Jesus. When it's all done and the last crumb has been consumed, everyone's heart will be as full as their tummy!

Who is it for?

From preschool through high school, the whole family can enjoy this together. But why keep the good news to yourself? If comfortable, families can invite friends and neighbors so they can enjoy the sweet celebration with them.

When and where does it happen?

The "Dough Holy Night" experience is designed for families to do at home whenever it is convenient for you after Dec. 11th or families can attend an in-person event on December 18th at New Bedford Church.

Awana Clubs

Half Club Plan will meet 5:00-6:45 PM
Drop off is at the Main Doors for kids to go to the Sanctuary
Doors will open at 5:00

If you want more information about Awana please contact Dawn Harris

Puggles-Ages 2 & 3 Cubbies-Preschool Sparks-Gr. K-2 T&T-Gr. 3-6

Schedule for which Clubs meet on the given Wednesday.

December 2nd - Cubbies, & Sparks (no Puggles)

December 9th - T & T (Happy Birthday Jesus Party)

December 16th – Puggles, Cubbies, & Spark (Happy Birthday Jesus Party)

No Club December 23rd or 30th – Have a blessed Christmas & Happy New Year!

Family Ministries Calandar
December 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
6 Jr high 12:30-2 Sr high 2:30-4:30	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**
13 Jr high 12:30-2 Sr high 2:30-4:30	**14**	**15**	**16**	**17**	**18**	**19**
20 Youth group Christmas party 5-8 pm (at church)	**21**	**22**	**23**	**24**	**25**	**26**
27 No Youth Group	**28**	**29**	**30**	**31**		

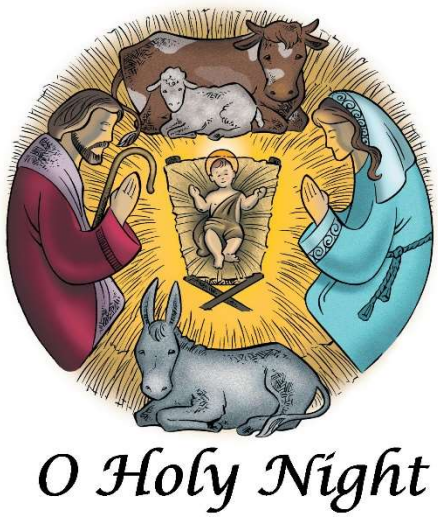
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Redeeming Times Newsletter
DECEMBER 2020

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!