Blessings for a Joyous Advent & Christmas Season Please Join Us for These Special Events...

Sunday, December 3 at 10am

Holy Communion

Advent Intergenerational Get-Together!

After Worship In Dining Hall

Wear Your Favorite Ugly Sweater (Again)

Crafts · Refreshments · Games · Fun!

Crafty Ladies Mini Bazaar & Quilt Raffle Drawing

Sunday, December 10 at 4pm

Christmas Candlelight

An Evening of Scripture & Song

Senior Choir - Joyful Ringers Handbell Choir

Youth Choir - Musical Guests

Sunday, December 17 at 10am

Christmas Pageant during Worship

"A Candlelit Christmas Story"

Experience the Christmas Story in a New Light

Featuring our children, youth & teens

Caroling to Shut-Ins after Worship

Thursday, Dec 21 at 7pm

Blue Christmas / Longest Night Service

Hosted at Trinity Church - 215 W Court Street

A service of hope for those who grieve or find this season difficult

Christmas Eve Service

Dec 24 at 4 pm

Holy Communion & Carols

Advent Devotionals available on the tables in the back of sanctuary

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined." (Isaiah 9:2)

As winter approaches and darkness unfolds, I find myself reflecting a lot about the impact of light. Even the smallest flame can illuminate the darkest space. A flickering candle, the dance of a flame. There's something mystical, magical, and sacred about the glow of a candle. The light emerges into the darkness soft, yet confident, bright yet, not overpowering, evoking a sense of wonder, awe, and divine presence. I believe it's why we're drawn to candlelight services at Christmas, at vigils, and in times of prayer.

The glow of a candle changes the darkness. It creates something new. The energy in the space is totally changed. There's a different feel to a room when illuminated by candlelight vs conventional light. It brings comfort. The glow of a candle has a language that speaks to the soul to be still, to pause, and to see what is right there in the present moment. Instead of rushing by, we pause. Light points the way. All this happens from one tiny flame.

One tiny flame, a spark of the Creator's imagination, and the whole cosmos was set in motion. Looking up into a dark sky the stars are ever so brilliant

bringing us back to a state of wonder and awe. That one bright star thousands of years ago led the magi to the newborn Savior. The brilliance of that Savior illuminated the darkness of people longing for salvation. Each time I see the lights shining in the darkness on houses, trees, and walkways, I'm reminded of that one true Light born to save us all whose light pierced the darkness and changed the course of history and our lives forever.



As the seasons of Advent and Christmas unfold, we wait not in total darkness, but in the hope and promise of the light of Christ. And when the new year begins, that Divine Light is still there. It is always there, around us and within us. Candles remind us of this. And so, I invite you to light a candle or two or three. Let it remind you of the Great Light that has come among us and continues to dwell with us each and every day bringing comfort and joy. May we share that divine light with others.

Merry Christmas and a Happy and Blessed New Year! Pastor Edwina

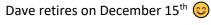
AROUND THE CONGREGATION

Birthdays

More Birthdays

Jackie Roush 12/02 Ron Rhodes 12/04 Melissa Hickernell 12/06 Martie Talley 12/10 Teresa Chase 12/12 Ann Hapanowicz 12/12 Carol Berger 12/13 David Nolan 12/14 Brittney Cataldo 12/14 Bruce Warcup 12/16 Linda Kimball 12/18 Mary Townsend 12/18 Danielle Sexton 12/21 Lisa Dombrowski 12/21 Chris Tyrlik 12/23 Kirk Hinman 12/24 Ward Beeman 12/25 Valerie Wood-MacRae 12/25 Carole Maksymozuk 12/29	Jan Brynilsen 01/10 Dave Dombrowski 01/10 Tyriana Jones 01/11 Leah Sexton 01/11 Nancy Morgan 01/12 Diane Temple 01/15 Dylan Dunadee 01/16 Suzie Abreu 01/17 Elizabeth Reyes 01/18 Kyle Dombrowski 01/18 Ron Pfeuffer 01/19 Maryrose Scaccia 01/19 Andy Bak 01/21 Bob Ketchum 01/22 Steve Dunadee 01/26 Jim Cupples 01/26 Sue Moses 01/27 Linda Davis 01/30
Carole Maksymczuk12/29	Anniversaries
Carol Drumluk 12/30 Dori Clark 12/31 Tim Burns 01/03 Helen Martin 01/07 Herb Thorpe (101) 01/09 Kay Engelbert 01/09 Sarah Rushton 01/10 Minnie Clark 01/10 Logan Storms 01/10	Jim & Bev Cupples

Congratulations Dave Nolan!!



Congrats Ryan Fish!! Ryan will graduate from Clarkson University on Dec. 16th with a degree in Engineering & Business Management. He'll start a job with Indium Corp in Rome in January!

Thank you Sunshine Horse Farm

for the Donation of hay for our Nativity Scene on the front lawn!





NEWS FROM OUR DEACONS

Salvation Army Bell Ringing: Saturday, December 2nd from 9AM – 3PM at Price Chopper. Thank you to everyone who volunteered! Please stop by Market 32 on the 2nd to say support our ringers!!

Christmas Caroling to Shut Ins – Lunch after worship— we'll leave church around 12:30pm in case you can't stay to eat. We'll visit shut-ins on Sunday, December 17th to sing Christmas carols – specific times & locations TBA. If singing isn't your thing please consider visiting or sending holiday greetings to someone on the list below:

Jan Brynilsen, Olga Woodhouse, Barb Steagall, Mary Davis, Shirley Fox, Ralph Pezulla, Mary Griffith, Brian Burke, Dori Clark, Minnie Clark, Roberta Bert, Chris Hayden, Mary Conover, Teresa Chase & Sandy Braun (Terrace), June Sperlik (Acacia Village); Ron Owens (Bethany), Joanie Lewis (The Nottingham)

Salvation Army Angel Tree Tags are available on the tree in the vestibule! If you need a tag logged and mailed to you or if you need us to pick up your gifts contact the church office

Our Project Angel Tree Tags now available with early deadline, December 11

- There is a green notebook to put your name, child's name, and a number of the tag which is located on the right hand corner. If a tag is lost, it can be replaced.
- The Salvation Army is asking for each Angel to receive at least one clothing item and two toys from the child's requests.
- Please try to place the items you purchased into one bag along with the Angel Tree tag. There are hundreds of gifts that are placed in corrals and bags can get separated from each other.
- The Deacons have put together 90 "stocking bags" with age appropriate items for each child and will be placed in the unsealed bag with the items that were purchased by you.
- If you would like, more than one person can sponsor an
 Angel. Share a recipient with a friend; If you would just like to bring an
 unwrapped toy, the Salvation Army will give that gift to a needy child as well.
- All gifts must be new. No guns. Please feel free to donate an unwrapped toy or article of clothing. Salvation Army will give that to a needy child too
- Please return all gifts to the church by **December 11th.**

Thank you for putting a smile on a child's face - Blessing you all

CHRISTMAS EVE MORNING WORSHIP 10AM
CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE 4PM

SUNDAY WORSHIP NEWS

If you are having trouble hearing in the sanctuary, PLEASE try using one of our hearing assist devices. These devices are directly miked into our sound system and are sanitized after each use

JOIN US FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP AT 10AM



- * In Person at 108 West Court
- * Tune to 97.5FM from Our Parking Lots & Neighboring Streets
- * Broadcast on Facebook Live
- * Recording posted to our church YouTube Channel
- * Link emailed to those who request it
- * Our Court Street Sanctuary doors are the only ones to remain unlocked for Worship entrance
- * Take your bulletin home or discard in blue recycling containers

Friend's Rate Cinema Capitol or Capital Theater Tickets are available to us thanks to Ray & Gail Tucker. Pick up yours from outside of the church office



It Takes a Village Advent Calendar

Spread kindness in your "village" this holiday season by spending time with family and performing random acts of kindness within your community.

December 1- Leave a treat for a mailman/delivery driver

December 2 - Living room picnic w/ Christmas movie

December 3 - Write thank you note to someone

December 4 - Make time capsule ornament

December 5 - Leave change taped to vending machine

December 6 - Donate blankets/towels to animal shelter

December 7 - Make treat and deliver to neighbor

December 8 - Family outing for a holiday activity

December 9 - Patronize a small, locally-owned shop

December 10 - Buy flowers for a random person

December 11 - S'mores and hot chocolate

December 12 - Donate food to local shelter

December 13 - Make card for a soldier

December 14 - Bake cookies (take a few to a neighbor)

December 15 - Donate gifts to a family in need

December 16 - Put birdseed out for the birds

December 17 - Make meal for a neighbor

December 18 - Write letter and send to a friend

December 19 - Family Christmas movie night

December 20 - Pay for someone else's order

December 21 - Do a chore for someone

December 22 - Take treat to police or fire hall

December 23 - Compliment someone

December 24 - Be patient and kind with your family

Friends! As we enter the holiday season, let's make time to celebrate not just the love of Christ, but also the call to serve and love our neighbors. I hope you and your family and friends feel inspired by this list of activities to enjoy fellowship and reach out to your community!!!

Serenity Circle with have a potluck celebration on December 11th at 4PM. Please bring a snack to share. We will pause for the holidays and resume in 2024 after the New Years holiday, date TBA. During Jan, Feb, and Mar we will meet on zoom.

NEWS FROM OUR PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

- Mini Bazaar Dec. 3 and the Quilt Drawing will be announced!!
 - PW will have items for sale to assist your shopping and to help fill the stockings with practical items. The Crafty Ladies have been hard at work all year and the money raised is used for mission projects and support. Come and enjoy being with congregation members who are grateful for the return to some normalcy in our church lives. We have been supporting each other for several years and we need to celebrate. Let us pray for a healthy and truly meaningful Christmas.
- The next meeting will be Jan 16, Tuesday, at 9:30 am in the Choir Room

FINANCIAL NEWS FROM SUSAN HATZINGER

	2023 Year-to-Date			2023		
October		Actual		Budget		Budget
\$ 36,974.23	\$	316,891.88	\$	319,010.00	\$	382,764.58
\$ (26,736.98)	\$	(302,609.35)	\$	(317,768.08)	\$	(289,985.24
\$ 10,237.25	\$	14,282.53	\$	1,241.92	\$	92,779.34
\$ 60.00		Per Capita 2024 ● \$45 per active member				
\$ 180.00						
			_			
		wish to receive offering				
\$ 88,432.00						
\$ 5,000.00		en	ve	lopes for 2	202	24
\$ 5,213.62				•		
\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	\$ (26,736,98) \$ 10,237.25 \$ 60.00 \$ 180.00 \$ 88,432.00 \$ 5,000.00	\$ 36,974.23 \$ \$ (26,736.98) \$ \$ 10,237.25 \$ \$ \$ 60.00 \$ 180.00 \$ 5,000.00	* 36,974.23	State Contact Sure	Stock	October Actual Budget \$ 36,974.23 \$ 316,891.88 \$ 319,010.00 \$ (26,736.98) \$ (302,609.35) \$ (317,768.08) \$ 10,237.25 \$ 14,282.53 \$ 1,241.92 \$ 1241.92 \$ 180.00 \$ 60.00 \$ active member Contact Susan if you not wish to receive offe envelopes for 202 \$ 60.00 <td< td=""></td<>



MUSIC NOTES

- ★ Wed. rehearsals.... Sr Choir and Joyful Ringers rehearse Dec 6th (no other Wed.'s in Dec.)
- ★ Youth Choir rehearses after worship Dec 3 and 10
- ★ Dress Rehearsal for Candlelight is Saturday, Dec 9...Joyful Ringers rehearse at 9AM, Sr and Youth Choirs join rehearsal at 10AM
- ★ Candlelight Service is at 4 PM Sun. Dec 10th.
- ★ Joyful Ringers and Sr. Choir resume Wed. rehearsals January 3rd (6:20 and 7:30)

CHRISTMAS EVE CHOIR

Get into the Christmas spirit! Bring your friends and family! Join the Rome Senior Choir to sing on Christmas Eve! We will sing a simple, 2-part arrangement of *What Child Is This?* by Jill Galina called *The King of US All*. Rehearsal in the choir room at 3 PM. Any questions? Contact Kathy Austin at ktaustin47@gmail.com or by text at 315-941-6952

Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright.

MUSIC STAFF NEWS

We are excited to announce that Tina Toglia will become our organist, starting January 1. Many of you may remember Tina when she was with us from

2007 to 2011. Tina holds a Doctorate in Music from Stony Brook University, and Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Piano Performance from Temple University. Most recently she has been a Lecturer in Piano at Hamilton College and teaches Research in Music at Syracuse University. Tina also maintains an active private piano studio and performs regularly in many venues. She is anxious to get back into church music. We are so fortunate to have her return to our church!

Our Senior Choir Director, Kathy Austin, has submitted a letter of resignation, effective Dec. 31st. We thank Kathy for the wonderful work she has done with our choir. Starting in January, Kim Nethaway will be leading the Senior Choir.

Our annual Candlelight Service will take place Sunday, Dec. 10 at 4 PM. Please invite family and friends to this special service of music and scripture, featuring our Youth Choir (led by Kim and John Nethaway) Joyful Ringers Handbell Choir (led by Kim Nethaway) and Senior Choir (led by Kathy Austin). We will be joined by organist/pianist Tina Toglia, and flutist Amanda Yeoman for an inspirational Advent celebration.

FAITH FORMATION NEWS

Apocalyptic Advent

Embracing Hope in the 2nd Coming of Christ 2023 ADVENT DEVOTIONAL

Daily reflections by Outlook Editor Teri McDowell Ott help readers wrestle with Christ's promises in a broken world.



Adult Education classes are taking a break until January. Children and teens are practicing for the pageant.

A new year, a new idea....Starting in January, the Faith Formation Committee will be trying some new ideas for our Faith Formation/Sunday School classes that we think you will like.

Carrie Scaccia will switch to teaching the teen class.

Parents, on a rotating basis, will work with the children's class! Participating parents include Danielle Sexton, Heather & Raymond Tucker, Jillian Olney, and Mary Yates!

The adult class, usually led by Helen Adsit or Pastor Edwina invites more individuals to lead a discussion with a new format. We will experiment having our "class" meet in the parlor vs the chapel (since everyone is already gathered there for great snacks and refreshments)

This more casual format will consist of whatever topics adults would like to discuss. It may be a bible lesson one week, theological questions you've been wondering about, other faith-related questions, or even how Church intersects with society. We're hoping the new format and location will lead to more participation and some great discussions!

Christmas Pageant "A CANDLELIT CHRISTMAS STORY"

Experience the Christmas Story in a New Light
Featuring our children, youth & teens
Sun, Dec 17
During 10am Worship

ECUMENICAL YOUTH GROUP: JANUARY 21, 2024 ECUMENICAL YOUTH GROUP MEET HERE



EPIPHANY CELEBRATION & TAKING DOWN THE GREENS

Welcome the Appearance of the Three Kings during Worship Refreshments for All & One Last Wearing of the Ugly Sweaters!!



- December: Gingerbread Week!! Decorate cookies & gingerbread houses!
 Lots more fun with holiday parties & making gifts for our families
 School will be closed from 12/22 through 01/02
- January: Winter Week, Night Week, Bear Week, Hat Week

NEWS FROM OUR MISSION COMMITTEE

Our Mission Closet is currently open Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9:30am to Noon. Visitors have been referred to us by other local churches, The Neighborhood Center, Rome Rescue Mission, Rome Connected Community Schools & Mohawk Valley Community Action to name a few.

Thanks to all of you who have donated articles to the closet. At this time we need:

- Men's: T-shirts, boots, coats, pants (jean & sweatpants)
- Boys & Girls: All things winter: size 16-18
- Sheets: King & Twin
- Toiletries: Wash cloths, toothpaste & toothbrushes all ages
- Pantry: Spaghetti Sauce

Always Collecting: Non-perishable food items & hygiene products for our Community Closet. Boxes are in the sanctuary entryway and in the CE hall

Blessings in a Backpack has been selected by the Store Leadership Team at Hannaford to benefit from the Bloomin' 4 Good Program. BIB will receive \$1 from every specially marked Bloomin' 4 Good bouquet sold during the month of December 2023 at 808 West Chestnut Street, Rome NY

Cooking for the Rome Rescue Mission: We do NOT prepare meals for the Mission during the month of December. We have been asked to cook for meals served on

Jan 10, 17, 24 and 31 instead ①. Please sign up to help one of your captains: Liz, Amy, Bruce & Kari — We're always looking for captains to lead cooking and thank you to everyone who turns out to help!! Many hands make light work!!



Christmas Joy Offering

Your gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering help to provide brighter educational opportunities at historically Presbyterian ethnic schools and colleges. Gifts to the offering also support the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions, a fund that assists retired church leaders and their survivors in difficult times. Together, the Christmas Joy Offering supports the leaders of our church, past, present and future. The envelopes will be in the pews for the month of December. You can go to www.pcusa.org/specialofferings to learn more.

MORE MISSION COMMITTEE NEWS

Rummage Sale Update: The sale at the Fall Fair netted approximately \$1800. Thank you to all who donated and helped organize this part of the Fair!!

The Rome Branch of the NAACP will hold its 2nd annual Warm & Cozy event in our Dining Hall on Saturday Dec 9th from 11am to 2pm. This event is geared toward those in the our community who could use a little help and friendship during the holiday season!! Other church partners, including Rome Connected Community Schools and local first responders, will also join this festive event! The Rome Branch appreciates the support of 1st Pres – Please stop by to say Hello if you are able!!

Alternative Gift Giving Table At Advent Celebration

Support A Cause In Honor Of Someone You Love: Below are links to gift markets for organizations that work with development & relief around the world.

Heifer International: Go to www.heifer.org then click on "Gift Catalog"

Church World Service: "Best Gift Catalog" https://cwsbestgift.org

Alternative Gifts International offers a wide range of development and education projects to support: www.altgifts.org

The Presbyterian Church USA also has a giving program for development projects. You can see those at https://presbyteriangifts.org





TAPESTRY

The All-Centuries Singers

G. Roberts Kolb, director

Christmas Tapestry

Benjamin Britten A Ceremony of Carols

Kirke Mechem Seven Joys of Christmas

Motets and Chorales from the 16th-century

Saturday December 16, 2023 7:00 P.M.

Stone Presbyterian Church South Park Row Clinton, NY

General admission \$15; Seniors \$10; Students \$5



WINTER WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Date	Layreader	Recorder	Special Note
3-Dec	Gail Tucker	Shari Fish	1st Sunday of Advent
10-Dec	Danielle Sexton	Val Wood-MacRae	
Candlelight	No Layreader needed	Jay Fish	Pastor
17-Dec	No Layreader needed	John Nethaway	Pageant
24-Dec	Jon Denton	Shari Fish	Christmas eve morning
Christmas Eve	Evan Griffith	Don Hanson	
31-Dec	Helen Adsit	Tom McGibbon	New Year's Eve
7-Jan	Liz Clough	Val Wood-MacRae	Epiphany/Undecorate
14-Jan	Raymond Tucker	Jay Fish	
21-Jan	Carrie Scaccia	John Nethaway	
28-Jan	Dave Nolan	Shari Fish	

COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

Copper City Community Connections: Do you or someone you know feel a lack of interest in things you once enjoyed? Have decreased energy? Feel worthless or hopeless at times? Healthy Ideas is a program for anyone age 55 and older who may feel sad or lonely. To make a confidential appointment, contact Stephanie Malagese at (315) 337-8230

35th Annual Messiah Sing – Dec 17 at 3pm - Zion Episcopal Church, 140 West Liberty; featuring music of GF Handel's Messiah and the Hallelujah Chorus. Led by G Robert Kolb, accompanist Sar Strong, & featuring Rebecca Matte and other area musicians. Program is free & reception follows. Loaner copies available for use

"Warm & Cozy Pizza Party"-Sat, Dec 09, our church co-hosts with the Rome NAACP. Free to all in need and every guest receives warm and cozy winter accessories. Please be sure to thank & patronize Cianfrocco's Subs, Joes' Jerky (Sherrill), Sinatra's Pizza, Big Jay's, La Roma's, Ferlo's Bakery and Domino's Pizza; our Presbyterian Women and our 1st Pres Mission Committee!

PRESBYTERY OF UTICA'S RIP MEDICAL DEBT CAMPAIGN NEARS COMPLETION

"I've had so much stress over my medical debt and to have it removed by an angel is such a blessing. It has had a huge impact on me and my family."

Want to help those living under the crushing burden of past due medical debt? The Presbytery of Utica has collected almost \$23,000 towards a goal of \$30,000 to purchase and relieve almost \$3,000,000 in past due medical debt in New York State through RIP Medical Debt (https://ripmedicaldebt.org/.) You can make a year-end contribution and help those in aching need. Write a check payable to the Presbytery of Utica with "RIP Medical Debt" in the memo line; mail it to Presbytery of Utica, PO Box 127, Holland Patent, NY 13354. If you need more information, contact Larry Beasley at uticastatedclerk@gmail.com or call 315-794-9124.











Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Rome	Girl Scouts meet Tue NA meets Tuesday evenin Refugee Services English	at 8:00 pm in our Dining F sdays from 4-5:30pm ngs at 7:30 pm Dining Hall Classes - Tues & Thurs AM IN THE CHAPEL – CONCERT 12/	& PM	DECEMBER 2023	1 RFL Paint 'n Sip	2 Bell Ringing at Price Chopper/ 9 to 3pm
3 10am Worship Holy Communion Advent Celebration Youth Choir Pampered Chef Deadline	4 Organ Tuning 4pm Serenity Circle Bring your own Poinsettia Deadline	9:30 Community Closet 10am Crafty Ladies	9am Wed AM Club 6:20p Bell Choir 7:30p Senior Choir r	7 9am Piano Tuning 9:30 Community Closet Poinsettias to Church BIB Packing at Trinity	Poinsettia Delivery & Setup	9 10am Candlelight Rehearsal 11am to 2pm Warm & Cozy Pizza with Santa
10 10am Worship Coffee Break Youth Choir 4pm Candlelight	4pm Serenity Circle	8:30 Wed AM dress rehearsal 9:30 Comm Closet 10a Crafty Ladies 5pm Alz Support Grps	10:30 am Wed AM Club present In Sanctuary	Pastor Group? 9:30 Community Closet 6:30pm RFL Stained Glass Workshop	15	16
17 10am Worship Christmas Pageant Caroling & Lunch	18	9:30 Community Closet 10am Crafty Ladies BIB Packing at Trinity	20	"Longest Night" Service 7pm at Trinity	Church Offices Close at Noon	3:15pm Choir rehearse
10am Worship 4pm Christmas Eve Service/Communion 31michelle – lessons carols Happy New Year Eve	Merry Christmas	26 Church Offices closed for Holiday 9:30 Community Closet	27	9:30 Community Closet	Presbytery Necrology Report Due Church Offices Close at Noon	30

Save These January Dates: Church Offices closed for Holiday, Monday Jan 02 / Community Closet on Tuesdays & Thursdays 9:30am to Noon

Choirs Resume 01/03 Church Offices closed for Martin Luther King holiday, Mon Jan 15

Worship & Music Thu 01/04 at 6:30pm PW meets in Chapel at 9:30- Tues 01/16 -Mission meets at 1pm

Epiphany & Stay After Worship to Help "UnDecorate" on Jan 07 Faith Formation: Wed Jan 17 at 5:15pm

Serenity Circle resumes Jan 9 / Session Bible Study Thur, January 18th at ten in the library, discussing Lessons 4 and 5.

Nursery School Board meets Mon, Jan 22