

# THE LIGHTED CROSS



## December 2022 Issue:

Inside this issue:

Stewardship

Lessons & Carols

Christmas Events

Tax Advantaged Ways of Giving

Library Recommendations

BUMNS Update

Scout Troop 181 Update

Fall Fest

December Birthdays

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## December Calendar

- 4 Holy Communion
- 6 Widow Support Group
- 11 Last Day of Toy Drive
- 18 Service of Lessons & Carols, 10am
- 18 Christmas Lunch, immediately after service
- 21 Longest Night Service, 7pm
- 24 Christmas Eve, 7pm
- 25 Christmas Day, 10am

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Food Pantry Open Every Tuesday 9am to noon & Thursday 2pm to 6pm

DECEMBER PANTRY NEEDS Cookies, Oatmeal, Cream of Wheat, Dry Cereals

## STEWARDSHIP FOR THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY *Steve Cherry*

Paul Maina, an Oxford colleague of Janelle Larson, is in the states on break from his work as director of the **Children & Youth Empowerment Center [CYEC] in Kenya**. He spoke to the Every Topic Considered [ETC] Class on November 20<sup>th</sup>. You'll recall that Berwyn UMC has partnered with him in support of this durable, successful project operating under extremely challenging conditions. Children and youth, many of whom were homeless and orphaned, are comprehensively supported giving them the best shot at whole and full life. Paul is articulate about the importance of helping young persons develop, in the Global Community in which we participate and are a part. We get to take part in God's work while seeing the fruits of those labors bloom into success. [see emails: Giving Tuesday & Online Auction for Zawadi Fund International (ZFI), write to [cyec.zfi@gmail.com](mailto:cyec.zfi@gmail.com) or see website: [www.cyec.net](http://www.cyec.net) ]

For Berwyn UMC to be a force in the global community your participation in the church community is essential. Over the next several weeks you'll receive some special requests:

- One is to make a plan for giving to BUMC for 2023 and respond by US mail or email. This helps us prepare for the various ministries and missions to which we're called.
- The other is to consider a '2<sup>nd</sup> mile,' end-of-year gift as part of your 2022 tax year charitable planning. This will help us address a spending deficit for the year.

Paul Maina is one who inspires us to see ourselves as part of a world community, aware of those for whom Jesus cared beyond our local community. Thanks for your being a part of the Berwyn UMC witness and participating in the global community.

## LESSONS AND CAROLS *John Lewis*

An ancient tradition of the church, join us as we journey from the beginning of Creation to the Birth of Christ as we read from sacred scripture and sing the beautiful music that span the Advent and Christmas seasons. Professional musicians will join with our church choir to enhance the beauty and reverence of the music and worship experience. A brunch reception will follow.



Merry Christmas! Hearing those words can bring a smile to my face, especially from a loved one. Oh, but there is so much to do between now and Christmas, and each day of December seems to tick by at a lightning pace. In addition to our everyday business of working, keeping the house clean, getting children to their activities, and staying connected as a family, this time of year adds Christmas shopping, Christmas parties, Christmas decorating, and Christmas itself.

Before you start calling me a Bah Humbug, I love Christmas. I love seeing my children's faces light up when the Christmas decorations turn on for the first time, just like they did when they were younger. I love that our children are old enough to help decorate the tree without worrying too much about broken ornaments. Where I struggle, and I say this as a pastor, is how to keep still long enough to focus on the time of advent and Christmas and to make sure my kids also keep the meaning of Christmas in their hearts.

Let's be honest. The idea of adding anything new to an already busy schedule is terrifying, borderline sitting in the corner of my office rocking terrifying. However, suppose your season is just as busy, but you want to focus on the hopeful waiting of advent and the celebration of Christ's first coming in Christmas. In that case, I offer a few suggestions to transform what you are already doing into moments of faith formation.

**Tree Decorating:** I don't know about your family's traditions, but our family decorates the tree together, at least after I wrestle with the lights for an hour or two. Rebecca hands the ornaments to each child, and they find places to hang them. Rebecca and I usually hang the last ornament – a ceramic door with our last name over it – and then we take our picture. Offering a blessing before you start can transform this fun, although sometimes frustrating, task into a moment of faith formation. Here is something you can use to bless your tree as you decorate it:

*God who created the birds in the air, the fish in the sea,  
the stars in the sky, and the trees in the ground,  
bless this tree as we decorate it and make it a joyful symbol in our home.  
May its branches remind us of the shade and shelter  
you provide for us and for many creatures.  
May its trunk remind us of your strength.  
May its lights bring us peace.  
May we remember your gift to us this season, the gift of the baby Jesus. Amen.*  
[Blessing Your Christmas Tree – Buildfaith.com](#)

**Spending time with your Church Family:** This year, on Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, we will have our musical celebration of Lessons and Carols, followed by our church Christmas Dinner. I hope you will carve some time out of your busy season for this festive occasion. It is an excellent opportunity to invite friends and neighbors.

**Longest Night Service:** Let's face it, the Christmas season can be challenging for many people. Whether they are grieving the loss of loved ones, are feeling lonely, or can't seem to get into the festive spirit they see in others this time of year. That is ok, and this year we are adding a service to our Christmas traditions called "The Longest Night Service." This service, held on the First Day of Winter, December 21<sup>st</sup>, is a low-key contemplative service meant to give prayerful space to those who find the traditional Christmas celebrations challenging to manage.

**Christmas Eve:** We sing our favorite carols and hear the Christmas story. Berwyn UMC will have our service at 7:00 pm. This traditional service with candle lighting and communion is a perfect opportunity to sit and rest in the light and hope that Christ's birth brings as we listen to and sing our favorite carols to the Christmas story.

**Christmas Day:** We will have an informal celebration at our standard worship time of 10:00 am. There will be lessons, carols, and a brief message. Whether you come decked out in your favorite Christmas attire or show up in your favorite Christmas Jammies, you are welcome to this time of Joyful celebration.

**New Year's Day:** We will gather at our standard worship time of 10:00 am for the Wesleyan Covenant Renewal Service. The heart of the service focused on the Covenant Prayer, requires persons to commit themselves to God. Wesley found the service rich and meaningful, as expressed in his Journal: "Many mourned before God, and many were comforted" (April 1756); "It was, as usual, a time of remarkable blessing" (October 1765). "It was an occasion for a variety of spiritual experiences ... I do not know that ever we had a greater blessing. Afterward, many desired to return thanks, either for a sense of pardon, for full salvation, or a fresh manifestation of His graces, healing all their backslidings" (January 1st, 1775). In London, these services were usually held on New Year's Day.

My goal this Christmas is not to add more activities and duties but to transform the things that we already do into meaningful ways of sharing the story of Jesus. You can find more details in this newsletter and on our church website at <https://www.berwynumc.org/Christmas>. What are some of your favorite Christmas traditions?

May your Christmas be Merry and Bright,

Pastor Kevin

To keep up with local, national and global church news follow:

**Berwyn UMC Newsletter:** The Lighted Cross

**Facebook:** BUMCservice

**Instagram:** bumcares

**YouTube:** Berwyn UMC

**Church Website:** www.berwynumc.org

**Eastern PA Conference website:** www.epaumc.org

**UM News website:** www.umnews.org

**\*To share church events and member news in The Lighted Cross, please submit them via our website** www.berwynumc.org/media-resources.

**\*To include items in the church bulletin, email the church office at** bumc@comcast.net.

**\*To include items in the weekly e-newsletter, email John Paylor at** jlpaylor@verizon.net

## TAX-ADVANTAGED WAYS OF GIVING *Pastor Kevin Rutledge*

Did you know that the Internal Revenue Code provides a way to support the ministry of Berwyn UMC that may lower the amount of tax you owe? It's true. By carefully structuring your gifts, you can reduce or eliminate substantial portions of your tax liability. Below are just a few ways.

1. Gifts of appreciated assets such as stock, real estate, and collectibles: When donating an appreciated asset, the item's current market value is deductible from your taxes. However, the gain on that asset is not taxed. For example, if you purchased stock for \$1,000 that has risen to \$2,000, it could be gifted to the church, and you receive a charitable deduction of \$2,000. If you sold the stock and gave the church \$2,000, you still receive the \$2,000 deduction, but you will also have to pay a capital gains tax on the \$1,000 profit. You avoid capital gains taxes if you give the asset to the church rather than selling it yourself.
2. For those receiving income from retirement accounts such as IRAs or 401K, or 403B plans, donations from those accounts given directly to the church avoid paying taxes on the withdrawn amount. The amount given even counts toward your RMD—required minimum distribution—without increasing your taxable income.
3. If your taxes are such that you are close to the threshold for itemized deductions, giving in one tax year may make sense while having the church allocate the donation to a different church year. For example, if your taxes are such that you anticipate being able to itemize this year but not next year, you can donate money in 2022 that you want to apply to the church's budget.

If you want more information about your donation options, please visit our church website, where you can learn about the various ways to give and initiate the process of making a stock gift. You may also speak to Steve Cherry, our Financial Secretary, or Pastor Kevin. They would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

## BUMC LIBRARY BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS *Marjorie Smink*

Each book for the next several months comes from the library of Rev. Dr. William T. Cherry, father of BUMC member, Rev. Steve Cherry. Bill Cherry passed away in 2020.

***Don't Sweat the Small Stuff...and It's All Small Stuff*** by Richard Carlson, c1997 [158.1]

Do little things in life drive you crazy? Author and consultant on stress and happiness, Richard Carlson, suggests ways to calm yourself in your hurried, stress-filled life. For instance, "Think of your problems as potential teachers."; "Remember that when you die, your inbox will not be empty."; "Try to live in the present moment." With his gentle manner, Carlson shows ways to make your actions more peaceful and caring, thus helping make your life calmer and more stress-free.



**Our Mission**  
Worshipping God  
Serving Jesus  
Loving Others

**Our Vision**  
**Statement**  
We are a diverse  
community of social-  
ly conscious believ-  
ers affirming our  
faith in Jesus Christ  
through action.

*Ministry of the People  
is supported by the  
Staff*

Pastor: Kevin Rutledge

Lay Leader: Amy Dodds

Sexton: Over Caicedo

Admin. Assistant:  
Veronica Mosley

Organist/Director of  
Music: John Lewis

Nursery Assist: Eliza  
Chumpitaz



## BUMNS DECEMBER UPDATE *Jane Harris*

December is upon us and 2022 is nearly over! The weather may be grey and cold but it is always bright and warm at nursery school. The hallways are filled with colorful holiday projects that the children have worked so hard on. The children are very excited for the holidays. We will be performing our holiday show on December 15<sup>th</sup>. Even the youngest children have a part to play and all have been practicing their songs. This is a cherished BUMNS tradition and we are happy there are no limits on participation this year.

The Nursery School would like to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a peaceful, healthy New Year.

## SCOUT TROOP 181 UPDATE *Debbie Bellew*

This past month has been a busy one for Scouts BSA Troop 181 - we camped at the Hawk Mountain Scout reservation on the Appalachian Trail, worked together on an Eagle Scout project (pictured) to rebuild steps at the Field of Dreams for the Berwyn Paoli Area Little League, and conducted a pre Thanksgiving food drive. We are looking forward to earning the Radio merit badge together next month. Interested boys age 11 or older are encouraged to join the troop for a fun bowling night at Devon Lanes on December 13 at 7:00pm, or join us for a sample meeting any first Tuesday of the month in Schieck Hall at 7:00pm. Please reach out with any questions



to [joinpaoli181@gmail.com](mailto:joinpaoli181@gmail.com) or [scoutmaster.181.paoli@gmail.com](mailto:scoutmaster.181.paoli@gmail.com).

## BUMC FALL FESTIVAL *Steph Borelly*

While you are 'Winter/Spring Cleaning' – please remember the Fall Festival! We accept Flea Market goods, Collectibles and book donations. Everything can be placed in the Scout Cabin – there is A LOT of room!!!

Any questions:  
Cell: 610.299.6254  
Email: [borellysteph6@gmail.com](mailto:borellysteph6@gmail.com)



### DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

2 Jane Ruoff

5 Eloise Levitt

10 Eric Spofford

15 Amy Dodds

18 Sally Bridwell

19 Dorothy Wilhelmy

21 Penny Stoker

Contact church office to update birthday  
information





## Our Mission

Worshipping God

Serving Jesus

Loving Others

## Our Vision Statement

We are a diverse community of socially conscious believers  
affirming our faith in Jesus Christ through action.

## Worship Schedule

Sundays	10:00AM	In Person Worship in Sanctuary
	10:00 AM	On-Line Worship on Facebook Live/ Church Website/YouTube

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Berwyn, PA 19312

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[www.berwynumc.org](http://www.berwynumc.org)

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