



Sunset Hills

M E S S E N G E R

January 2022

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Sunset Hills United Presbyterian Church

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A Message from Pastor Laura

On coming to the house, the Magi saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him.
- Matthew 2:11



Epiphany is a church season, running from Twelfth Night through Transfiguration Sunday. Shall we unpack that mess of words a little bit more? The twelve days of Christmas are the twelve days following Christmas. (Yes, that’s what the Christmas carol is talking about!) Twelfth night is the twelfth night after Christmas, known as Epiphany. Epiphany is the day we celebrate the arrival of the Magi in Bethlehem

to worship Jesus. Epiphany is ALWAYS on January 6.

The season of Epiphany begins on January 6, this twelfth day of Christmas, and runs through the Sunday we celebrate the Transfiguration of Jesus. You’ll remember the Transfiguration as that moment when Jesus ascended the mountain with three of his closest disciples, visiting Moses and Elijah, and glowing with a radiant light. Transfiguration Sunday takes place in 2022 on February 27. Therefore, the season of Epiphany runs from January 6 - February 27 this winter.

What does Epiphany mean for us? One tradition for celebrating Epiphany is the practice of chalking the door, usually at the front or main entrance of our homes, as a way of asking God to bless those who live and visit the home in the coming year. This year, the chalking will read, “20+C+M+B+22.” The first and last numbers refer to the year. The CMB, rather than referring to the legendary names of the wise men, are an acronym for the Latin words, “Christus Mansionum Benedicat,” translated, “May Christ bless this dwelling!”

If you choose to chalk your door, it may be a beautiful daily reminder of Christ’s blessing over your home in the coming year. When you come to worship on Sunday, you will also hear Epiphany liturgies and Scriptures preached. ‘Tis the season and we will celebrate the coming of the Magi, the new year, and our newborn king!

In Christ’s Joy,

Pastor Laura

Music Notes

By Shelby Gracey



It was so wonderful to have live music back for our Advent and Christmas season this year! Many thanks to the Chancel Choir, Campanile Bell Choir, GPM, and our soloists and instrumentalists for

their hard work, dedication, and hours of practice throughout the season to make this year's music extra special (after last year's quiet Covid Christmas!). We hope that the seasonal music helped to make

the Spirit of Christmas come alive for you, as well as add peace and joy to your heart!

As I say every year, SHUP is so very fortunate to have such a wonderful group of musicians, singers and ringers in our congregation. Especially after this very long year of navigating worship and music during Covid times, I am truly blessed and honored to have the opportunity to lead these talented and dedicated people, and to be part of the musical family at Sunset Hills. On behalf of everyone involved in the music program, we thank all the members and friends of SHUP for your support of our music ministry, and wish you all a blessed, happy, and healthy New Year in 2022!

Deacon News

Unhanging of the Greens

Sadly, it is time to take down our Christmas decorations until next year. We will be “unhanging the greens” after the worship service on Sunday, January 9th.

In addition to taking down the decorations, there will be a need for some light cleaning. So, please consider joining us to get the church back into shape. Your help is much needed and much appreciated!



Cookie Sale

We are so grateful that we were able to have our cookie sale this year. Thank you to everyone who baked goodies for this fundraiser. And thank you to all of the Deacons who volunteered to work the event.

The sale was a huge success. With members, friends, and neighbors lining up by 9:30 am to get in the door, we were out of cookies before noon!

Notes from Christian Education

By Taylor Strang

Carols, Cookies and Christ was a huge hit! The kids and I enjoyed learning about the meaning of Christmas through the reflections of Adam Hamilton's "The Journey". We went with Mary to visit Elizabeth to share the good news and went on a 10-day journey to Bethlehem where we met Baby Jesus in the manger. We loved starting the night off with carols and ending it with prayer and something sweet. As much as we loved the lessons in CCC, we are excited to restart Kid's Club. Winterfest was an absolute blast! It was the perfect way to spend time with our community right before Christmas. Saint Nick visited and talked to children and so many crafts were finished and ready to put onto Christmas trees at home. I am so excited for our next festival!



Mrs. Paul's 3-year old class from the Sunset Hills Nursery School made Christmas crafts to share with the church. When they were all done, they gave them to Taylor and she mailed them out to different members of SHUP. Thank you to Mrs. Paul and her generous group of students!

Financial Updates

ALL DONATIONS for 2021 **must** be received in the church office no later than December 31, 2021 for them to appear on your Statement of Giving for this year. It is best to mark on your check or envelope the year for which you intend your donation to be counted to avoid any confusion. If there is no designation, donations will be recorded in the year in which they are received.

Questions concerning your pledge and/or donations to the church can be directed to Beth Romig at shupfinance@gmail.com



2022 PER CAPITA is assessed at \$34.79 per member. Please consider making a separate donation to cover the cost of each church member in your family. Any donation received that is specifically designated for per capita payment will prevent a reduction in the general budget.

YOUR 2022 PLEDGE CARDS should have already been returned to the church. If you have not turned it in, please do so. The Pledge Cards are needed in order for our Treasurer to complete the 2022 Budget.

Cards can be mailed to the church office, placed in the offering tray or brought into the church and given to Beth Romig.

All pledges are strictly confidential and can be altered at any time by contacting Beth in the Finance Office.

Thank You



The words “thank you” seem so inadequate for the wonderful service and luncheon that was held on December 5 for my Pastor Emeritus celebration. The words and music in the service were so very touching, and the love and appreciation that I felt was overwhelming. The luncheon was delicious, the room was perfectly decorated, and it was wonderful to see so many old friends. I know there were too many people involved to try to mention each one by name, but thank you to everyone who helped put it together. Thanks so much to Pastor Laura who coordinated the celebration, and for her graciousness and support of my former ministry. On behalf of myself and my family, we thank you all so much for your love and support. Blessings for a wonderful New Year, and may you always remember our benediction!

Bill & Shelby Gracey & family

*Dear Sunset Hills U.P. Church,
Blessings to you all! And what a blessing it was for me and my wife to see the church after so many years. Thank you to all of the gracious families and friends who attended the meet and greet.*

While over 150 churches across the country decided not to return our phone call requests for overnight assistance, you all extended Christ-like hospitality and generosity.

Thank you for the group dinner and a special thank you to Pastor Laura for allowing us to stay in her home for two nights!

We pray God’s continued blessing upon your church’s life, ministry, and service to Christ’s presence in the feast of his brothers and sisters.

Chuck Monts



TAI CHI QIGONG CLASSES

coming soon to

Sunset Hills United Presbyterian Church
900 Country Club Dr., Mt. Lebanon, PA 15228

Join Gurney Bolster, founder of Tai Chi for Health Pittsburgh for a

FREE Meet & Greet

Wednesday evening, January 19, 7-8pm in the Crystal Hall

Beginner level classes starting Wednesday, 2-2-2022, 7-8pm.

Tai Chi Qigong is a moving meditation integrating mind, body and breath through mindful movement and stillness. Reflecting the patterns of nature, Tai Chi Qigong can help you attune to your own natural rhythms to feel more centered, confident and resilient.

Regular practice of Tai Chi Qigong can help:

- > Quiet your mind & reduce stress
- > Improve sleep & nurture your health
- > Improve balance & mobility
- > Strengthen immunity & circulation
- > Manage chronic illness & pain
- > Restore vitality & lift your spirits



Beginner series, 8 weeks, February 2 - March 23, 2022, 7-8pm.

Fees: 8 class series, \$90 Drop-in \$15/class.

No experience or equipment needed. Please wear a mask.

Please pre-register: gurney.bolster@gmail.com 412 480 4492

Gurney Bolster, MA, Dance Movement Therapy; Certified Tai Chi Instructor, Tai Chi for Health Institute; Certified Qigong Instructor, Center for Taiji & Qigong Studies.

Gurney.bolster@gmail.com

412 480 4492

www.tchpgh.com

Building the Beloved Community

Everyone is invited to attend this informative and thought-provoking lecture from Dr. Ali Michael on Saturday, January 15th at 3:00 pm in the sanctuary at Bower Hill Community Church.

Positive racial identity development expert Ali Michael (Ph.D) returns to her hometown of Mt. Lebanon to speak on building and sustaining a healthy multiracial community.

As a child in predominantly white Mt. Lebanon, Michael recalls that race “wasn’t talked about” and only as an adult did she begin to recognize the harm that can do. “Racial competence is a skills-based competence; it can be learned,” says Michael. She asserts that making conversations about race ongoing is crucial, “race questions are not meant to lead to

a quagmire of guilt, discomfort, or isolation. Sustained race inquiry is meant to lead to anti-racist classrooms, positive racial identities, and a restoration of wholeness of spirit and community that racism undermines.”

Dr. Michael’s Bio

Ali Michael works with schools and organizations across the country to help make research on race, whiteness, and education more accessible and relevant to educators. Ali is the author of *Raising Race Questions: Whiteness, Inquiry and Education* (Teachers College Press, 2015), winner of the 2017 Society of Professors of Education Outstanding Book Award. She is co-editor of the bestselling *Everyday White People Confront Racial and Social Injustice: 15*

Stories (Stylus Press, 2015) and the bestselling *Guide for White Women Who Teach Black Boys* (Corwin Press, 2017). Ali sits on the editorial board of the journal *Whitness and Education*. In addition to her work as the Co-Founder and Director of the Race Institute for K-12 Educators, Ali teaches in the Diversity Inclusion Program at Princeton University as well as the Equity Institute for Higher Education from the University of South Carolina. Ali’s article, *What do White Children Need to Know about Race?*, co-authored with Eleonora Bartoli in *Independent Magazine* won the Association and Media Publishing Gold Award in 2014. When she is not writing, speaking or training, Ali is striving to be an anti-racist co-parent to two young boys.

In Recognition of Martin Luther King Jr. Day 2022

Building the Beloved Community: How Everyone Can Play Their Part



Presentation by Dr. Ali Michael

Saturday, January 15th

Bower Hill Community Church

3:00 pm - Sanctuary

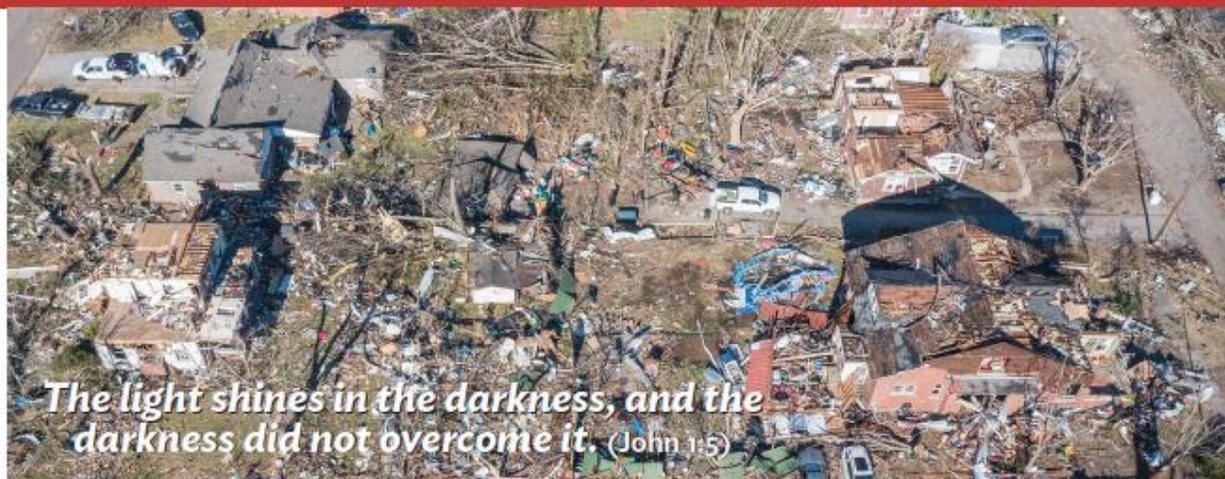
70 Moffet Street

Pittsburgh, PA 15243



PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE

God is our refuge and strength



The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. (John 1:5)

Mayfield, Ky., Dec. 12, 2021. Courtesy of State Farm (CC BY 2.0)

As night fell on December 10, powerful tornadoes ripped across several states, ending the lives of more than 100 people and wreaking devastation across many communities by morning. In the wake of these catastrophic storms, it is the role of people of faith to shine as light in this bleakest of winters. We are called to be the hands and feet of God to help to rebuild the lives of those who have experienced significant loss. We are invited to stand with them — and to stand together — bearing witness by our gifts and prayers that God is indeed incarnate among us.

The above picture shows some of the destruction and devastation to Mayfield, KY. To the right is a picture of The First Presbyterian Church of Mayfield on December 11th.



To Give to the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Fund please visit their website at [Presbyterian Disaster Assistance \(pcusa.org\)](https://www.pcusa.org), call 800-872-3283, send a check to Beth in our Financial Office or use our tithe.ly app at [Church Giving: Mobile App, Online & Text Giving for Churches | Tithe.ly](https://www.tithe.ly).

Any help you can give is much needed and appreciated.

December Information

Adult Sunday School

8:30 am

Pastor Laura will begin a 6-month series entitled: *The History & Archaeology of the Bible* using videos from National Geographic Historian, Jean-Pierre Isbouts on January 9th.

This class will continue using Zoom.

Sunday Worship

10:15 am

If you are not able to join us in person, a video of the service will be posted to our YouTube channel on the Monday after the service:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeEpiQYSD_9My9tb5GEhVRA

You can get a copy of the bulletin by clicking on the link on the homepage of our website www.shupchurch.org.

Yoga

Tuesday's - 9:15 am - Crystal Hall

Instructors from BreathIN2IT will hold an 8-week Hatha Yoga class beginning on January 11th. If you would like to sign up for the class, please visit their website at [Online Stress Management & Anxiety Relief Programs \(breathin2it.com\)](http://OnlineStressManagement&AnxietyReliefPrograms(breathin2it.com)). (See flyer on page 10.)

Youth Group

Every other Sunday - 12:00 pm - Findley Hall

Youth Group will begin meeting after worship services on Sunday. They will meet on January 9th & 23rd this month.

Campanile Bells Rehearsal

Tuesday's - 6:30 pm

Campanile Bells will continue to meet in the sanctuary in January.

Chancel Choir Practice

Tuesday's - 7:30 pm

Chancel Choir will continue to meet on Tuesday evenings at 7:30 pm.

Findley Hall Bible Study

Monday's - 1:00 pm

On January 10th, the class will begin an 8-week study of *What Does it Mean to Be Chosen?*.

If you are interested in learning more about this class, please contact Evelyn Lape at: heyveve7@verizon.net.

Wilson Hall Bible Study

Tuesday's - 1:00 pm

This class will continue their study of the Book of Psalms.

Contact Information: Carole McCullough at seamus1219@hotmail.com

Kids Club

Wednesday's - 4:30 pm - Crystal Hall

Taylor Strang will hold Kid's club in Crystal Hall every Wednesday for children in K-5th grade.

If you would like to learn more about Kid's Club, please contact Taylor at youthandfamilyshup@gmail.com.

Special Events in January

Building the Beloved Community Event

Saturday, January 15th, 2022 - Bower Hill Church

Please see the article on page 6 to learn more about this event.

Congregational Meeting

Sunday, January 16, 2022

We will hold our yearly congregational meeting after worship service on Sunday, January 16th.

Italian Pilgrimage Meeting

Sunday, January 16th - 3:00 pm - Library

For anyone who signed up for the Italian Pilgrimage, Pastor Laura will be holding an informational meeting in the Library at 3:00 pm on Sunday, January 16th.

Officer Installation

Sunday, January 30, 2022

Our new Session and Deacon members will be installed during worship service on Sunday, January 30th.

Coming in February

New Members Class

Sunday - 11:30 am - Wilson Hall

If you are interested in becoming a member of SHUP join pastor Laura for the New Member Classes every Sunday in February.

January Birthdays

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 9 Joe Hughey | 24 Lori Matson |
| 11 Lissa Bensusan | 26 Dottie Smith |
| Keith Yanda | 27 Shelby Gracey |
| 14 Beth Romig | 28 Violet Zeglin |
| 15 Bernie Berklich | 30 Patrick Oknefski |
| Laura Oknefski | 31 William Stimmel |
| 20 Jackie Elborne | Amanda Zeglin |

Prayer List
JoAnne Enterline

Prayer Circle

We ask that every week you take a moment and add these people to your daily prayers.

Week of:	Praying for:
Jan 2 nd	Gus & Sandy Gill The Glantz family; James, Andrea & Aria
Jan 9 th	Andrew Gracey Ryan Gracey
Jan 16 th	Rev. Dr. & Shelby Gracey David & Carla Greenfield
Jan 23 rd	David & Karen Heim Kailey Hepburn, Anthony Siorentini & Lyla Rose
Jan 30 th	Karl & Alannah Hetrick The Hoffman family; Richard, Lynda, Garth, Orion & Declan

Scam Emails

There have been recent emails sent from an account that is not from Pastor Laura, but the person sending them claims to be her. They are asking for the receiver to purchase gift cards and email pictures of the codes on the back. They are also very insistent that you do not contact the sender (in this case Pastor Laura) by phone. In general, no one who is legitimate will ever ask you to do this for them...not family, not friends and not Pastor Laura.

SHIM Food Donations
January 2022

For the month of January, we will be collecting **Tuna**. We appreciate your continued support of this ministry.

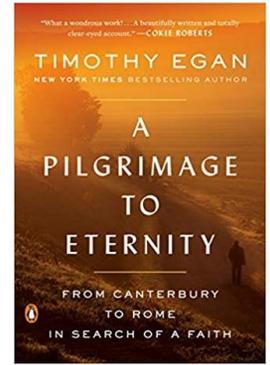
Sunset Hills Book Club
Dec. Book of the Month
A Pilgrimage to Eternity
By Timothy Egan
January 26th - 7:30 pm

Moved by his mother's death and his Irish Catholic family's complicated history with the church, Timothy Egan decided to follow in the footsteps of centuries of seekers to force a reckoning with his own beliefs. He embarked on a thousand-mile pilgrimage through the theological cradle of Christianity to explore the religion in the world that it created. Egan sets out along the Via Francigena, once the major medieval trail leading the devout to Rome, and travels overland via the alpine peaks and small mountain towns of France, Switzerland and Italy, accompanied by a quirky cast of fellow pilgrims and by some of the towering figures of the faith--Joan of Arc, Henry VIII, Martin Luther. The goal: walking to St. Peter's Square, in hopes of meeting the galvanizing pope who is struggling to hold together the church through the worst crisis in half a millennium.

A thrilling journey, a family story, and a revealing history, "A Pilgrimage to Eternity" looks for our future in its search for God. (Amazon Book Description)

The Book Club will meet using Zoom. If you would like to join the discussion, please contact Pastor Laura to have the Zoom link sent to you:

revlaurastrauss@gmail.com



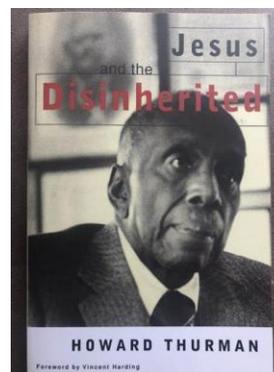
February 2022
Book of the Month

Jesus and the Disinherited

By

Howard Thurman

Meeting on February 23rd

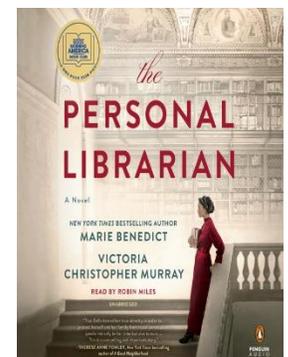


March 2022
Book of the Month
The Personal Librarian

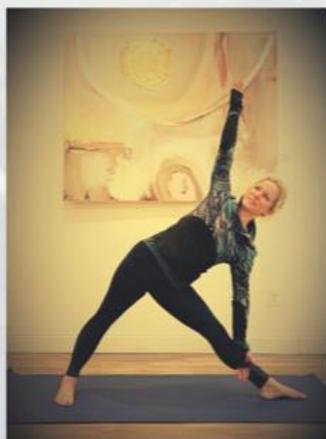
By

Marie Benedict

Meeting on March 30th



Winter Hatha 1 Yoga at SHUP!



Led by



*Time to Breathe, Move,
Strengthen, Stretch*

-Free Babysitting Available-

When: *Tuesdays 9:15-10:15 AM, Crystal Hall,
SHUP Church, starting Jan. 11th for 8 weeks, \$80*

How: *Register at www.breathein2it.com/yoga*



Who: *Class led by E-YRT500 Aimee Lamendola
of breatheIN2IT, LLC*

www.breathein2it.com