

# MARS UP CHURCH



We are your hometown church: Faithful to Tradition, Loving in Fellowship & Reaching for Tomorrow!

December 2021

December is always the season of Advent. This is the time we as Christians seek to prepare ourselves for the coming of Christ. We prepare because on Christmas eve we will be hearing the age-old story of the birth of our savior once again, but also we prepare knowing that one day Christ shall return. Though we do not know when that day will be, we have to be prepared, be ready, live ready, for the day each of us will be called home. In the church we have many traditions and practices to help prepare us for the coming of Christ. One of the traditions of the Advent season is to light candles designed to remind us of the Christian lessons of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love.

Each of these are important tenants of our faith, but for the purposes of this article I want to focus on the concept of Joy. I received a number of comments this past Sunday about my Sons baptism. In particular there seems to be a great deal of chatter about the conclusion of the baptismal service when I took the water from the fount and threw it into the air. To me this act is a symbol of the joy we have in baptism. It is the water coming alive with the Spirit. It is beautiful and life giving in so many ways. I must confess throwing the water like that is a move I stole from my late brother the Rev. Scott Hauser.

I can remember when I was in seminary he had already been in the pastorate for some time and so he became my de facto mentor. I often called him with questions about faith or simply to debate theological topics. One of those conversations was over the topic of baptism. We often talked for hours, but the thing I remember about that conversation was him showing me two videos. The first was of a tall handsome man in a suit and tie walk solemnly toward the minister, bow his head low, as the organ played the hymn “Softly and Tenderly” with a slow deep resounding holy way that only an organ can. The minister sprinkles water on the man’s head and then taken up the universal stance of devout prayer with hands clasped as the man stands, bows, and solemnly walks to his seat. It was a video of high church the illustrates with clarity the holiness of the sacrament. The second video was of a young boy, with a wiry grin on his face, as he then runs and jumps and does a canon ball right beside the pastor standing in the baptismal pool. The water covers the pastor, splashes over the sides of the pool, even drenches the Bible sitting on the edge of the pool beside the microphone. The church erupts in laughs and cheers as the boy pops up out of the water with the biggest smile you have ever seen in your life. The minister still trying to understand what happens, slowly looks around, trying desperately not to laugh out loud as well.

Scott said to me, “Baptism should look more like the second video than the first”. After all it is in the sacraments that we experience God, are claimed by God, are filled by God, strengthened by God! Is that not a time to be filled with joy and excitement? When we receive communion it should be more like a glass of wine with a long lost friend than a staunch and boring affair. I’m not saying that Baptism and Communion are not Holy rituals, they are! But Holy does not mean boring, it does not mean lifeless. And so this season of Advent, I invite you to put the joy of Christ back into all of your rituals. I encourage you to find that inner peace and contentment that comes from the joy of knowing Christ and being known by Him. I encourage you to think of Holy, and Christmas, as a life-giving and exciting time because it is. Christmas is coming. Christ is coming. Hallelujah!! Praise the Lord!!

With Many Blessings,

Pastor Brian



Rev. Scott Hauser

**BAPTISM OF  
JACOB SCOTT HAUSER**



As the season of Christ's birth approaches, Pastor Brian invites you to join us in worship on December 21st @ 7:00 pm.

The Blue Christmas service recognizes "blue" feelings many have around the holidays while being a resource of strength and hope.



# TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

*Celebrate the birth of Christ and the great light that has come into the world at Mars UP Church!*

*Regular worship services Sunday Morning at 10:00 am also Live Stream via Facebook*

Two diverse candlelight services:



- ♦ **5pm**— Family Focused, Child Friendly Service with Glow sticks
- ♦ **7pm**—Traditional Candle Light Service with Communion and Choir



Looking for Advent Readers

Would you like to help with the Advent readings during worship?

Sunday the 12th, 19th and Christmas Eve Services @ 5:00 pm and 7:00 pm all need readers!

Please let the office know if you are willing to help!

## Mission & Outreach Christmas Service Outreach

### *"Be an Angel"*

For many years, through incredible generosity of this church, needy families in our community have been blessed by the gifts and food we supply through the Salvation Army Angel Tree, local food bank, and the Lighthouse. Share the JOY of Christmas with others. Consider one or all of these options to be a visible face of Christ in our community

♦In Tarry N Talk there will be an Angel tree with tags.

Select a tag for a local senior citizen. Return the unwrapped gift (tag attached) and leave it under the tree by Sunday, December 5th. The Salvation Army will deliver these gifts to the senior citizens at Christmas.

♦Also, in Tarry N Talk are tags for Christmas toys for children of all ages. Please bring the toys by December 5th. This year the Lighthouse is again requesting donations for toys. Last year the Lighthouse foundation was able to supply toys for 750 children throughout the community. Help us, help them exceed this amount and brighten the lives of many more children and families with the love of Christ.



♦Please remember the local food bank at Glade Run Church. There is always a need for non-perishable items but during the holiday season the need is even greater. Please drop off items at the church or stop by the food bank with your donations or even a monetary gift. Monetary gifts can be made out to the SOUTH CENTRAL BUTLER COUNTY FOOD BANK, 1091 PITTSBURGH ROAD, VALENCIA, PA 16059

## **CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

There will be a Congregational Meeting at 11:00 am (after Worship) on December 19, 2021 for the election of officers and the presentation of the Preliminary 2022 Budget. We invite all to attend.

## Session Highlights from November Meeting

- Youth Group “homeless night” went well
- Hard tack candy making is going well. Have sold 240 lbs so far. Volunteers are being accepted.
- Congregational Meeting for election of officers and Committee Reports will be December 19, 2021
- Ordination of new Deacons and Elders will be January 16, 2022
- Congregational Meeting for Budget will be January 30, 2022
- Blue Christmas Service will be on December 21, 2021
- Christmas Eve Services will be held at 5:00 pm and 7:00 pm
- Salvation Army “Angel Tree” is located in Tarry and Talk. Please take a Card and make Christmas happen for someone.
- **Need Volunteers to “Ring the Bell” for Salvation Army on Monday December 6th from 10:00 am till 6:00 pm at the Seven Fields Giant Eagle. Would like to have 2 people per hour so one is alone and no one is outside for too long. Sign-up sheet in Tarry and Talk area...**
- Doing the Lighthouse Foundation Toy Drive again this year
- Living Nativity will be evenings of December 10 & 11...Need Volunteers
- Rotary Club will be collecting Socks for the Homeless – look for container soon...



## Time of Year Again.....Christmas Flowers

Mars United Presbyterian Church

Your order for Christmas poinsettias will help to enhance the beauty of our church sanctuary. Poinsettias are available in 6" pots for \$9:00. You may take your flowers with you following worship on Christmas Eve. Orders must be placed by December 12, 2021

Red: \_\_\_\_\_

Pink: \_\_\_\_\_

White: \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of:

\_\_\_\_\_

In memory of:

\_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Please prepay your order and place it in the offering basket, or bring it to the church office.



*Watch the story come alive at Mars UP Church!*

***Friday, Dec 10th from 6pm—8pm***

***Saturday, Dec 11th from 6pm—8pm***

***Everyone is Welcome and Refreshments provided!***



*Please Remember to Support the Glade Run  
Food Bank and the Deacon Kindness Collection  
this month of December.*

*With the Holiday fast approaching, Christmas  
dinner supplies and baking ingredients are  
especially needed at the food bank.*

*The Deacons will be working with the schools  
and local agencies to determine various needs in the community  
during this Christmas season.*

*Help make this Christmas extra special this season by helping support  
these two MUP community outreach projects.*

*Sunday, December 5th —Food Bank Collection*

*Sunday, December 12th —Deacon Kindness Collection*



## SUNDAY SCHOOL FUN



*Joshua fought the battle of Jericho!*



## SAVE THE DATE!

- ◆ Communion -December 5th
- ◆ Living Nativity - December 10th and 11th @ 6pm
- ◆ Congregational Meeting—December 19th after worship
- ◆ Blue Christmas-December 21st @ 7pm
- ◆ Christmas Eve Evening Services - December 24th 5:00 pm and 7:00 p.m.



### Contact Us

Stop by the office, email or give us a call for more information.

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Mars, PA 16046

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[marsup@mars-up.org](mailto:marsup@mars-up.org)

Visit us on the web at  
[www.mars-up.org](http://www.mars-up.org)

We're also on Facebook!!

Join us for Worship  
Sunday's at 10:00 am

Prayer Chain  
[mjaiken@zoominternet.net](mailto:mjaiken@zoominternet.net)

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