



Volume 92 December 2022 - January 2023

Steeple Views

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR WAGNER

Dear Church,

We have all seen the phenomenon of choking in sports - when the hopes and expectations of an entire city or country rest on the padded shoulders of one star player. Every now and then a player rises to the occasion and saves the day with a decisive goal, a home run or a basket that earns them "eternal" gratitude from the fan base. The definition of 'eternal' in the world of sports is not a long-lived affair. It



might last a year... or more likely until the new season begins. Fan bases are fickle and have notoriously high expectations for their teams. Choking occurs when a player feels so much pressure that he or she can't perform when it counts most. It is quite common. (We are hoping that the Eagles won't choke. They look great this year!)

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6

This Messianic proclamation feels like it would surely choke whoever may become the anointed one. Are these expectations realistic? Can they ever be fulfilled? We know that the expectations we have for our presidents in the US are generally too high. Every four years we look for Mr. or Mrs. Fix-it and usually our expectations (and theirs) collide with reality. The government must rest on more than one person's shoulders, no? Peace must be brokered between divided parties, which is hard and often frustrating work and involves many people. Whatever Isaiah saw in his crystal ball, it pointed to someone, something greater than a mere mortal. He even says it: "Mighty God."

The Christmas story and the gospel of God Incarnate is as wondrous and daring today as it has always been. It takes this Jewish dream to the cradle of Bethlehem and proclaims it fulfilled. It brings humanity together in a backwater town. It makes room where no room can be found. The star above confirms that we are dealing with something that comes from the heavenly firmament.

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

Sanctuary: 8:30 am & 10:30 am with Livestreaming Sunday School

ST. PETER'S CHURCH COUNCIL

Suzanne Shaffer, President
Vacant, Vice President
Varyann Gerhart, Secretary
Dave Kinka, Treasurer
Brooke Alderfer
Nicole Alunni
Diana Blum
Steve Frescatore
John Ledder
Doug Mahan
Diana Sundar
Maureen Tang
Steve Wright
Diane Zenker

CORE VALUES

As members of St. Peter's Lutheran Church we value and embrace service driven ministry and being "other-oriented" serving God by serving people both locally and globally.

As members of St. Peter's Lutheran Church we value and strive for meaningful vibrant worship, enhanced with purposeful liturgy, powerful relevant messages, devout prayer, glorious music and participation by both clergy and lay "ministers".

As members of St. Peter's Lutheran Church we value spiritual growth for all generations defined by well thought out programs available for all ages and strong support for families of all types.

As members of St. Peter's we value and commit to being an inclusive community promoting authentic caring relationships with each other and our partners in ministry, always treating each other with respect.

As members of St. Peter's we value and commit to community hospitality, placing importance on being an integral part of our community by using both our building facility and our ac-

STEEPLE VIEWS

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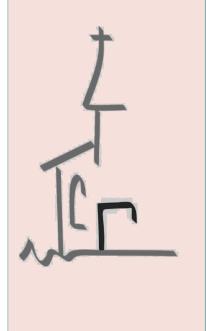
Music MinisterOrganist: Sam Tarasenko samtarasenko@gmail.com

Director of Handbell Bells: Liz Allen <u>redbetsey@gmail.com</u>

Administrative Assistant: Lisa Miller

Articles for Steeple Views should be submitted to the office or secretary@stpetersnorthwales.org

It is the Mission of St. Peter's Lutheran Church to invite all people to know, live, and share Jesus Christ



PASTOR'S MESSAGE CONTINUED

This text has never been about a human being or an earthly king or queen – or a president or the traditional Messiah. Any such person would choke inevitably, and their hubris would cause harm sooner or later. We need to put our greatest hopes in God so that we can be more realistic and measured in our expectations of people, leaders, humans... This time of year, we allow this dream to grow in our hearts and we place it where it belongs: onto the invisible shoulders of Christ our Lord. He may be called "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." He won't choke.

Have a blessed Advent/Christmas season.

Pastor Andreas Wagner



We will follow our established pattern for Christmas Eve Services.

6:00 pm Christmas Eve for Children and Families

with involvement of our youngest church members, costumes and young artist music.

8:00 pm Lessons and Carols

Festive Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with participation of choir and our music program. This year we will follow the order the service at King's College, Cambridge. Lots of King James language!

10:00 pm Holy Night Service with Communion

This is a quitter, more contemplative option. Guest singers: Paula Rivera and Luna Dantagnan.

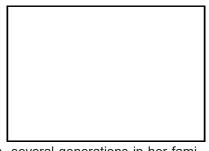
10:00 am Christmas Day Zoom Service

Please use our regular zoom link as posted in our daily emails and on our website. There will be no in-person service Christmas morning.

PARISH UPDATES

Baptisms

On Reformation Sunday we celebrated another outdoor Baptism. **Nola Saleno** received the Holy Sacrament in a traditional Baptism gown that has



been passed on from several generations in her family, dating back to the late 1800's. Her mother Liz was baptized in it. Nola visibly enjoyed all the attention she received in this moment of grace.

On October 9, **Sidney Kratz** was baptized. It was a beautiful day, and she was old enough to perhaps remember it as her parents, godparents, siblings, and other family members looked on. The Baptism



had been delayed because of the pandemic.

New Members

We were blessed to receive another group of new members to our church on Reformation Sunday. We hope that you will have the opportunity to get to know them:

- Boris & Joanne Borichevsky
- Elizabeth & Steven Fitzgerald
- Karen Haber
- Thea Johnson
- Melissa Kalb

- Linda & Bill O'Brien
- Betty Rogers
- Elizabeth (Liz) & Nola Salerno
- Carol Seipp



Funerals

We had a heavy month with several unexpected losses, including middle-aged people. Our prayers continue to go out to family members as they mourn, cope, and try to find their bearings.

- Michael Arena died suddenly at the age of 42 on October 11. He left behind his wife Crystal, daughter Coleen and son Leo. The community rallied around them with loving care and raised money for the funeral. Pastor Michael Carlson led a Memorial Service at church on the following Saturday, Oct. 15.
- Paul Smith was the middle son of Olga and Dave Smith. He died of a heart defect in a hospital in New Jersey on October 16. Paul was well-known to us and had been a part of the St. Peter's community for many years before moving to the Poconos. He was 53 years old. He leaves behind his wife Roberta, three children (Keith, Brian, Lisa) and several grandchildren. His service was held at church on Monday, October 24. Many stories and tributes were shared and greeted with both tears and laughter.
- Oswilla Mc Govern had died earlier on September 25 after an intense struggle with cancer. Relatives from out of state, close family, former colleagues, as well as students from Montco Tech, and many church members flocked into the church for her November 21 Memorial Service. The choir, which she had served for many decades, sang. Her role in family, church, and education was celebrated. During her long membership at St. Peter's, she served as Council President and Director of Christian Education. Please pray for her daughter Maria and granddaughter Lilia.
- Alfred (Al) Ledder reached the proud age of 94 and passed away on Friday, November 25. He was a tall man with a big heart and a sharp mind. He was also a man of faith. Al was born to German immigrants in Philadelphia in 1928. He remembered Psalm 23 and the Lord's Prayer in the language of his parents to his last days. A service was held for him at Lowne's Funeral Home in Lafayette Hill on December 3. He leaves behind his wife Helga, sons Craig and John and their families, including four grandchildren.

CEMETERY COMMITTEE

The cemetery will not sit idle this winter, and it's not because we are expecting a lot of activity at the Columbarium. (Hopefully not!) We have accepted TJ's Outdoor Maintenance proposal to establish a walking path from the Prospect Street entrance to the Columbarium. Off-season work on one of the side walls is also expected to take place in the next few months. Pete Sinotte planted several small shade trees at no cost to the church. He literally dug most of them out in the mountains. Historical markers and new benches will also be added in the spring of next year. For those various upgrades we will hold a fundraiser early next year, probably starting in January. People can make a direct donation to the cemetery or purchase a Memorial Tree (with a plaque) or a Memorial Bench up there. We will also renew our efforts to have people purchase a niche in our Columbarium for future use . The walkway alone with pavers around the Columbarium will cost approx. \$11,000. It will enable people to safely navigate their way to the columbarium, including people in wheelchairs and with walkers.

DEVOTIONAL BOOK PROJECT UPDATE

Next March it will be three years since we started the Devotional Book Project at St. Peter's. We have completed approximately 280 devotions so far, written by twenty-two different writers. By the end of June 2023 all devotions will be completed, and we will proofread the entire body of texts one more time and get it print ready. Around this time next year, you will be able to purchase our **Devotional Book** with a spiritual message for every day of the year. I would like to thank all who are contributing to this project. We are entering the final stretch!

Devotional Book Contributors

- Kathy Anglim
- Anita Bailey
- Charlene Bance
- Ali Clark
- Susan Darrow
- Tom Friend
- Bernie Heinze
- Bill Hubler

- Linda Hubler
- Bill Kesack
- Maryann Landmesser
- Rebecca Ledder
- Shelby McCarty
- Oswilla Mc Govern
- Jamie Nouri
- Mark Ouellette

- Terry Riesz
- Patricia Riordan
- Linda Sausser
- **Rob Strauss**
- Andreas Wagner
- Karen Whelihan

CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY

Spark and Youth children of St. Peter's have been busy these last few months learning about God and the love he shows to all of us. Our faithful teachers, Suzanne Shaffer, Gretchen Flanagan, Darin Gross, along with our Interns from Gwynedd Mercy, Jackie and Nadia, have been teaching wonderful lessons with games, activities and even a Jesus Four Cheese Pizza lesson! Hey, who doesn't love pizza? George Gross has been working with the Youth Group on Sundays during the second service. Confirmation students continue to meets each Sunday after the 2nd service.

First Holy Communion Eight children received the Sacrament on November 6th: Avery Charles, Mae Garrity, Brody Inman, Fox Kane, Austin Hain, and Stephen, Nora, & Grant Staudt.

Mitzvah Center Trip On Sunday, November 13th, a group of children and adults volunteered at the Mitzvah Center warehouse near Norristown sorting and packing items to help families in need in our surrounding communities.



Serves families walking along life's edge by providing over 100 Mitzvah Circle products including clothing, diapers, new strollers and car seats, toiletries, household items and other necessities.



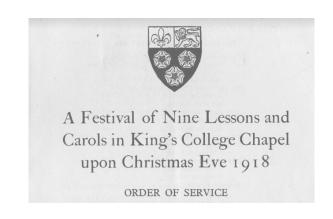
Christmas Eve Our traditional Christmas Eve service for Families is at 6:00 pm. Contact Jenn Bodolus if your child would like to participate in the service. Jenn is looking for readers, worship assistants, and young musicians to help bring the Nativity story alive. We look forward to seeing you there!

A MESSAGE FROM SAM TARASENKO MUSIC MINISTER

Happy Advent and Merry Christmas! December is upon us and we'll be celebrating the New Year in the blink of an eye. The music ministry has been working on a lot of exciting music. On Dec. 4th, you'll heard the choir sing at the 10:30am service while Maureen Tang provided beautiful cello music during both services. The Belles will lead spirited services (as they always do every second Sunday of the month) on Dec. 11th. If variety is your thing, A Common Thread will lead an upbeat Advent and Christmas themed service on Dec. 18th. They have been preparing for months and are excited to share a contemporary approach within a traditional setting. (They will subsequently appear every six weeks).

Christmas Eve is the pinnacle of this season. We will have three services: 6:00 pm, 8:00 pm, and 10:00 pm. Each service will be unique. The 6:00 pm is a family service put together by Jenn Bodolus. To cite Professor McGonagall from Harry Potter, it will be an evening of "well mannered frivolity" replete with costumes and storytelling. The 8:00 pm service will be based on the King's College Service of Lessons and Carols, a tradition spanning back to 1918. This service arose out of a need for "more imaginative worship" in a society emerging out of a brutal war. It was carefully crafted by Eric Milner-White, the dean of King's Chapel, who borrowed from "ancient sources a little service for Christmas Eve - nine carols and nine tiny lessons, which were read by various officers of the Church, beginning with a chorister, and ending, through the different grades, with the Finally, the 10:00 pm service will be the Bishop." most meditative. It will feel like a Sunday service but with added Christmas music and guest musicians.

What can we expect in the New Year? To put it simply, the unexpected. I anticipate growth in the



choir, emergence of small special music groups, and a bigger presence of A Common Thread. My goal is to use the best elements of high church worship while fusing it with the informal "feel" of St. Peter's. Our biggest strength is our community. That sense of care and familiarity is something we never want to lose. However, we shouldn't down dress and popularize church into something devoid of majesty and reverence. Often these two ideas compromise each other rather than enhancing one another. Some things will work; others won't. Anticipate something new every week and keep an open mind to the unexpected!

I am optimistic for the future. God is leading St. Peter's in a new direction. It is our job to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit as we "press on the upward way" and stay relevant in a secular world that needs a spark of the divine. Until the new year rolls around, I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a minimally stressful holiday season.

Warmly,

Sam



RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

So proud of this group and community!!

We've already collected 96 units so far in 2022 – so that's saved 288 lives and we are at 101% of our goal YTD.

Thank you to all who are willing and able to support the blood drives!!!

Monday

Dec 12

2 pm - 7pm

For appointments please go to:

www.redcross.org

Enter sponsor code: St. Peters North Wales



ST. PETER'S SOCIAL MINISTRY UPDATES

Good Gifts Thank you so much for your generosity in this year's Good Gifts collection. As of Nov 28th we raised \$2,118. We will purchase 2 family farms - each farm contains a cow, a pair of goats, a dozen chicks, two pigs, farming tools, seeds, and agricultural training. With 1 or 2 donations still outstanding, we will easily reach \$2,145, enough to buy 3 farms! Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

The Gemma Giving Tree (Silver Springs Martin Luther School) is up and ready. We have more than 40 gifts to chose from. Here is what you have to do. 1. Pick a gift 2. Buy the gift. 3. Bring the unwrapped gift back to church by December 11 for delivery to Santa's Workshop at Gemma. If you missed a chance to pick a gift check out the list provided for other needed gifts and stocking stuffers. If you have any questions just ask Robin. Thank you for making a child's Christmas special.

Update on our friends from **New Creation Lutheran Church**. A large delivery was made in November to the church of food, clothing, and blankets. The food and some of the clothing was given to the members of New Creation. What they can't use along with the blankets were then handed out to the homeless in the area. St. Peter's sent a check to help New Creation renovate the apartment next to the church. A work day was held to help with the work. A small but mighty group worked on floor in the bathroom, painting, dry wall patching, and moving old appliances out. There is still a lot of work to be done but we are getting there. If you interested in helping with a work day. Please let us know. We are planning another work day in January.

St. Peter's donated 5 bags of **Everything But the Turkey** for the families in the community based programs at Gemma (Silver Springs). The bags included a gift card for a turkey, dinner, dessert fixings, and the pie and turkey roasting pan to cook them in. Thank you for your support of this ministry.

Laurel House 5K Many thanks to Karin Clark, Stephanie Freidly, John Mac-Innes and Mia Woods for their efforts to run and raise funds to support Laurel House. The team raised \$430 towards its \$500 goal! Laurel House provides support services to victims of domestic violence. Thank you again runners!

If you have any questions on any of our projects or would like to help with any of them please contact Robin 610-277-8378

Thrift Shop News

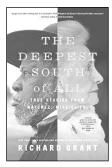
The Thrift Shop continues to be a popular shop in the North Wales community. We happily accept donations of clothing and household items on Tuesdays from 9:30 to 11:30 and Wednesdays and Saturdays when the shop is open.



St. Peter's Readers

is a group of women who meet on a Tuesday (about every 5-6 weeks) at 11:30am -1:00pm in the church parlor. Here is our anticipated reading discussion schedule through July 2023. Contact Charlene at cmbance@gmail.com if you would like to join us or have a question.

January 10: The Deepest
 South of All: True Stories from
 Natchez Mississippi by Richard
 Grant. From NYTimes: An entertaining tour of a complex Mississippi town build on slavery and defined today by a handful of eccentric characters.



- February 28: Everything I Never Told You by Celeste Ng
- March 28: Dear Marcus: A letter to the Man Who Shot Me by Jerry McGill
- May 2: The Engineer's Wife by Tracey Emerson Wood
- June 13: The ExtraOrdinary Life of Sam Hell by Robert Dugan
- July 25: The Next Ship Home by Heather Webb

St. Peter's Green Team

Eco-Friendly Policy

for Users of St. Peter's Facilities

The Earth is the Lord's and all that is in it.

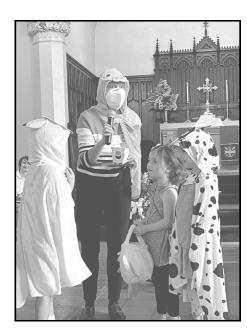
Psalm 24:1

We recognize the importance of being stewards of creation and environmentally responsible.

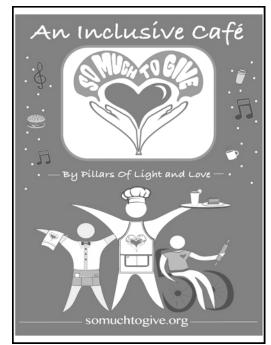
- Use the kitchen's dishware, cups and stainless cutlery whenever possible. (Alternative: paper or biodegradable cups, plates, cutlery & paper napkins)
- Encourage people to bring their own refillable water bottle and/or provide pitchers of water with the kitchen's cups or paper cups.
- Recycle plastic water bottles. Discard recyclable items in the marked containers
- No use of Styrofoam cups, plates or containers.
- No use of plastic plates, cups, cutlery, straws or beverage stirrers.

Caring for God's Creation





Joy Jacobson, with the help of some adorable barnyard friends, explains the Good Gifts program during Sunday Worship.



Pillars of Light and Love opened a restaurant! The mission of the So Much to Give Inclusive Cafe is to provide a welcoming and inclusive experience to empower all people, including those with disabilities and their families, to have equal opportunities to work, dine, socialize, volunteer learn. 3401 Skippack Pike, in Cedars, located just outside Skippack PA!

St. Peter's Happenings









Work Continues at New Creation Lutheran Church in Philadelphia.

Teens and Families Volunteer at the Mitzvah Center.











First Communion Students



The Staudt children Steven, Nora, & Grant.



Mae Vonne Garrity with her mother Melissa.

Mae Vonne Garrity, Avery Charles & Nora Staudt



Dr. Todd Bauer (center), Superintendent of the North Penn School District, for conversations with local clergy and faith community leaders.



Eric Gutsche with his dad Bill. We blessed Eric prior to leaving for service in the Army.



Ellen and Mike Kostrubiak at our recent gathering with Father Mykola. They belong to the Ukrainian Catholic Church of the Presentation of our Lord in Lansdale. Ellen was the coordinator of the Ukrainian aid collection held earlier this year.



Bill and Linda O'Brien (sitting on each side of the chart) opened the door to Shamanic traditions for us. Jamie Nouri provided the drumming sound that literally sets the tone for journeys into the very real imaginary world.



The Arena Family
Acyn & Blake Auxier
Bryan Auxier
Tom Brauman
Joyce Chaffee
Tracy Cicala
Vickie Concepcion
Becky Cuccuzza
Elin Detweiler
James Doherty
Marion Feathers
John Foster

Grace Furey

Joan Gauker
Jenny George
Barbara Glover
Pat Hagy
Renae Hayden
Ruth Herbert
Janet Hoffman
Billy Kane
Herb Kavash
Leo Kirschner
RJ Krieswicki
Lenihan Family
John Lopresti
Lyman Lundeen
Cindy Mancuso

Leona Marchakitus

Michael Mattar

Carlos Malave

Richard McCune Lilia McGovern Jan Miller Joe Mitterhur Bill Myers Sally Neiderhiser Arlene Novak Mike O'Hanlon Kirk Olson Kirsten Olson Eve & Bryn Phelps Yolanda Romero Kurt Schwarz Rev. Ihor & Olga Shemihon **Bruce Simons** The Smith Family Florence Ulrich

Dale Underwood Sam Wagner Brenda Weir Larry Whittaker Barbara Wiedman Sheila Wilkins Charles Zajatz

AA members

People suffering from natural disaster, military conflict, and uncertainty in their lives, especially the people of the Ukraine.

Hol

Holy God, Creator of all that is,

Once again you delight us with fall colors and smells and we thank you for crisp, beautiful days.

Yet many near and far, are experiencing extreme weather conditions that have brought destruction, loss, and death.

On perfect days it is easy to forget the suffering of others.

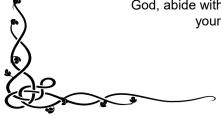
Lord, help us to be present for them; to be a source of help and hope as they seek to rebuild their lives.

Lord, we continue to pray for peace in our country and our world and for wisdom among the world's leaders as they guide us through difficult times.

Hear our prayers also for all on our prayer lists and those who care for them;

those who are ill, those struggling with chronic conditions, and every person who feels diminished and bereft of hope. God, abide with them and us, and let us all experience your healing presence every day.

Amen.



December

Lucas Morrow	.Dec 02
Jeffrey Streckfus	.Dec 03
Melanie Lauro	.Dec 05
Christine Troxel	.Dec 05
Jean Prindle	
Joan Gauker	.Dec 08
George Gross	.Dec 09
Leland Honeywell	.Dec 09
Bethany Coover	
Lauren Hain	.Dec 11
Allison Hannigan	.Dec 11
Steven McGlynn	.Dec 12
Leo Arena	.Dec 14
David Sausser	.Dec 15
Francisco Worman	.Dec 15
Sydnie Kratz	.Dec 16
Meg Matlack	.Dec 16
Karen Shuster	.Dec 16
Cindy LeBlanc	.Dec 17
Remington Charles	.Dec 19
Adam Meyer	.Dec 19
Tricia Riordan	.Dec 20
Isabelle Michaud	
Ellie Spaid	.Dec 22
Sarah Wagner	.Dec 23
Susan Darrow	.Dec 25
Judy Jones	
Karl Walter	
Ryder Charles	
Michael O'Brien	
Doug Mahan	.Dec 29

January

Karen Haber	Jan 01
Justin Urban	Jan 01
Jen Gutsche	
Michelle Browne	Jan 03
Avery Hain	Jan 06
Dottie DeStefano	Jan 07
Mae Garrity	Jan 10
Nancy Hain	Jan 12
James Miller	Jan 12
Marjorie Blum	Jan 14
Bill Kane	Jan 14
Eileen Wright	Jan 14
Renee Erwin	Jan 16
Jenni MacInnes	Jan 16
Sharon Brenfleck	Jan 17
Luke Homan	Jan 17
Gina Rudolph	Jan 18
Martha Pope	Jan 20
Suzanne Shaffer	Jan 20
Jennifer Bodolus	Jan 21
Tacey Cullen	Jan 23
Carol McGilloway	Jan 23
Sandy Schrader	
Kurt Schwarz	Jan 23
Hudson Charles	Jan 25
Rich Schrader	Jan 25
Florence Ulrich	Jan 25
Vince Giangiacomo	Jan 26
Barbara Rodgers	Jan 26
Jeremy Heilman	Jan 30
Cameran Irwin	Jan 30

February

Jo Borichevsky	Feb	01
_indy Kolb		
NathanHeilman	Feb	02
Keith Bance	Feb	04
Ashley Destefano	Feb	04
Helga Ledder	Feb	05
Malcolm Tang	Feb	05
_illyTurner	Feb	05
Nora Staudt	Feb	80
Grace Paek	Feb	10
Ted Riesz	Feb	11
Bill Gutsche	Feb	12
Owight Homan	Feb	13
Charles Hayes	Feb	14
Ryan Beahan		
Cindy Heist	Feb	16
Emily Gross	Feb	17
Jayson Troxel	Feb	17
nge Coleman	Feb	19
Andrea Walter	Feb	19
America Lara-Worman	Feb	20
_yla Diehl	Feb	22
Brynne Gallagher		
Eve Phelps	Feb	25
Sean Dallas	Feb	26
Judy Coates		
Kevin DeStefano	Feb	28
Austin Hain	Feb	28
Martha Heinze	Feb	01



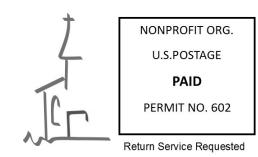
Olivia Greco Dec 31 Beth Watts Dec 31

Leo Doherty recently celebrated his 100th Birthday!!



Pastor Wagner celebrates US Citizenship!







6:00 pm Christmas Eve for Children and Families

8:00 pm Lessons and Carols with Candle Light

10:00 pm Holy Night Service with Communion