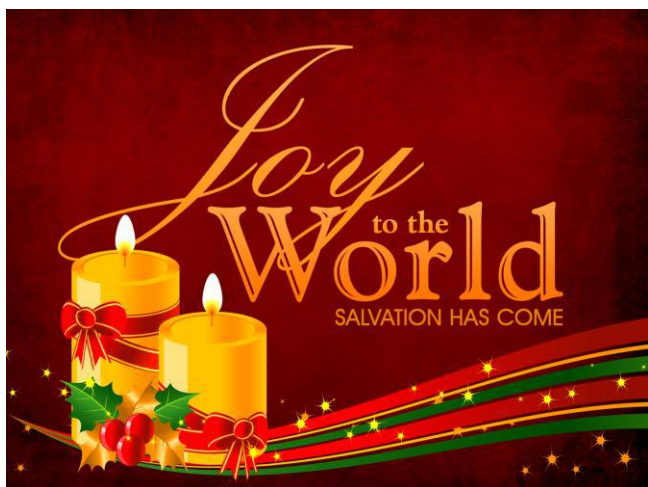
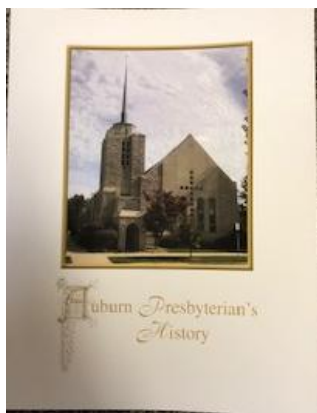


Auburn Presbyterian Church
111 West 12th St. – P.O. Box 448
Auburn, IN 46706
Rev. David Lawrence



DECEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER



HISTORY BOOK!!! If you haven't yet picked up a copy of the church history book, compiled for the 175th Anniversary celebration, copies are available in the office in a brown box by Tracy's desk. If you so desire, Barb Morrow will deliver a copy to your home. Feel free to call her at 925-5356. If you have grown children or other family members who you'd like to receive the book, extra copies are available. A \$5 donation is requested to offset printing costs. Thank you!

NEW CALENDARS FOR 2021

Pinnington Funeral Home has provided free 2021 Calendars to the church. You may pick one up at the back of the sanctuary or in the church office.



FROM THE PASTOR:

Brothers and sisters-

I hope you are all well and doing those things that keep us and those around us healthy.

I am tired. What about you? This pandemic lifestyle is taking its toll. The stress and worry about who's sick or could get sick just wears me out. I try to be constantly mindful of the precautions, which is mental and emotional work. All of us have lost any kind of routine or pattern to our days and the simplest thing takes twice as long as it used to. I miss the freedom to gather with people for worship, a meal, or even coffee. I'm about done with this. I want to raise my voice with the psalmist: How long, Lord, how long? How long will you hide your face? How long must I bear pain in my soul and sorrow in my heart?

This is my cry, but I know you are tired too. We have had to adapt and develop new ways of doing things, but in that process we have lost some things. Most significantly, we have lost the opportunity to be with each other. We have given up gathering in the sanctuary, but we've lost even more than that. The YMCA is off-limits and many of us have given up exercise out of an abundance of caution. Most of us haven't been to a restaurant for months, and getting our hair or nails done is a rarity. We have lost so many of the simple things that made up our lives.

Our losses and stresses are real. It's only natural that they affect us. It might seem like we're complaining or self-pitying, but when we don't say anything our grief just percolates. This makes our stress come out in ways that we don't intend—we can be short-tempered or angry or exhausted or depressed or any combination of the above. Most of us just feel blah. Like the psalmist, we wonder where's God in this. How long will God's face be hidden?

These words of lament and sense of abandonment come from Psalm 13. This psalm begins with this heartfelt lament, a cry familiar to all of us. At one time or another, we have all felt lost and alone. We sense God is present, but has forgotten about us and turned aside or left us behind. Our heart is heavy and life is grim.

The psalm starts there but moves to prayer. The psalmist speaks to God, renewing that relationship and recognizing it as a source of strength and support. We are in the middle of a difficult time. There seems to be no quick or easy way out of these days, but our faith tells us that God remains. It is this relationship with God, nurtured with prayer and meditation, that can help us with our grief.

During this time of incessant transition, insecurity, and stress our safe harbor is our relationship with God. This might mean that we have to explore new practices to strengthen our relationship. We might have to look into books or an online community. We might have to discover journaling or prayer walking or simple breath prayer. I don't know what will work for you, but I do know these practices are vital to our faith in these days.

Read Psalm 13 and find the richness of this lament. This psalm ends with thanksgiving for God has been good to us.

Shalom, Pastor David

Every week on Monday we will be emailing you some activities for advent. The first addition is longer because it explains the program. I hope you enjoy this and that it makes your advent time more meaningful.



SESSION NOTES:

We want to thank the elders, deacons and committee members for their time, talents, and dedication shown to our church this past year. Your work was greatly appreciated. The following Elders and Deacons have served their terms and will be going off at the end of December:

Deacons: Kathryn Bassett, Christine Cross, Carl Smith, Leah Watson
Elders: Joe Dick, Barbara Morrow, Julia Nixon
Jr. Deacon: Marcus Smith



On Sunday, November 22 the following individuals were voted by the congregation to serve as Elders, Deacons, and Foundation Board members for the next 3 years. We appreciate your willingness to serve your church!

Deacons: Nancy Derrow, Chryl John, Phyllis Neumann
Elders: Peggy Jones, Doug Morrow, David Poudrier
Junior Deacon: Aidan Smith
APC Foundation: David John
Leadership & Development Committee: Barb Morrow and Marjorie Reinsch

Just a quick note that the Joint Meeting of Elders and Deacons that normally takes place in December has been postponed until January or February.

THE LATEST COVID UPDATE CONCERNING WORSHIPPING IN THE SANCTUARY GIVEN ON NOVEMBER 17, 2020

Friends:

I hope you continue to take steps to keep yourselves healthy. I wanted to write to bring you up to date on things at the church, especially about worship.

The session met last night and we looked at the data and medical advice concerning the Covid spread. Central in our discussion was the fact that the majority of our congregation has at least one characteristic that puts them in the high-risk category. Concern for your health outweighs the pleasure we take in gathering. We agreed that the best decision for the health of our congregation was to stop worshipping in our sanctuary until after the New Year. This was a hard decision and I don't think any of us liked this action.

This raises two questions: what about the congregational meeting and what about Christmas Eve. First, we will plan on a congregational meeting after worship Sunday. People will have to use Zoom to participate in the meeting and we will use the same Zoom room that we use for worship. As many as possible need to participate in this virtual meeting so that we have a quorum. You do not have to download the Zoom program—just click on the link in the email. We will vote by raising hands, which can be done with Zoom. You will receive instructions on how to do this with the invitation to Sunday worship.

We will have a worship service Christmas Eve. Right now, this service is a work in progress. The Worship Committee and I are striving to design a unique worship service that will be memorable and inclusive. This will be new territory for all of us and I appreciate your willingness to be a part of this journey.

I want to remind you of the daily devotion on FaceBook and the weekly Bible study on Zoom. I also want to encourage you to call me if you want to talk about this decision, things going on at the church, or just to chat.

Please stay safe and healthy in these uncertain times. May God's Spirit go with you today and every day.

Shalom,
Pastor David

STEWARDSHIP AND BUDGET COMMITTEE:

The books for 2020 will be wrapped up December 31. If you would like to have your giving go towards 2020, we will need your offering before that date. Thank you.



PER CAPITA: \$42.00 per confirmed member

Per Capita is assessed on the number of active members on the church's roll. Each governing body beyond our Session determines how much Per Capita it will assess the membership. For next year, our church **Per Capita Apportionment is: \$42.00 per member.** You may make your checks out to the Auburn Presbyterian Church and either mail to the church office or drop in the offering plate. Be sure to mark at the bottom of your check "per capita" so the treasurer will apply the funds appropriately.



The Stewardship and Budget Committee would like to thank you for your tithes and personal giving this past year. With your financial support and personal involvement, the church will be able to do God's work. If you haven't already, **PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO MAIL IN YOUR PLEDGE CARD!**

END OF YEAR NOTICE:

Officers and anyone who has to submit a report for our Annual Report, please have it to the church secretary no later than January 10, 2021.

WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE:

If you are using your home phones to get the worship services on Sunday morning, the following is the information you will need:

Dial by your location

- +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)
- +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington D.C)
- +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
- +1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)
- +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
- +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

Meeting ID: 834 8133 8362

Pass code: 732642



CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICE:

Although we are discussing other options, it's likely that the Christmas Eve Service will be provided virtual on Zoom. You will be sent an email about this when the time gets closer.

MISSION ACTION & INTREPRETATION COMMITTEE:



2020 CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING:

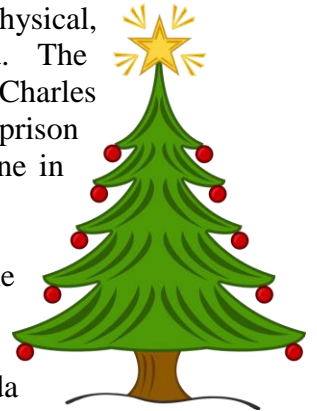
What Is the Christmas Joy Offering? There are four special offerings designated by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) which provide congregations direct ways of supporting specific causes that help those who need assistance. The Christmas Joy Offering has been a Presbyterian tradition for more than 60 years. As we celebrate with joy our unity in God's family, we are providing tangible support to persons in our community of faith.

The receipts from the offering are distributed to the Board of Pensions (50 percent) to support assistance programs and to the Committee on Higher Education (50 percent) to support the Presbyterian racial ethnic schools and colleges.

Please make a generous contribution to the Christmas Joy Offering by mailing your contribution to the church (PO Box 448) and mark "Christmas Joy Offering" in the memo part of the check.

Thank you, from your Mission Action and Interpretation Committee.

ANGEL TREE! For several years, the Auburn Presbyterian Church has helped meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the families who have a mother or father incarcerated. The national program is overseen by Prison Fellowship, an evangelical organization formed by Charles Colson as a result of his experiences in jail. Angel Tree's objective is to connect parents in prison with their children through the delivery of Christmas gifts. It is a volunteer program, one in which we are given the names of families and the needs of their children.



This year things will be a little different. Because we are not having worship in the sanctuary the names/angels we will be provided by **email** or by phone (if you don't have email). If you are interested in participating in this wonderful tradition of bringing the joy of Jesus' birth to DeKalb County children whose parents are incarcerated please email Linda Pulver/Jackson at **siablue74@gmail.com** or call her at 260-402-1684. She will then email you back a name from the angel tree. (If you have a preference of an age group please include that in the email.)

The gifts can be brought to the church on Wednesday, December 9th between 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. only. If you are not able to get here during that time please call the church office at 925-2987 to make arrangements for the church to be unlocked. The gifts will be delivered this year on December 13th.

Presbyterian Women Meeting:

Presbyterian Women's Circle will **NOT MEET** in December due to the number of cases of COVID rising in DeKalb County. Judy and Cheryl are thinking of you during this time, miss you all, and wish you a Merry Christmas!

Looking for a nice Christmas present for someone this year. We still have copies left of our Anniversary Edition - Celebrating 175 Years Cookbook. The cookbooks are filled with many wonderful recipes. You will find many favorite recipes from many of our current members and those that have passed on, which were taken from the very first cookbook dated back in 1972 as well as popular recipes from volumes two (1982), three (1995) and four (2003) cookbooks. These cookbooks are available for purchase at a cost of \$15.00 each. If you would like to purchase one, contact the church office. Checks need to be made out to Auburn Presbyterian Women.