



Boar's Head & Yule Log Festival 2026

The Boar's Head Committee has been hard at work to create the Boar's Head and Yule Log Festival for Sunday, January 4, 2026 at 3:30 pm. You will see many familiar faces and some new ones, too. Plus hear the glorious music of the brass, bagpipes, guitars, harp, and beautiful voices. We are asking all the previous participants to again be in the 2026 performance. There will be a "walk through" on Tuesday, December 30 at 6:30 pm in the sanctuary. Then we will again have a light, delicious lunch for the cast after church on Sunday, January 4 at 12:15. Then it is on to the one and only dress rehearsal after lunch.

We will again feature the Cookie and Punch reception after the festival down in Fellowship Hall prepared by the loyal, royal bakers. Please drop off your Christmas cookies to the church on Sunday, January 4 and place them in room 106 and make sure to mark them for "Boar's Head." It takes a "village" to put on this production and that is exactly what we use—many folks from our church, community, and of course a lot of "Divine Intervention." If you or someone you know might like to be in the cast, please let Lynn Pyle or Paula Haehnel know.

Come and enjoy the music and pageantry. May this offering of praise to Jesus Christ at his Epiphany recall us to the greatest gift of Love given to us in the person of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Tuesday, December 30—6:30 Walk Through Rehearsal in the Sanctuary
 Sunday, January 4—12:15 Light Lunch for Cast following the service
 Sunday, January 4—1:00 Dress Rehearsal, start in Fellowship Hall
 Sunday, January 4—3:30 Boar's Head and Yule Log Festival in the Sanctuary
 Sunday, January 4—5:00 Cookie and Punch Reception in Fellowship Hall



The First Presbyterian Church of Sharon, Pa.

E m p h a s i s

DECEMBER

2025

"Your Christmas Carol"

"Christmas! Bah, humbug!" The infamous line belongs, of course, to Ebenezer Scrooge in Charles Dickens *A Christmas Carol*. And this year countless people will once again hear Scrooge "humbug Christmas" by reading the book or watching a version in a movie or seeing a play. "Humbug" itself means dishonest talk or behavior meant to deceive people. So to Scrooge, at least in the beginning of story, he experiences all the cheer and generosity of Christmas as a deception compared to the ledgers in his business. Life and choices have made him an "outsider" to Christmas.

In truth, the Christmas season can be difficult for many people. Loss and grief seem to magnify during the holiday. Long lists of "to dos" increase stress. Anticipated difficult family gatherings fill others with dread. Tight budgets can frustrate some parents. Holiday obligations exhaust still others, as do longer lines and heavier traffic. And who doesn't get tired of hearing "Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer" on the radio. There are more than a few whispers of "humbug."

But the great Christmas promise is "Emmanuel"; "God is with us." And so I trust the promise and try to pay attention. I start by doing a little less: a little less going, a little less doing, a little less buying, a little less decorating. And I try to make time for a few simple things: walking around the lit Christmas trees at Lake Julia in Buhl Park, watching "A Charlie Brown Christmas," and reading again *A Christmas Carol*. The beauty and peace of the 11PM Christmas Eve service is always filled with wonder for me. And I find that when I slow down and pay attention, quieter things seem to speak to me the peace of Christmas. And "Emmanuel" happens.

"Humbugging Christmas—that happens, too. Life goes sideways at times for everyone. But the God who is "Emmanuel" is patient. And so this God waits for us to do a little less, and to do a little simpler, and to pay attention to beauty and wonder. Sometimes it takes the "spirits of Christmas past, present, and future." And sometimes it just takes candlelight on Christmas Eve singing "Silent Night."

Glenn

"...and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means 'God with us.'"

Matthew 1:23

December 2025 Preaching and Worship Schedule

- 7 2nd Sunday of Advent: Love. Youngstown Fine Arts Brass. Lighting of Advent Wreath. Matthew 3:1-12. Dr. Hink preaching.
- 14 3rd Sunday of Advent: Joy. Bell Choir. Lighting of Advent Wreath. Matthew 11:2-15. Dr. Crooks preaching.
- 21 4th Sunday of Advent: Peace. "Nicole and Friends Christmas Concert" and harp. Lighting of Advent Wreath.
- 24 Christmas Eve.
5PM—"Family and Friends Worship." Candles, carols and Terry Leonard's "One Night in a Stable."
11PM—"Holy Night Worship." Communion, carols and candles.
- 28 1st Sunday of Christmas. Lighting of Advent Wreath and carols. Shorter sermon and service. Matthew 1:18-25. Dr. Hink preaching.

Worship Notes

*The Advent and Christmas seasons are once again filled with the beauty and wonder of decorations, candles, and music. The three Advent Sundays have Fine Arts Brass, Bells, a Christmas Concert by "Nicole and Friends," and harpist Kirk Kupensky. The 5PM Christmas Eve service includes "One Night in a Stable" by Terry Leonard. And the 11PM Christmas Eve service includes the beauty of carols with candlelight.

*The Shenango Valley Chorale will present their annual Christmas Concert at 1st Church on Saturday, December 13th, 7:30PM. The 100-voice choir will be joined by the Shenango Area Youth Choir. This will be the only presentation in the Shenango Valley so come early for parking and seat.

*Christmas Eve. We will once again offer two different services. The 5PM "Family and Friends Service" is meant to help families and those who do not want to be out later. This service includes carols, the lighting of the Advent Wreath, candles, and Terry Leonard and friends telling the Christmas Story through the musical "One Night in a Stable." The second service at 11PM emphasizes the peace and wonder of Christmas. This quiet service includes candles, carols, the lighting of the Advent Wreath, and communion. For many this is their favorite service of the year.

*Invite your friends. Many people don't attend worship services regularly, but are looking for a place to share in the hope and joy of Christmas. So invite them to share Advent and Christmas with you at 1st Church.



Our Shut-ins

Ridgewood 724-347-0998
One Elston Way, Hermitage, PA 16148
Gail Hink, 206

The Meadows
308 W Warren St., RM 108
Cadiz, OH 43907
Betty Hudson

St. Paul's The Villas
339 E. Jamestown Rd.
Greenville, PA 16125
Jean Meyer



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|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Jan Reichenfeld | 15 Robert Hug |
| 2 Larry Jones | 16 Betty Lenhart |
| 2 Nina Joyner | 17 Michael Gonano |
| 3 Charles Rogers | 18 Brenda Oman |
| 3 Cathy Byerly | 18 Emily Hall |
| 3 Gretchen Darcangelo | 18 Brian Inman |
| 4 Annalise Smith | 19 Heather Gill |
| 5 Melanie Moyer | 20 Greg Oman |
| 7 Betsy Mora | 21 Patty Fletcher |
| 9 Garrett Smith | 24 Kaye Elder |
| 10 Merri Gonano | 27 Amanda Getway |
| 10 Terri Jones | 27 Glenn Hink |
| 11 Noah Dillinger | 30 Peter Acker |

Puzzle!

The Christmas Story

Unscramble each set of letters to form a word from the Christmas story. One letter in each set doesn't belong. Write each extra letter below, on the line above the correct number. Then answer the question: What did we all receive at Christmas?

- (1) TGLBEHME
- (2) NEAGLO
- (3) NRMEDAG
- (4) ODEKSNY
- (5) AMGYR
- (6) OHESJIP
- (7) EFJSUS
- (8) ITEENMSW
- (9) SPHDSREEO
- (10) EMCFAL
- (11) TLSRA
- (12) CSSNUEO
- (13) HEVSPE
- (14) ENIN



- | | | | | | | | |
|---|----|----|----|----|----|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | | |

Answers: Bethlehem (1), Angel (2), Manger (3), Donkey (4), Sheep (5), Mary (6), Joseph (7), Jesus (8), Wise men (9), Shepherds (10), Camel (11), Star (12), Census (13), Sheep (14), God's gift of love (15).



Christmas Card treasures

Turn old Christmas cards into beautiful keepsake ornaments! It's a fun, simple way to give new life to cards you've received and add a handmade touch to your tree.

What you need:

- Christmas cards
- Scissors
- Glue
- Circle pattern (cut from cardboard or trace around object)
- Hole punch
- Yarn or ribbon
- Glitter (optional)

What you do:

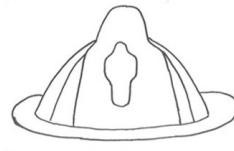
1. Trace a circle onto two Christmas cards.
2. Cut out the circles and glue the backs together.
3. Decorate the edges with glitter or ribbon for extra sparkle.
4. Punch a hole at the top and thread yarn or ribbon through to hang.

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights.
— James 1:17 (NIV)

Special Dates in December

- Second Sunday of Advent, *December 7*
- Third Sunday of Advent, *December 14*
- First day of winter, *December 21*
- Fourth Sunday of Advent, *December 21*
- Christmas Eve, *December 24*
- Christmas Day, *December 25*
- New Year's Eve/Watch Night, *December 31*

MISSION TEAM PRAYER PROGRAM



Sharon Police Department
December Adopt-a-Cop
Daniel P. McEvoy

Sharon Fire Department
December Adopt-a-Firefighter
David Coffy



*A Look Ahead at Worship

*Boar's Head. The 18th Annual "Boar's Head and Yule Log Festival" at 1st will be Sunday, January 4th, 3:30PM. This re-enactment of a medieval Christmas celebration includes wonderful costumes, moving music, 60+ actors/actresses and singers, and musicians in the beauty of the 1st Church sanctuary decorated for Christmas. Whether it's your 1st time, 18th time, or somewhere in-between, plan to attend and bring friends.

Reconsider the Rush

The Christmas rush leads to stress for many people. But author Burton Hills viewed the madness from another perspective:

"Eventually, the hour comes when the rushing ends and the race against the calendar mercifully comes to a close. It is only now, perhaps, that we truly recognize the spirit of Christmas. It is not a matter of days or weeks, but of centuries — [more than] twenty of them now since that holy night in Bethlehem. Regarded in this manner, the pre-Christmas rush may do us greater service than we realize. With all its temporal confusion, it may just help us to see that by contrast, Christmas itself is eternal."



Psalms

Everyone is invited to join the Sunday School class that meets in Fellowship Hall every Sunday, 10:00-10:45 AM. Dr. Crooks and Dr. Hink alternate teaching. The class has grown from 8-10 to 12-15. Over the fall the class discussed the Psalms. This prayer book and song book of the Bible has been a part of Jewish and Christian worship life and theological discussion for generations. And yet every time you take a closer look at a Psalm you learn something new. The class will begin discussing a different book in the Bible in January. Nothing has been finalized, but there will be something. Contact Dr. Hink with any questions.



Church Attendance for October 2025

2024		2025		
6th	100	5th	102	64 views
13th	62	12th	84	58 views
20th	72	19th	98	83 views
27th	94	26th	112	79 views
328		396		
31%		37%		

Financial Giving News
October 2025

Operations Budget		Mission Budget	
1st Sunday	4,034.75	1st Sunday	535.00
2nd Sunday	2,052.75	2nd Sunday	190.00
3rd Sunday	2,552.75	3rd Sunday	270.00
4th Sunday	3,127.75	4th Sunday	130.00
Total for October		Total for October	1,125.00
Budget for October	14,904.17	Budget for October	1,385.50
Balance for October	(3,136.17)	Balance for October	(260.50)
Total for Year to Date		Total for Year to Date	17,185.00
Budget for Year to Date	149,041.67	Budget for Year to Date	12,469.50
Balance for Year to Date	(3,155.03)	Balance for Year to Date	4,715.50

Mission Corner

“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters, you did for me.”—Mathew 25:40

Update!

- ♦ The loss of federal funding to the SNAP program initiated a whirl of activity. We released Disaster Relief funds. We followed Food Bank requests for individual donations. Members responded quickly.
- ♦ Trunk or Treat filled the parking lot to provide a safe, clean area for neighborhood children to play, enjoy treats, and get a face painting.
- ♦ A Hot Dog Bar served up a fun feast! The Mission Committee THANKED all members for their weekly and special offerings that help us reach out.

What’s Coming Up?

- ♦ The Mission Committee will be taking a short rest during December and work on budgetary planning, outreach planning, and educational planning.
- ♦ The Akron Children’s Hospital Book Project will begin in January. Yeah!
- ♦ Youth Trip 2026 will soon unveil their plans for a Mission experience.

How Can I Help?

Blue Coats would like 2 volunteers to act as substitutes if a worker falls ill. It’s on the 3rd Monday of the month 11:00--1:00 until March. Call the office or see Ed or Vicki Watson if you’re willing to be a Sub.

Outside Opportunities!

Each month we highlight a local/regional Christian outreach program. This church has a rich history of members who help inside the church and outside the church representing our Lord! Share a name in the plate to highlight.



November was stewardship month. All members and friends of 1st Church were asked to return a pledge card for 2026. Pledge cards help in the church budget process and are an expression of faithfulness and generosity. Generous and faithful stewardship is a strength of 1st Church. And because of that we are able to care for our facility, have gifted staff and have many ministries, missions and programs.

If you have turned in your pledge card, thank you. If you have not yet turned in your pledge card, it's not too late. Simply put it in the Sunday morning offering plate, mail it back to the church, or drop it by. If you would like a pledge card just call the church office and one will be mailed to you. Every year we receive less than ½ of possible pledge cards. We would like to receive a high number this year.

Also, regarding end of the year giving, federal law requires that all donations be into the church or postmarked by December 31st to be credited as a 2025 donation. Contact financial secretary Shari Getway with any questions.



A new Bible study group will be meeting every other Tuesday at 5:00 pm as a home study. We will begin on December 2 at 5:00 pm at Derrenbacher's house.

Our study will begin on the book: *For Such A Time As This: An Emergency Devotional* by Hanna Reichel. The book can be purchased on Amazon. If you don't want to purchase the book, we can share. A simple dinner will be included in the first meeting. Then we will plan from there who the next host will be. The dates for December are December 2, 16 and 30. If you would like more information and to sign up call or text Debbie Derrenbacher at 724/866-1588.



HAITI FUNDRAISER

Open House and Dinner

\$20 in advance | \$25 at the door

Haitian Meal (Dine In or Carry Out)
Haitian Items for Sale
Chinese Auction and Raffles (drawings at 4 p.m.)
Silent Auction (ends at 3:30 p.m.)

Sunday, December 7, 2025
11 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.



HAITIAN SENSATION
76 SHENANGO AVE.
SHARON, PA 16146

Chinese Auction starts on Small Business Saturday
Winners do not need to be present for drawing

