

second chronicles



December 2025 & January 2026

Advent 2025:



FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION...

WORSHIP:

Starting in worship on Sunday, November 30, the First Sunday of Advent, we will look with fresh eyes at some very familiar stories of the days leading up to the first Christmas, including the Angel's Annunciation to Mary, Joseph's Response, and Mary's Visit to Elizabeth. We will even study Jesus's genealogy as recorded in Matthew's Gospel to discover what we can learn from it.

BIBLE STUDY:

If you join the Thursday morning Bible Study during Advent you'll get a sneak peek at the scriptures we'll be exploring on Sunday mornings:

Luke 1:26-38

Matthew 1:18-25

Luke 1:39-55

Celebrate on Christmas Eve!

5 PM

Christmas for Kids, including The Nativity Play – A child-centered worship service for everyone. Costumed children will lead us in re-creating the Christmas story. Fully live-streamed on all our platforms.

7:30 PM

A Second Family Christmas complete with Carols, Candles, and the Christmas Story – this service is perfect for everyone. Bring friends, family, and neighbors. Second Singers and Second Ringers will lead us in singing all your favorite carols. Pastor Jeff Gibelius will offer a message of hope. Fully live-streamed on all our platforms.

**Hundreds of candle-lit luminaries will be displayed around our campus from dusk onward (weather-permitting).*

Christmas Eve and Offering Plates

We're bringing back our brass offering plates for one night only: our 5 and 7:30pm Christmas Eve celebrations. This is the night when members, visitors, and guests are most likely to want to give cash or checks as a spontaneous act of generosity, especially in support of our Christmas offering.

Will You be Home for Christmas?

Rev. Jim Richards will lead worship on Sunday, December 28, at 10:30am. Bring a guest to join you!

Start the New Year with Worship!

Epiphany Sunday is January 4. We'll remember the gifts of the Magi and celebrate the Lord's Supper together.

Guess Who's Coming to Worship in January? Joshua, Son of Nun

Joshua was Moses' lesser-known successor, but his role in leading the Israelites into the Promised Land demonstrated his unparalleled faithfulness. Starting on Sunday, January 11 of the new year we will think deeply about what we can learn from Joshua's leadership.

Second Staff

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Second Family All Church Christmas Breakfast



**Sunday
December 14**

9:30 am

RSVP at

GrowWithSecond.org

All are invited to join us for food and fellowship in the Rotunda.

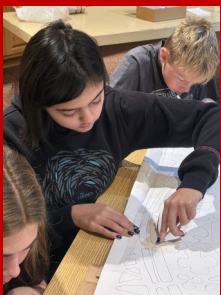
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It Will Soon be “Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas”

Paper Lace Advent Banners—Look for the paper lace banners that our Shine! Stars and the congregation have been working on. One is a triptych banner (3-panels) that is black and white and made with markers.



The other is a single-part banner that the Shine! students cut out carefully with X-acto knives on Sunday morning and covered with tissue paper.



Church member Ashley Gogoj’s art students at Carlisle High School made the painstaking outlines on the banners. Jerry and Nancy Wilkes created the lighting design for the single panel banner.

Advent Wreath, Advent Banners, and Christmas Tree – You’ll see all three of these on November 30, the First Sunday of Advent.

The Facilities Team will be focusing on winter preparation during the coming months.

We will be preparing salt containers and servicing our snow blowers to be ready for snow. Broken elbows and downspouts will also be replaced. The driveway and parking lot will also see some repairs with cold patches and sealing of cracks where needed. We are also completing installation of the new security system.



Do you have an interesting nativity set you would like to share with our church family this Advent? If so, it will be exhibited in the hallway show case. If interested contact Mark Smith at 717-514-3551.



second *family* **CHRISTMAS** *Offering*

This year the Christmas Offering will be shared between The Cracked Pot and Community Cares.

The Cracked Pot's mission is "providing youth, who are aging out of foster care, new opportunities through Christ-centered community". The Cracked Pot Coffee Shop is located at 36 N. Hanover Street, Carlisle. The Cracked Pot provides employment, as well as other services and opportunities, to help young adults no longer in the foster care system to move forward with their lives. In addition to donations The Cracked Pot is also looking for volunteers to help with transportation and to help in the coffee shop.

Community Cares is currently renovating a building on Spring Garden Street to become their new emergency shelter and resource center. They hope to have the building completed within the next few months. This new shelter will provide much needed space for sleeping, eating, and work areas for the residents, as well as extra storage space, and the administration offices – bringing all the staff, volunteers and services for the residents all under one roof.

The Christmas Offering will help The Cracked Pot provide services to a very vulnerable group of young adults and help Community Cares to provide a larger and more efficient place to provide services to the homeless.

Poinsettias for Advent

Help us decorate the Sanctuary for the season of Advent!

You can bless our Christmas Eve worshippers by donating toward the beautiful red poinsettias that will adorn the base of our Christmas Tree and Chancel.

A \$10 donation provides one poinsettia.

To participate, visit GrowWithSecond.org and click on the GIVE tab. Or, you may send or drop off a check to the church office attn: Poinsettias.

You are welcome to give in honor of or in memory of someone special—please include that note with your donation.

Luminaries for Christmas Eve

The Season of Advent is upon us. We are again planning to light up our Church campus on Christmas Eve, with your help. For more details about these volunteer opportunities and to sign up, go to growwithsecond.org.

- Prepare the luminaries
- Set out the luminaries around the church campus
- Clean up the luminaries, the day after Christmas
- Donate \$10 for 10 luminaries. Any monies received above the cost of the luminaries will be donated to the Alzheimer's organization.

If you would like to support these decorations on our church grounds, go to GrowWithSecond.org and click on the GIVE tab. Or send or drop a check to the Church attn: Luminaries. You may include one of the following: Giving in honor of _____ or Giving in memory of _____.

Please contact Carol Turner at 717-329-5850 or email cturn717@gmail.com for more information about our Luminary project on Christmas Eve.



TRANSFORMED

How God Changes Us

A new small group is beginning January 14th, led by Shirley Verbos. The group will meet Wednesday evenings twice a month at 6:30 p.m. for 7 weeks. The class will be based upon Rick Warren's book *Transformed: How God Changes Us*, but the book is not required.

Please think about joining me in a journey of significance, in a small group, as we look at being transformed by God's word.

"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind".

Romans 12:3

Reach out to Shirley at 717-385-4805 for more information or let her know you are interested.

What's Happening with the Thursday Morning Bible Study? Thursdays at 11am

During December we will visualize the events leading to Jesus's birth, examining familiar scriptures from a new perspective.

Starting on January 8, Pastor Jeff will lead a study to the leading lessons from the life of Joshua.

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Names for the Messiah—Sundays, 9 AM, Beginning November 30

Facilitated by Sara Larouche

“For a child has been born for us, a son given to us: authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Might God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isa. 9:6
NRSV

Over the four Sundays of Advent, we will discuss these titles for Jesus including the reasons why people at the time may not have seen Jesus’s birth as meeting their expectations and why Christians believe that Jesus fulfilled those expectations.

Based on the Advent Study *Names for the Messiah* by Walter Bruggeman



In November the Serve Team Shared Our Abundance and Sent:

- An additional \$2000 to Project Share to help with increased food insecurity due to SNAP disruption.
- \$500 to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance to aid in relief for the Alaskan villagers effected by Typhoon Halong.
- \$1000 to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance to aid in relief for the people of Jamaica effected by Hurricane Melissa.
- An additional donation of \$1000 to Safe Harbour to help pay their electric bill.
- \$311 for needed items to Domestic Violence Services of Cumberland & Perry Counties, which included paper towels, toilet paper, multipurpose cleaners, disinfectant sprays, laundry detergent, hand soap, body wash for adults, body wash for children, and trash bags.
- \$609 for totes, pots, and pans for the Welcome Home Kits given to the clients of Community Cares who are moving from homelessness to their own home.
- 124 items of clothing for the men and women of the Fruitbelt Farmworker Christian Ministry. We share this donation with the Presbyterian Women who allowed us to get much of the clothing from their October Whale of a Sale. Thanks to the Presbyterian Women for their compassion and generosity.

****Thank you to all the very generous church members who give out of their abundance!***

The Serve Team: Charlie Bailey, Kathy Beck, Sharon Gardner, Gail Hollands, Jerry Ogline, Karen Saporito, Sharon Tate, Sue Wimer, Roxanne Hagenbuch, and Vicki Lantz

GUESS WHAT?! Bekah Barlow, Director of CYF Ministries, Has Been With Us for a Year!



And what a great year it has been! She has achieved three important first-year goals:

1. Reopen the Nursery for every Sunday use
2. Establish a Sunday morning program for elementary age children. This is what we know as SecondKids.
3. Ensure that all our background clearances for staff and volunteers up to date

She has done all this and more. A new child protection policy, called “Safe at Second,” has been adopted by the Session. She hosted several family-oriented events. She is staging an all-new Nativity Play for Christmas Eve.

At the same time Shine! has grown to include up to 16 teens on a Sunday morning. And Michelle Trefren has created the Youth Arts Christian Choir. Meanwhile, KidsPraise and the PrayGround are going strong during worship.

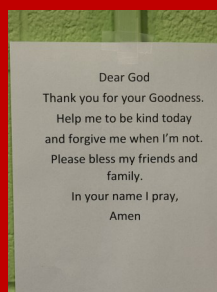
Children, Youth, and Families Ministry News From Bekah Barlow, Director of CYF Ministries

I would like to wish all of our children, youth and their families a very happy and blessed Christmas season as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior!

Look for more monthly Fun Night activities starting in the New Year. They will be posted in the weekly CYF emails with signups!

Our annual Children’s Nativity Play will take place on Christmas Eve at 5pm. Rehearsals are in Glory’s Edge, Sundays at 9am.

SecondKids Meet Sundays at 9am – Kindergartners through Fifth Grade are learning about heroes and heroines of the Bible. Notice how they have transformed their meeting space in Glory’s Edge with artwork.



SHINE! Meets Sundays at 8:53am. – We currently have 16 “Stars” divided almost evenly between boys and girls in 6th through 12th grades. Here are some recent action photos from events in our building and in Philadelphia on a recent mission retreat.

It's Time to **SHINE!**

(SHINE! is our ministry for 6th through 12th graders)

11/30	8:30 AM Serve meal at “The Breakfast Table” (New Life Community Church, 64 E North St, Carlisle) 10:30 AM Worship – Shine! Stars help with special Scripture Reading
12/7	8:53 AM Prepare Communion for Worship 10:30 AM Worship
12/14	8:53 AM Christmas Gathering 9:30 AM Second Family Christmas Breakfast 10:30 AM Worship 11:30 AM Move stage sections into Sanctuary after worship
12/21	8:53 AM Fill luminaries with sand (wear old clothes); led by Garrett Duff 10:30 AM Worship
12/24	3 PM-ish Place and light luminaries around parking lot 5 PM Nativity Play and Worship 7:30 PM Assist with scriptures, collecting offering
12/28	No Shine! (Worship at 10:30am)
1/4	No Shine! (Worship at 10:30am)
1/11	8:53 AM Shine! Resumes for the New Year! 10:30 AM Worship



NEWS

from the Session

October Edition

The Funding Committee is now the "Finance" Committee – Finance reported that year to date giving is about 5% behind budget (c. \$18,300).

The Finance Committee has created a Legacy Team to focus on growing giving to the Generations Fund.

Upcoming Special Giving Opportunities:

- * Christmas Offering – December through January 4
- * Every Member Offering – Suggested donation is \$35/per member – January 15 to February 15.
- * Legacy Giving (Generations Fund) February 22 (Legacy Sunday) to March 22.
- * Easter Offering: March 29 to April 12.

Second Church is hosting a workshop meeting of Carlisle Presbytery on Saturday, February 7, 2026. The Presbytery of Carlisle has asked Second Church to host a grand worship service for all 39 congregations on August 30, 2026.

We are exploring possible new ministries to serve senior adults in our congregation and community.

The Session approved criteria to be considered by the Building Use Team when determining which outside groups are charged for using the facilities and what those charges should be.

Carlisle Presbytery News

Second Church will host the Presbytery of Carlisle TWICE in 2026!

On Saturday, February 7, we will host a training oriented meeting of the Presbytery focused on equipping pastors and other church leaders for more effective ministry as Elders, Deacons, Youth Ministers, etc.

On Sunday, August 30, in the afternoon we will host a first-ever worship service for ALL members in the congregations of Carlisle Presbytery, not just Elders and Pastors. This promises to be a festive service with lots of music, great preaching, and tons of food afterward!

Save the Date: Saturday, February 7!

Second Saints – On November 2 we remembered members of our congregation who have died in the faith since All Saints Day 2024:

Bill Allison
Sandy Banks
Betty Bowes
Skip Brown
Shirley Johnstone

Mary Kutulakis
Mary Percival
Sylvia Rambo
Tom Rhen

Please thank God for these precious saints in your prayers.

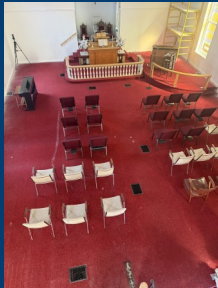
Second Church is Building Bridges in Carlisle

Shiloh Baptist Church and their pastor came to Second Church for worship on November 2.

On October 8 volunteers from Second Church joined 8 volunteers from Bethel AME help with their renovations, beginning with the removal of their Sanctuary carpet.

Pastor Jeff spoke to the Presbytery of Carlisle on November 19 about the power of Bridgebuilding in a sermon called, "Let Us Go to the Other Side."

Nepali Christian Churches are hosting an evangelism event at Second on December 6. We have been invited to attend!



Music Ministries at Second

Second Sunday Choir

Dec 7th we will sing "And he shall purify" from Handel's Messiah!
Contact Michelle@growwithsecond.org for a practice track!

Join us for Christmas Eve 7:30pm service!

We would love to add to our singing ranks to celebrate Jesus' birth.
Won't you join the fun?
Thursdays Dec. 4, 11, and 18 @7-8:30pm
Christmas Eve, Dec. 24th

Handel's *Messiah* is Coming Back to Carlisle!

Michelle Trefren and Cantate Carlisle are presenting a community concert of the Christmas portions of Handel's *Messiah* on December 21 at Carlisle United Methodist Church at 3pm. Aaron Gibelius, a recent graduate from Duquesne University's Pappert School of Music – and a member of our Second Family – is a soloist. Don't miss out!

Cantate & the Community

Sunday, December 21 | 3pm

First Evangelical Lutheran, E. High Street

Reservations Requested | Donations Welcome

Handel's *Messiah*

Christmas Movements



City Sidewalks:

Yuletide Choral Favorites

Saturday, December 6 | 7pm
1st UCC (30 North Pitt St, Carlisle)

Sunday, December 7 | 3pm
2nd Presbyterian (528 Garland Dr, Carlisle)

Advance Tickets: www.CantateCarlisle.org/events

Extended Communion Reaches Many – On November 2 over 150 people received the Lord's Supper in the Sanctuary. Countless others received in their homes while worshipping online. 29 were served the elements by Elders at Green Ridge Village during 10:30am worship; several more folks were served the elements in their homes after worship. And Pastor Jeff brought communion to 14 residents of Cumberland Crossings on the following Wednesday. That's about 200 people communing together with Jesus!



In the spirit of Thanksgiving, the Deacons Continued a Beloved Tradition

—assembling and delivering fruit baskets to over 20 members and families who have been unable to attend in-person worship. These cherished members reside in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, or are homebound due to medical concerns.

Thankfully, many are still able to join their Second family through our weekly online worship services. Delivering these fruit baskets is our way of sharing love and connection from their church family.

In giving, we also receive—this meaningful ministry continues to be a source of joy and gratitude for the Deacons.



Deacon Gift Cards for College Students

Second Church Deacons are once again sending Gift Cards to our Second Church College Students (they are members or their parents are members of the church). The college students will receive a special gift from their Second family around Valentine's Day to let them know that we are thinking of them. Please purchase a Gift Card to any store, i.e., Starbucks, Amazon, Target, Sheetz, Dunkin Donuts or one that covers a multitude of stores/restaurants, etc. to show God's love and your love! Cards can be given to Lynn and Dave Kennaly, Charlie Bailey, Susan Blackburn, Deb Kelly or Deb Brandberg. If you want to drop off your gift card during the week, they can be placed in Vicki Lantz's mailbox in the hall. If you want to make a dollar donation, please reach out to Vicki Lantz. Thank you very much for your contribution!

You can help your neighbor or family or friends suddenly experiencing a food or housing crisis.

Here is a list of local organizations that can provide assistance.

—From the Serve Team

Emergency Shelter & Housing

COMMUNITY CARES: Provides emergency shelter & coordinated housing re-entry in Cumberland County.
717-249-1009

SAFE HARBOUR: Provides a continuum of housing options for those experiencing homelessness.
717-249-2200

CUMBERLAND COUNTY: Helps to find housing, refuge, care and self-sufficiency.
717-240-5112

Clothing & Household Items

NEW DIGS MINISTRY: Free household goods and furniture. You must be referred to this organization by a social services agency. Ask Project SHARE to help!

CARLISLE AREA FAMILY LIFE CENTER for families looking for help with supplies for newborns to age 5.
(Diapers, formula, clothing)

GREENLIFE THRIFT STORE: A non profit thrift store where everything is priced \$4.99 or below

LIFESTYLE BY NEW LIFE COMMUNITY CHURCH: For families transitioning from homeless to a home, this ministry helps furnish new homes.

Help With Food and Groceries

PROJECT SHARE: Offers monthly food distribution at their warehouse and weekly food distribution at the farmstand.

NEW LIFE COMMUNITY CHURCH: Offers a free breakfast every Sunday morning at 9am.

THE SALVATION ARMY: Offers a variety of free meal options during the week.

All are welcome to the dinner program, held on the following days:

Monday - Friday from 4:30 PM - 5:30 PM

Saturday from 12 PM - 1 PM

Sunday from 5 PM - 6 PM

Emergency Food Distribution: If you are looking for weekly groceries, the Salvation Army food pantry is available for all in need. Please call 717-249-1411

**SAVE THIS PAGE TO HELP
A NEIGHBOR**

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN



Presbyterian Women is the women's organization of the PC(USA). Participate as deeply and/or broadly in the organization and its commitments as you wish.

PW of Second engages in meaningful missions work, social activities, and community. Join us at our next meeting in January (TBA) to see what we're planning for 2025!

Co-moderators for 2025:

Diane Tokash (717) 919-2680 drosen1057@gmail.com

Lynn Kennaly (717) 386-7004 dkennaly@yahoo.com

Here we go into the holiday season PW!

Please join us for a FABULOUS cookie party/

meeting DECEMBER 2ND 6 – 8pm!!! Munching cookies will be on the agenda as well as discussing our survey(please fill it out ASAP!), allocating funds for our mission partners, electing new officers, and planning for 2026! Oh MY! Also mark your calendar for a SOUP/BREAD DINNER Jan. 7th 5 to 7:30pm (we will be collecting items for our special mission partner, Domestic Violence Services). We'll start with some chair yoga at 5 then sip soups around 5:45pm. Start your crock pots!

Remember if you ever need a ride to any of our activities, please let Lynn, Diane, or Lillian know.

So hope to see you there!!!!

PW also says a HUGE 'Thank You' to Second Church for supporting the 2025 Giant Gift Card sales the third Sunday of the month. All monies raised through these sales goes into the PW missions account for distribution to our mission partners.



Giant Gift Cards

These are available for sale in the Narthex on the 3rd Sunday of every month. They are great for buying gas, groceries and gift giving!

All proceeds go to mission.

second
presbyterian church
528 Garland Drive
Carlisle, Pa 17013

A dark, atmospheric illustration of a nativity scene. In the foreground, a wooden manger is partially visible. The background shows silhouettes of trees and a bright, glowing star in the night sky, casting a beam of light. The overall color palette is dark blue and purple.

Christmas Eve at second church

5 pm – Kid-centered Christmas Eve Celebration

7:30 pm – A Second Family Christmas for all ages

Check out all the details inside.