



# The Visitor

December 2025

The newsletter of the Presbyterian Church of Kane

## Advent Begins

*How long does it take to decorate the church? ... fifty-three minutes*

### In this edition

#### Decorating for the Season

On Sunday, Nov 30<sup>th</sup> a group of volunteers transformed the church sanctuary in less than an hour.

#### A Forty Year Tradition

Trumpeting Angels decorate the sanctuary

#### How I (We) Got Here

This month is the story of how Friends Memorial Library got its start.

#### The Bird

Read the news of what is happening around PCK..

#### Vision Committee Update

The Vision committee continues its work and provides an update to the congregation

#### Recap of November and Looking Ahead to December

Read a recap of some of the events of the past month (November) and look ahead to what is happening in December.

After worship on Sunday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, a well-organized crew had the church decorated for the Advent/Christmas season in less than an hour and then spent almost more time than that socializing and eating lunch from a selection of delicious soups and breads.



Betsey Davis and Matt Gayley hang the greens. Photo Credit: John Cleland.



The well-organized crew enjoying fellowship and lunch after decorating the sanctuary. Photo Credit: John Cleland

## Heralding Angels – A Christmas Tradition

Four trumpeting angels in the sanctuary heralding the coming of the Christ Child have called us to the Christmas Season for more than forty years. The winged angels, with their copper-colored hair and flowing gowns, were designed and made by Merry Ryding in the early 1980s. Originally, they were installed only on Christmas Eve. Christmas Eve candlelight in a darkened sanctuary reflected off the angels as they seemed to be magically suspended overhead. Perhaps, some thought, it mimicked what the Shepards themselves might have felt on the Holy Night.

Some forty years ago Merry also designed the six sets of paraments that are changed at the beginning of each of the church year's six liturgical seasons. They drape the communion table and hang from both the pulpit and lectern. Several women of the church sewed and pieced together the patchwork of each of Merry's designs.

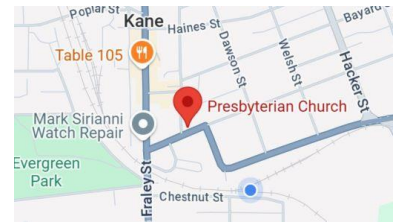
Advent's parament reflects the Biblical passages that the crooked will be made straight and the rough places plain. The parament changes again at Christmas. A 6-point gold star on a bright white background points us to Bethlehem and announces the birth of the Christ child.



Lowell Watts hanging the angels. Photo Credit: John Cleland

# How I (We) Got Here ...

*Each month a member of our faith community will share their story of how they found their way to the Presbyterian Church of Kane.*



## *The Friends Memorial Library is now an established institution in Kane. But how did it get started?...*

It was a project of members of our church. In the 1970s the “public and school library” was located on the second floor of the high school building, an inconvenient place for the “public” to get to. To solve that problem each Tuesday the high school librarian, Tim Casey, prepared a collection of books for the community. Those books were delivered to our church narthex along with a “recipe box” to be used by patrons to record a book that had been checked out. Tuesdays were a busy day at the church.

The book collection and the community’s use expanded, and it became apparent that a more suitable and permanent location should be found. Among those members of our church who were involved in that work included, among others, Jo Wolfe, Ginny Coppersmith, Jane Black, and Arlene Heath. As always happens, many other church members pitched in as needed. Key supporters in the community included Suellen Snapp, Janet Bard, and Gertrude Carson.

Grants supported programs, bake and tag sales, and a quilt show to raise money for a library fund. Eventually the library moved from our church narthex to the New Thompson House and from there to its current location on Chase Street. A wonderful community resource -- with its roots at our front door.



*The Bird was a column which appeared in the Kane Republican years ago providing brief snippets of town news. If you have news to share, please let us know!*

Looking WAY back, the precursor to the Visitor was a newsletter of the Congregational Church called The Purple Periscope. Not sure where the ‘periscope’ came from, but the ‘purple’ was the ink of mimeograph machines (remember those!)....And how about “dial-a-prayer.” That was a feature of the church’s ministry in the days of dial phones. The prayer was changed daily and a new prayer offered. It was eventually discontinued; no one seemed to notice.....Thanks to Lynda Karger, Sharon Bond, and Rev. Sharp for their efforts in coordinating the community Thanksgiving service....Our church choir was supplemented by voices from other church choirs and filled the sanctuary with beautiful music..... Water Update: Finally, it appears the water infiltration and its effects over decades have been solved. As the new drainage system was installed significant damage was discovered to the flooring and supports on the Greeves Street steps to Fellowship Hall. Thanks to Curt Hartman, Dale McLaughlin, Jody Larson and the Geer Brothers all is repaired and in good shape....A thought for not just for today: “You plant the seeds. How they grow is not your concern. God is in charge of that.”

## **Vision Committee Continues Its Work Good Stewardship Aligns with Mission to “Reach Out”**

Jody Larson, chair of the Vision Committee provides this update on the committee’s work:

For some time, the Vision Committee has been working to find ways that we can be good stewards of our building assets. As it is with many other congregations in our area with large church buildings, we no longer need all the space that we have available. Following our mission statement of Reaching Out into the community, we have been exploring ways to utilize the unused space with groups in our community.

As you know, the Northern Pennsylvania Regional College has been holding Homesteading classes downstairs since August and will continue to hold classes into February. The instructors have been very pleased with the response from the community, and most sessions so far have been well attended. Our relationship with the College is an example of the opportunity we have to use our building as a resource to bring people together.

Working with partners in the community, we have been discussing other possible building use that could bring more people together. Much of this is still in the planning process but you will be seeing some kitchen use and some art workshops taking place in Fellowship Hall.

As the planning process finalizes, we will present to the congregation a plan that will make greater use of Fellowship Hall, the kitchen, and the former preschool room. Our regular church schedule and church calendar of events will remain the same. Please continue to pray for the presence of the Holy Spirit to be with your Vision Committee and also with our church family as we try to find ways to live our day-to-day lives fulfilling our mission of Reach Up, Reach In, and Reach Out.

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*If you have questions about the work of the Vision Committee, please feel free to ask any of the members of the committee: Jody Larson Dale McLaughlin, Lynda Karger, Marie Larson, and John Cleland.*



### **Homesteading Series to Conclude in Early 2026**

Northern Pennsylvania Regional College (NPRC) continues to hold Homesteading classes in our Fellowship Hall.

The successful series of monthly programs is part of an ongoing vision to devote that part of our church building that is not in daily use to advance arts and education programs in Kane. The final two Homesteading classes are scheduled for early 2026:

January 28, Budgeting and Bartering for Self-Reliance

February 25, Gardening for Beginners.

Each session is offered as a stand-alone, and there is no need to register for all sessions if you are interested in only one of the topics. Further information is available at the NPRC website, [regionalcollegepa.org](http://regionalcollegepa.org), or contact Jody Larson or John Cleland.

# November Recap

**Confirmation Sunday** On Sunday, November 16, 2025, Bria Brzezinski and Avery Gayley affirmed their baptisms and confessing their faith along with answering the required constitutional questions, Bria and Avery were welcomed into full membership during the worship service. A time of fellowship, in their honor, was held after the worship service.



Bria Brzezinski and Avery Gayley. Photo Credit: Matt Gayley

**Community Thanksgiving Service** was held in our sanctuary on Tuesday, November 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm. The service included participation of clergy from the community and a community choir. The service was broadcast on the local radio station. Including the choir, clergy, and congregation there were sixty-six people in attendance. A time of fellowship followed the service.

**15<sup>th</sup> Annual Turkey Trot** Ned and Lynda Karger held their 15<sup>th</sup> annual Turkey Trot on Thursday, November 27<sup>th</sup>. Despite the cold and snowy conditions, there was a large turnout for this annual event.



This year's Turkey Trot Participants. Photo Credit: John Cleland

Several PCK members and friends supported Lynda and Ned Kargers' 2025 Thanksgiving Day Turkey Trot. This year's event raised over \$750 dollars, bringing their total cash donations to the Kane Area Food Panty to over \$5200 since 2011 in addition to over 1500 food items.

**Kane Area Food Pantry.** A heartfelt thank you is extended to all who donated in November. From the Food Pantry's website is this note from Deb Wensel:



*On behalf of the clients and staff of the Kane Area Food Pantry, I would like to give a heartfelt thanks to everyone who donated to the Thanksgiving distribution. 164 families were served. This is the largest donation in our history. There are extra turkey coupons and food on the shelves. Our staff works hard to provide healthy, nutritious meals and none of this would be possible without the generosity of our donors. God Bless You and thank you from the bottom of our hearts.*

# What's Happening in December .....



**Salvation Army Red Kettle** On Fridays and Saturdays in the month of December, the red kettle will be staffed by volunteers from the Kane community churches. Eighty-five percent of the monies collected will remain in this community to help those in need. Our church will be ringing

the red kettle bell on Friday, December 19<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, December 20<sup>th</sup> at Save A Lot. Please consider signing up for a time to ring the bell on one (or both) days. The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the narthex.

**Blue Christmas Service** will be held on Friday, December 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm at the East Kane Methodist Church. This is an ecumenical service, sponsored by the Kane Area Ministerial Association, providing space for people to acknowledge and grieve during the holiday season. It is for anyone who feels sad, lonely, or is struggling with loss, such as the death of a loved one, divorce, illness, or financial hardship, and is meant to offer comfort, solidarity, and hope. The speaker will be Pastor David Pfeiffer.

**Bell Sunday** Bell Sunday is traditionally the third Sunday in Advent. This year Bell Sunday will be on December 21<sup>st</sup>. The Bell Choir will provide music for the prelude and play an anthem during the worship service. The congregation is invited to BYOB (bring your own bell) to worship and during the final hymn, everyone is invited to ring your bell! Please join us for this special worship service and invite a friend to join you!

**Poinsettias for Christmas** If you would like to have a poinsettia as part of the decorations in the sanctuary for Christmas Eve, please pick up a form (in the church office) complete it (please write legibly) and return it to the church office no later than Friday, December 19<sup>th</sup> so that your information can be included in the Christmas Eve bulletin.



**Christmas Eve** This year Christmas Eve falls on a Wednesday. Our Christmas Eve service will begin at 8:00 pm. The choir will again lead us in worship with a Christmas cantata as well as the traditional lighting of candles. Please join us for this special service and invite a friend!

# A Meeting of the Congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Kane

A meeting of the congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Kane will be held on Sunday, December 14, 2025, for the purpose of election officers for the class of 2028, the audit committee for 2026 and the nominating committee for 2026. As ordered by the Session.

The nominees are as follows:

Ruling Elders Class of 2028: Curt Hartman, Diane Humphrey

2026 Audit Committee: Audrey McLaughline, Diane Humphrey, Marie Larson

2026 Nominating Committee: Matt Gayley, Ginny Coppersmith, Lynda Karger (chair)

## A Final Word for December ..... Be Ready

What does it mean to be ready? It means living a life committed to the values, teachings, and ethics of Jesus. It means to put one's faith and trust in Jesus Christ and to live in hope. Advent living is not something that we do just for a season. It is a way of life – a transformation of our hearts for the way we live our ordinary everyday lives. Faithful living requires being alert, mindful about the things we do, what we see, and requires us to be intentional about looking for what God is doing in the world.

Barbara Brown Taylor, Episcopal priest, theologian, and author, makes the observation that we seldom live our lives in present moment. Instead, she observes we are too busy worrying about what happened yesterday or what will happen in the future. Taylor offers this advice for living prepared and in the present:

*Every morning when you wake up, decide to live the life God has given you to live right now. Refuse to live yesterday over and over again. Resist the temptation to save your best self for tomorrow. Do not put off living the kind of life you meant to live. There is no time for that, no matter how much time is left. Go ahead and make the decision, write the letter, get the help you need, find someone to love, give yourself away. ...Live prepared. Live a caught-up life, not a put-off life, so wherever you are – standing in a field or grinding at the mill, or just going about your everyday business of your life – you are ready for God, for whatever happens next, not afraid, but wide awake, watching for the Lord who never tires of coming to the world.<sup>1</sup>*

As we begin the season of Advent, the secular world is rapidly moving forward with the commercial Christmas season. Commercial advertising applies pressure to find the perfect gift for everyone and to experience the perfect holiday season. Family and friends have expectations for us to host and/or attend parties and get together. How

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.christiancentury.org/article/2004-09/dont-say-when?code=115Rcwwu8sdkpkv9c8L1&utm\\_source=Christian+Century+Newsletter&utm\\_campaign=5d2ba26343-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_SCP\\_2022-11-21&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_b00cd618da-5d2ba26343-82643623](https://www.christiancentury.org/article/2004-09/dont-say-when?code=115Rcwwu8sdkpkv9c8L1&utm_source=Christian+Century+Newsletter&utm_campaign=5d2ba26343-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_SCP_2022-11-21&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_b00cd618da-5d2ba26343-82643623)

will we spend our time, and which season will we prepare for? Barbara Brown Taylor's words remind us to live *a prepared life in the moment*.

As we begin our Advent journey once again, my hope is that each of us will take the time to ponder what living a prepared life in the moment looks like for us. This year we are again using devotional materials from Sanctified Art which is a team of artists in ministry who create multimedia resources for worshipping communities of all shapes and sizes. The Advent devotional for this year invites us to reflect on the question "what do you fear?" and draws on the fear and terror which existed in the first century during the time of king Herod and compare that with the fear that we feel today and our own reactions. Fear is both physical and emotional. It can paralyze us and divide us. The devotional guide challenges us to see fear differently and consider ways that we can respond differently by seeing where God is at work and turning our fear into love and action. And, in doing so, we are in fact living a prepared life in the moment.

### ***Advent***

Edwina Gateley, *Soul Whispers* (2015).

Advent means  
we are waiting for something,  
we are to expect  
something good and up-lifting  
to make us feel better.  
And why not?  
We struggle so,  
and we only want  
peace, security and even  
a little happiness.  
We dream of it—  
like a lost treasure  
in an empty desert.

Then, in the very dying of the Autumn Season,  
along comes Advent  
with candles, prayers, songs  
and promises  
of new possibilities.  
And, all tingling  
with excitement and expectancy,  
we are seduced  
into hoping once again.

Oh—thank God  
for Advent—  
and its perennial promise—  
pointing to a light  
which never dies.