


Mt. Pisgah Presbyterian Church

The View

DECEMBER 2025



The virgin will
conceive and give
birth to a son, and
they will call him
Immanuel (meaning
'**God with us**'.)

MATTHEW 1.23 (NIV)

Purpose: To inform, encourage, and promote engagement in Mt. Pisgah's mission in the community, and opportunities for spiritual transformation. To invite reflection on the process of personal spiritual growth. To emphasize the bond that holds us together, and avoid magnifying the differences that separate us.

Worship Service 9:45 am (see back cover for location)



**Mt. Pisgah
VIEW
December 2025**

Welcome to the season of Advent. Advent is unique as a season that looks back while looking forward. We look back as we remember the story of Jesus' birth, and further backward as we remember the prophecies from the Old Testament that anticipate his coming. At the same time, we look forward during Advent as we anticipate a second coming, Jesus' Act II so to speak. Jesus does not remain an infant in Mary's arms but grows into his calling as the Royal Son of David, the Anointed King of Israel, and the hope of the world. This season of Advent, we find ourselves in that part of Matthew's gospel when Jesus' royal Sonship is coming into crystal clear focus. I hope that you will join us for worship this Advent season, which will culminate at Christmas Eve worship (at 7 p.m.) and our celebration of Jesus' birth.

Speaking of looking back while looking forward...the Session held a productive planning meeting earlier in November. We always take an opportunity to reflect on the year that was, in addition to looking ahead to the year to come. We found much for which to be thankful and to continue in the year to come. We look forward to continuing the support of the After School program and JaCinda and Georgia who provide leadership for that ministry. We will continue our support of Jenn's classroom at Westwood. We also noted the value of times for fellowship

and scripture study on Sundays after worship. We will continue the rhythm of class and quarterly special fellowship occasions. We will have some new offerings for our study time in the new year, with Luann Walton contributing a study series again.

In worship, we will continue some practices we started part way through this year. Luann will play once a month – we know how much folks like live music. We will also continue our monthly prayer focus for the coming year. Having a monthly prayer has provided a nice focus, as a congregation, for our daily practice of prayer. We will also continue to use creative scripture readings on occasion. (Thanks to all who have contributed to these efforts this past year!) We will also continue our practice of a year-long theme for scripture in worship. This coming year, we are going to zero in on Paul's life and teaching. Next to Luke's writings (the Gospel of Luke, and the book of Acts), Paul contributes the second most in quantity to the volume of the New Testament. This coming year we will get to know Paul the person and grow in familiarity with his teaching in his letters.

All in all, I am looking forward to the year ahead as we seek to live faithfully in our little part of the Lord's vast creation. It is a privilege for us, small as we are, to enjoy the favor of the Lord, and know that our ministry makes a difference! I hope that you will join me and the session in prayer for 2026, as we seek the Lord's wisdom and the Spirit's presence.

Peace,
Tom





In the midst of the hustle and bustle of the season...

When there's a problem, we want to know how God will fix it. But we never know exactly what He'll do. In these moments, trusting the Lord feels risky (when it's actually anything but).

A good way to begin building trust is to choose peace rather than be ruled by our emotions. This doesn't mean we abandon our hopes or ignore our feelings - - but simply that we keep them in the passenger seat rather than behind the wheel.

This decision puts space between us and our desires and welcomes God into them. And by doing so, we're better able to receive whatever He has planned - - whether it's what we imagined or something altogether different.

So how do we begin? With a prayer like this: *Lord, I want to experience the peace that comes only from You and not be governed by my emotions. Help me hold my hopes with open hands and trust You for everything. In Jesus' name, amen.*

(Excerpt from In Touch Devoted Living

Worship, Learning and Prayer Team



Dear family and friends of Mt. Pisgah...

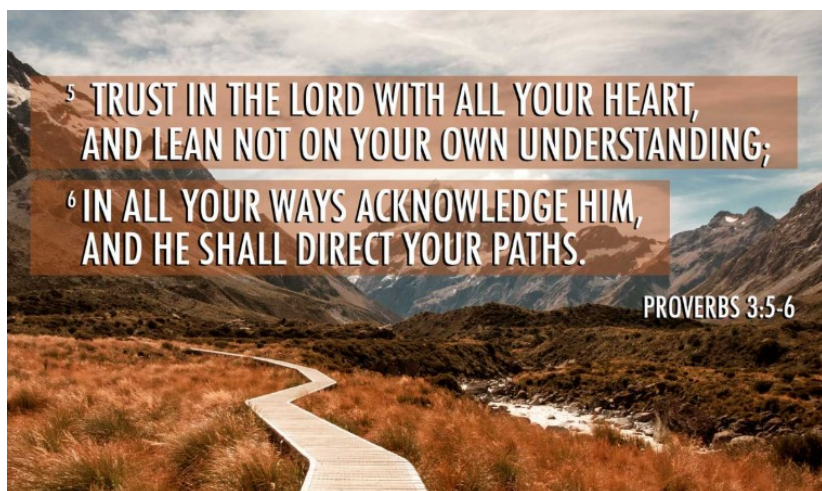
In addition to your own prayers of thanksgiving and petitions to our most capable Father in Heaven, creator and master of all things seen and unseen, all praise and glory be to Him who reigns victorious now and throughout eternity – “O, what a Savior!”

Prayer Focus for December:

**Creator God prepare our hearts
to welcome your advent.**

Hope to see you in worship Sunday morning, 9:45 am.
Submitted by the Worship, Learning and Prayer Team

Prayer Corner



There are times in our prayer life when we are called to relinquish our need for control, surrender ourselves to the Lord, and trust in His loving care. When challenges arise or the future seems uncertain, anxiety battles for control of our mind. We may be tempted to question God's love for us, demand answers, or resort to our own way of thinking. As a result, we lose touch with the Lord's presence in our lives.

If that sounds familiar to anyone, you are not alone. I confess that, during some recent trials, I have allowed fear to overwhelm me at times. But we have a Savior who has conquered fear and death; a loving and gracious Lord who will shepherd us through the challenges of life as we come to Him in humble prayer.

In her book, *Breath as Prayer*, Jennifer Tucker writes, "prayer is how you grasp the steadying, sure hand of God." But "the real purpose of prayer is not convincing God to do what we want, but

awakening to what God is already doing... Prayer defies the lie that all that is happening is just what we see, and trusts that, underneath and through everything, God's revolutionary and redeeming work is still victoriously happening."

In this season of my life, I feel the Lord calling me to be still (Psalm 46:10), to stop my anxious striving and acknowledge His sovereignty. As I focus more prayer time on seeking His wisdom, different questions enter the conversation:

- What would You have me learn in this? Open my eyes that I may see Your will for me.
- How can I serve or glorify You in this situation?

Releasing control is a daily struggle for me; but I'm trusting God to work all things for the good (Romans 8:28) and realizing that the valleys of life can still be a time of spiritual growth.

(Note: If you're interested in music to help you reflect on this topic, check out the song, Flowers, by Samantha Ebert).

Blessings,
Cindy

The Prayer Corner Team consists of
Cindy Grindel, Marta Pletz, and Luann Walton

Would you like to join us? Let one of us know!

December Breath Prayer

Breathe In: When I am afraid,

Breathe Out: I will put my trust in You.

Afterschool News



Earlier in the Fall, the students enjoyed celebrating Halloween and “Dia de los Muertos” which is a Hispanic holiday similar to our “All Saints Day”. Thank you to all for your donations, which helped make these activities a success!

“Dia de los Muertos” began with an exercise in giving thanks and this theme continued with activities during November.

But time moves on and now for the plans in December!

- ♦ Last year you generously purchased gifts for the students which they received at their Christmas party. We hope you will participate again this year, but we will make it simpler for you this time! If you donate the money to us, we will make the purchase for you.



We are planning “Hearts on Fire” tee shirts and McDonalds gift cards for use during their Christmas break, all placed in a Christmas stocking.

- ♦ An offering plate will be made available to collect the funds or a check can be mailed to the church.
- ♦ Thank You in advance for your generosity! And, as always, thank you for your support through prayer.

*For the Community Care Team,
Marta Pletz*

The Community Care Team consists of Jill Folkmire, Chair,
Kim Cook, Don Folkmire, and Marta Pletz



Christmas Love Offering

*Our annual Christmas Love offering
will be collected on Sunday,
December 21st, and at the
Christmas Eve service.
Genesis House of Pittsburgh
will be the recipient.*

Simple Living

God spoke: "Let us make human beings in our image, make them reflecting our nature so they can be responsible for the fish in the sea, the birds in the air, the cattle, and, yes, Earth itself..." Genesis 1:26

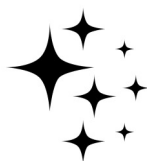


Seven Smart Reasons to Use Vinegar in Laundry

Vinegar is a budget friendly alternative to detergent, that whitens, brightens, and softens fabrics effectively without harsh chemicals.

1. Its Cheap: At 3.5 cents/ounce or less, it is about 1/3 the cost of liquid laundry softeners.
2. It's Colorless: Distilled white vinegar contains no synthetic color and no natural plant dyes that can stain clothes.
3. It Softens: The acid in vinegar helps remove detergent and soil that is left clinging to fabric fibers, allowing clothes to come out feeling soft and clean. Commercial softeners do just the opposite; they are designed to coat fibers, leaving them nonabsorbent and gray over time. Add 1/2 cup of vinegar to your final rinse.
4. It's Safe to Use: Safe in both standard and high-efficiency washers, it is both safe and beneficial for septic tanks and the environment.

5. It Whitens and Brightens: The acetic acid in vinegar will not harm fabrics because it is so mild, but strong enough to dissolve the alkalis left by soil and detergent.
6. It Reduces Odor: To get rid of sour or moldy smells on towels or clothes, fill the washer with hot water. Add 2 cups of distilled white vinegar and run a complete wash cycle with no detergent. Run a 2nd complete cycle with detergent added.
7. It Releases Lint and Pet Hair: 1/2 cup of vinegar in the rinse cycle will help prevent lint and pet hair from clinging to clothes. The vinegar helps the fabric "relax" and "release" the hair or lint.



Simple Living Tips are provided by the Community Care Team:
Jill Folkmire, Chair, Kim Cook, Don Folkmire, and Marta Pletz

NAME ABOVE ALL NAMES

Unscramble the words to form names for
Jesus Christ found in the Bible.

1. S H A S I E M

— — — — — — —

2. R A Z E A N N E

— — — — — — —

3. E E E E R M R D

— — — — — — —

4. R A M O D I E T

— — — — — — —

5. S E R A C O N U L

— — — — — — —

6. L A P A H

— — — — —

7. A M E N L U M E

— — — — — — —

Solution can be found on page 18.

From the Worship, Learning and Prayer Team:



Please join us after worship on the first and third Sundays of each month as we continue a deeper dive into the Book of Matthew.

It would be our blessing to fellowship around tables with you of this most wonderful study of the Gospel written by Matthew, inspired by our risen Lord and Savior Jesus!



December worship services will be
based on the following:

December 7	Matthew 22:23-46
December 14	Matthew 23:1-39
December 21	Matthew 24:1-51
December 24	Matthew 25:1-46
December 28	Hebrews 2:5-18

***An updated schedule of remaining scripture readings,
“Preaching 2025 A Year with Matthew,”
is available in the Malawi Room.***



Tuesday, DECEMBER 16, 2025

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

We will be celebrating our group of friends at the ANGKOR Restaurant at NOON on December 16. We look forward to celebrating our friendship at Mt. Pisgah with all at this wonderful time of year.

Please let Linda know **by DECEMBER 9** if you plan on attending, using the **contact information** below or for any questions you may have.



We want to thank Kim and Marta for their wonderful pasta recipes at our November meeting. We look forward to another chance to experience different new recipes at future meetings.

FUTURE MEETINGS:

January 27, 2026 Deputy Jason Tarap, Allegheny County Sheriff's Office, will speak about Scams and How to Protect Yourself against them.

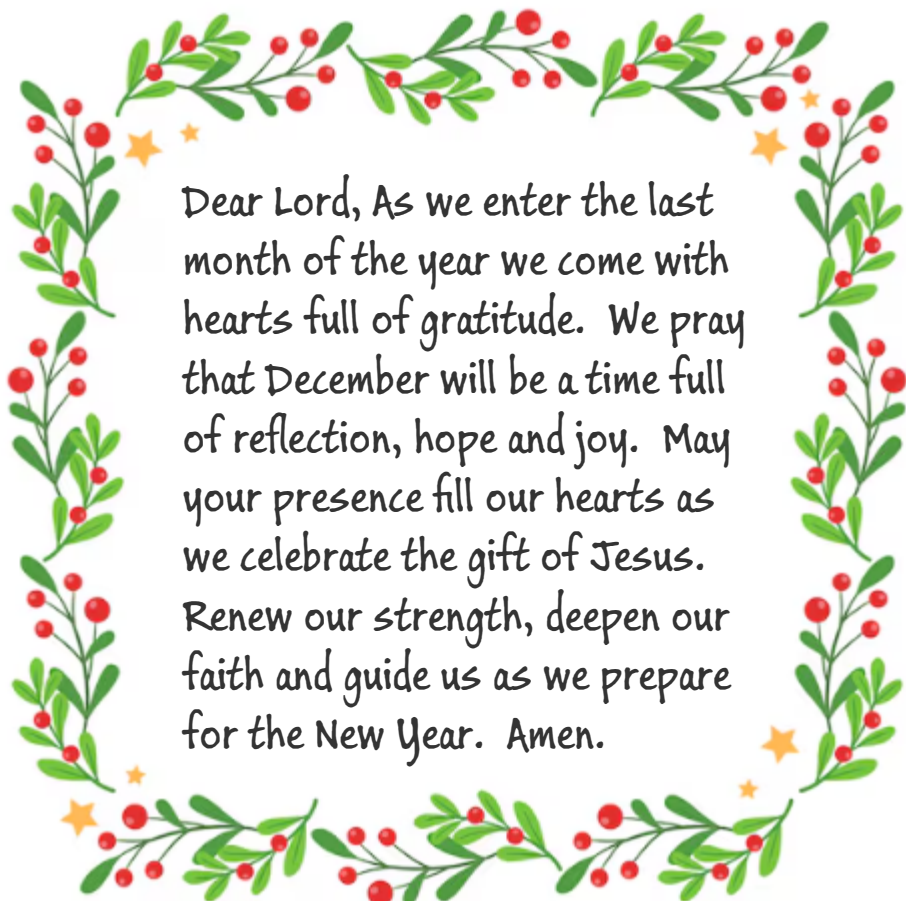
Day Timers is still participating in the **Crafton Food Pantry**. They would like us to gather items that the Pittsburgh Food Bank Does Not Supply. Please note that the Food Bank is asking for **Macaroni and Cheese** along with the usual **Saltine Crackers** (those in a box of 4 sleeves) and **Ramen Noodle Soup Packages**.

DayTimers will continue our assistance in supporting Westwood Elementary's autistic class teachers with Marta Pletz as our liaison.

If you have any comments or questions, call Linda Polaski, 412-921-8605, to leave a message, or email rlpolaski@AOL.com. The church phone number is: 412-921-8444 to speak with Marta. Please check your email for any changes or updates.

Blessings,
Linda and Rich, Kim, Marta, Bob and Mary





Dear Lord, As we enter the last month of the year we come with hearts full of gratitude. We pray that December will be a time full of reflection, hope and joy. May your presence fill our hearts as we celebrate the gift of Jesus. Renew our strength, deepen our faith and guide us as we prepare for the New Year. Amen.

This prayer will appear at the end of the BUZZ each week.

~Submitted by Kim Cook for the Prayer Team



Due date to submit articles for the January VIEW is December 19

Email Sharon Devey @ 37.s.devey@gmail.com

On the Lighter Side . . .

Submitted by
Sharon Devey



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Thanks to Dad Hengeveld

06-20-2003

YEA, VERILY, I LOVE MY NEW KING JAMES
BIBLE ... IT IS GOOD THAT ONE MAY
READ SCRIPTURE IN HIS NATURAL TONGUE
AND LANGUAGE

OUR CONGREGATION CONNECTS . . .

1 Thessalonians 5:16 “Rejoice Always!”

**Who will receive a December
birthday wish from you?**



Bless this your child, Lord, in the year to come. May they know the comfort of your presence, the certainty of your purpose, and the consolation of your love at work in their life.

4th ... Marte Morales
11th ... Keaton Sevacko
13th ... Sarah Sherman
19th ... Kim Fickley
24th ... Tami Ribar
25th ... Jesus

**“Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to
build him or her up.” Romans 15:2**

Solution for Name Above All Names

- | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1. Messiah | 2. Nazarene | 3. Redeemer |
| 4. Mediator | 5. Counselor | 6. Alpha |
| 7. Emmanuel | | |



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Mark your calendar . . .

- 7th Installation of Officers for 2026
- 7th Adult Class following worship
- 14th Deadline for Afterschool donations
- 15th Session Meeting 6:45 pm
- 16th DayTimers Meeting, Noon (*see page 14*)
- 19th Last day of 2025 Afterschool Program
- 19th January VIEW articles due (*see page 16*)
- 21st Adult Class following worship
- 24th Christmas Eve worship service, 7 pm
- 25th Christmas
- 28th SCRIP order placed
- 28th Worship, Learning and Prayer Team Meeting following worship

Weekly

Wednesday, Prayer Group online 5:30 pm

Wednesday & Friday, After School Program, 4:10 - 6:00 pm

Mt. Pisgah Presbyterian Church

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