# second chronicles



December 2026 & January 2027




**11/29**

**The First Sunday of Advent—**The tree will be up and the Advent wreath will be ready for lighting. A good friend of our Second Family, Rev. Dr. Bruce Humphrey, is preaching on Hope and Waiting as Advent begins.

**12/6**

**The Second Sunday of Advent—**We'll celebrate the Lord's Supper and reflect on "The (Holy) Ghost of Christmas Past."

**12/13**

**The Third Sunday of Advent—**Come early for Christmas Breakfast with your Second Family. We'll reflect on "The (Holy) Ghost of Chrstmas Present," and celebrate "Joy" Sunday in our 10:30 worship service.. Then, at 6pm, you can join friends from Bethel AME, Shiloh Baptist, and West Street AME Zion churces as we sing carols together at First United Church of Christ downtown. Pastor Jeff will lead an epic sing-along of the Twelve Days of Christmas!

**12/20**

**The Fourth Sunday of Advent —**"The (Holy) Ghost of Christmas Future." We'll be fully decorated and almost ready for the coming of the Christ child! This is also the day we'll baptize youth and adults who've been waiting for this special day. Please tell Pastor Jeff if your child would like to be part of the celebration.

**12/24**

**Christmas Eve—Come at 5pm or 7:30pm—**The early worship service is shorter and kid-focused, including the Nativity Story. The later service includes music from Second Singers and a Christmas Message from Pastor Jeff. Both services will be filled with joy, carols, and candlelight. Plan to bring some neighbors to check out the 100s of luminaries on our campus!

**12/27**

Rev. Bob Cook has served as a pastor for 48 years in Methodist and Presbyterian congregations. He also happens to be the father of Elder Kate Cook Jimenez. Now, in retirement, we are blessed to have Bob and his fiancé, Becky, worshipping with us whenever they can. Bob will be our guest preacher on the Sunday after Christmas.

## Learn More About Pastor Bob Cook



Rev Dr Robert Cook has been in pastoral ministry since 1979. Ordained in the United Methodist Church, he has served a number of congregations In Pennsylvania. Most recently he retired as interim pastor of the Greencastle Presbyterian Church where he served for 7 years. (That makes him a "Methoterian") He is the father of Kate Cook-Jimenez and papa to Alex, Carmen, Javier and Eva and father in law to Luis, who are part of Second Church. He makes his home in Shippensburg and is engaged to Rebecca "Becky" Fic of Mechanicsburg.

# Don't Forget Your Second Family in your Christmas Giving

Once you've gotten everything for your first family for the Christmas holiday, consider a year-end gift to your Second Family. Some people use a transfer from their IRA (as part of their annual RMD or required minimum distribution) to make a tax-free gift. You can designate it for the Christmas Offering, the Generations Fund, or another ministry close to your heart. Or simply make an extra gift of any kind to the annual fund and it will be used where it's most needed and where it will make the greatest impact.

# Second Staff

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## Second Family Christmas Breakfast

**Sunday, December 13 at 9:30am.**

All are invited for food and fellowship in the Rotunda.




**3** There's nothing like communion with your Second Family to begin 2027. Did you know that Elder Kate Cook Jimenez provides homemade bread each communion Sunday?

**10** Baptism of the Lord Sunday – We'll remember Jesus's baptism and our own.

**17** We'll remember the prophetic message of Dr. King and how it speaks to our time decades later. On January 16, we've been invited to join Bethel AME church for their annual MLK luncheon in the Second Church Rotunda. On January 17, our director of music, Michelle Trefren, will lead a unity choir of singers from across Carlisle at the annual MLK Scholarship Commemoration in the afternoon.

**24** We'll ordain and install officers in 10:30 worship. Afterward, meet with the Elders to hear their plans for the New Year and ask any questions you may have.

**31** Come for 10:30 worship and stay for the congregation's annual meeting. This is when we receive the budget, approve the terms of call for the pastor, and elect leaders to any vacant positions.



## 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

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
- Setting out the luminaries around the church campus
- Clean up the luminaries, the day after Christmas

You can also support this activity with a donation. 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.

## CHRISTMAS OFFERING

This has been a difficult year for many people which has added a lot of pressure on many of our mission partners. With this year's Christmas Offering the Serve Team hopes to help the following mission partners with their increased needs:

**CARLISLE TRUCK STOP MINISTRY —** Purchase a needed ramp for their storage trailer so they can continue to help with the increased challenges faced by independent truck drivers due to the rise in fuel costs.

**PROJECT SHARE —** Assist in funding the Weekend Nutrition Power Pack Program for students to help address the rising cost of food, especially for families. 8900 packs were given to eligible students in the Carlisle, South Middleton, & Big Spring School Districts last year.

**SAFE HARBOUR —** As experienced by many members and even our church, a need to keep their lights on and bills paid so that they can continue to provide temporary housing as well as help individuals find affordable housing.

You can give using the QR code or simply mark any offering "Christmas Offering".

# Thank You for Supporting Gems for Jesus!

Back in October we invited the congregation to give to the Generations Fund in a creative way. Donate your mis-matched earrings, broken bracelets, and coin collections that never quite got completed. We received more than we could have imagined! Watches, grandfather clocks, limited edition prints, and so much more. We took it all to dealers and have received – so far – more than $17000 from your donations. 100% of it will be invested in the Generations Fund to bless the future. Thank you! It's not too late. You can give your unwanted valuables to Second Church at any time. Elders Bob Hervey and Susan Hartman are our contacts for this ongoing project.



# ESL at Second Church: Sharing God's Love Through Connection

Why should Second Church offer English as a Second Language (ESL) classes? That was the question the Second Church Leadership Team recently explored, and the answer goes far beyond teaching English. ESL classes provide an opportunity to welcome international residents, immigrants, and refugees into our community while demonstrating Christ-like love through meaningful relationships and practical support. As we learned from other churches offering similar programs, participants come from all walks of life—doctors, nurses, spouses of professionals, refugees, and grandparents—all seeking to communicate more confidently and clearly. These classes offer more than language skills; they create opportunities to build friendships, share our faith, introduce families to children's and youth activities, and invite newcomers to experience fellowship, church potlucks, and special gatherings like Thanksgiving Dinner. By opening our doors, we are building bridges and inviting others to become part of the Second Church family.

Planning is underway, and we are excited to move forward with one class each week, beginning Wednesday, February 17, from 5:30–7:00 p.m. There are still opportunities to volunteer, but we also recognize the importance of prayer as this new ministry takes shape. We are inviting men, women, and children to join a prayer team and regularly lift up the students, volunteers, and relationships that will grow through these classes. Whether you serve in the classroom or faithfully pray from home, you can be part of this ministry. If you would like to volunteer or join the prayer team, please contact Vicki at Vicki@growwithsecond.org. Together, we can make a difference by sharing not only the gift of language, but also the love and mercy of Christ!

# Second Family Extends Communion beyond the Sanctuary

On Sunday, November 1, our Elders, Deacons and retired Pastors extended the Lord's Table to members who are unable to attend worship in person. This ministry allows these members to remain connected to Second Church. While the visits are important to those receiving the elements, as is often the case, the reports from those serving is that they received just as much joy from the visits.

Extended Home Communion takes place two to three times a year, and we are always looking to expand our circle of care.

Any Ordained Elder or Deacon (whether currently active or not) is eligible to participate.

These short visits make a difference in the lives of our homebound members, and it will deeply enrich your own faith journey as well.

Reach out to your Deacon or Vicki@growwithsecond.org to participate.




# Deacon Gift Cards for College Students

The Deacons will be collecting gift cards to mail to our College Students around Valentine's Day in February 2027.

We want to encourage your help. As you are shopping for the holidays, please consider purchasing some gift cards in the amounts of five, ten or fifteen dollars.

Please bring them to the Church and place them in the Deacon Mailbox in a sealed envelope. Or if you want the Deacons to purchase them for you, we would be happy to do that! You could write a check to Second Presbyterian Church and in the memo write Deacon College Gift Cards.

Suggested gift cards are from: Amazon, Walmart, Dunkin Donuts, Starbucks, Chic Fila and Target are a few good ones.

Thanks for your help in supporting our college students!!!
Your Deacons




## Save the Date!

**Coldest Night of the Year**
**Saturday, February 27, 2027**
Walk in support of Community CARES

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

SecondKids had so much fun this fall at Boiling Springs Lake and at Fields of Adventure! Winter activities will include a night at Midway Bowling and a cookie baking activity. Look for these and other fun activities in your emails from CYF! There will be a link to sign up in each email or you can email: bekah@growwithsecond.org.

We are excited for our annual Children's Nativity Play which will be a simple retelling of the Christmas story! We hope you will come and enjoy the Pageant which will take place on Christmas Eve at 5pm. Rehearsals will be on Sunday's at 10am, in Glory's Edge.



In January, SecondKids will be finishing our series, Heroes of the Bible and we will be starting a new series on the New Testament! SecondKids have learned so much about the Bible and Bible characters! I'm excited to see them grow in their knowledge and faith!

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




**Facilities Updates:** During the winter months, the Facilities team will be replacing stained carpet tiles throughout the entire church building. Paint touch-ups will also take place where needed. We'll also finalize the set-up of our new shop located in the mechanical room off Glory's Edge.

**Sculpture Finds Home in Memorial Garden —** Ron Stinson is a professional sculptor with works in collections around the country. About a year ago he offered to gift his Second Family one of his pieces, one created from both Corten steel and stainless steel. The rusted patina of the Cotten is an intentional part of the piece. Ron does not usually name his pieces, preferring to let them speak for themselves. But when Pastor Jeff saw it he immediately thought of Heaven meeting earth in the incarnation. What do you see?



It is now permanently mounted in such a way that people walking up the Memorial Garden pathway will be gently reminded of God's undying love for them.

Please thank Ron and Karen Stinson for their generous donation. And please thank Bob Hervey, Kenny Mansfield, and Denny Wimer for ensuring that the sculpture will stand tall and steady for generations to come.



# Music Ministries

## Come Sing in the Choir for Christmas Eve!

We NEED your voices!! Bring the whole family to sing in the choir!

Check this link for Christmas Eve practice materials: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1q9u6Bv1tt6mWvrQTAWmeADgyf7oGLban?usp=drive_link

Come on Thursday Dec. 17th @7pm to rehearse (or any other Thursday leading up to then!). In the meantime, come to a Second Sunday:

- Nov. 8th @9:30
- Dec. 13 @9am Rehearsal (then, breakfast at 9:30)

We welcome All! Contact michelle@growwithsecond.org for practice materials!

We have some amazing music ministry members in our midst. I know I speak for everyone when I say, THANK YOU, for offering your time and effort to be part of the music ministry.

## Second Family Music in the Community

Check out what our Second Family members are doing with music and arts in the community!

Leah Kaye Serr Gibson is a sought after soloist in the area! Here are some of her upcoming performances:

- Nov. 21 @7pm - Free - https://luhrscenter.com/event/shippensburg-university-community-orchestra-4/ — Schubert's Mass No.6 in E-flat Major with Shippensburg University Orchestra/Choir
- Dec. 5-6 @3pm - Tickets here: https://mercersburgchorus.org/ — Ralph Vaughan Williams' Hodie

Cantate Carlisle - www.cantatecarlisle.org — led by Michelle DiBona Trefren and joined by Second Singers Larry Estes, Aaron Gibelius, Tia Johnson, Lloyd Kappeler, and Diane Tokach presents:

"A Winter Ride" featuring American composers of holiday and winter music.

- Friday, Dec. 4 @7:30pm at First United Church of Christ
- Saturday, Dec. 5 @3pm at Second Presbyterian Church

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Peter 4:10-11



# Staff Spotlilght:
## Michelle Trefren, Director of Music Ministries



The Personnel Committee continues its efforts to familiarize the congregation with the crucial work of our staff by sharing information about Director of Music Ministry, Michelle Trefren. Michelle is a valued lay staff member whose essential contributions to the worship and growth of Second Presbyterian Church may not always be realized by the congregation.

**Professional Background and Experience:** Michelle's vast and varied background definitely provides Second a staff member who is able to juggle many tasks. Michelle received a BM in piano from Syracuse University and her Masters in Choral Conducting from Westminster Choir College. While at Syracuse she studied abroad in France where she supported herself as the organist for a local small church. Her performance on the organ portative provided a paycheck that was a portion of the offering each Sunday. Throughout her years in high school she worked multiple jobs providing music for up to 4 services in a weekend. Even during her middle school years she was playing organ to earn money for her piano lessons. After graduation from college, she accepted a teaching position with Philadelphia School district for levels K-8. During this time she worked on her teaching certificate program. It was during this time she met her husband Will Trefren who was serving in the Navy. The rest is history and her next adventures would be in Japan, while Will was stationed there. During her time in Japan she served the Toyoko International Children's Choir and Yokohoma International Elementary School as well as working with all age levels of the school's choirs after school.

Upon her return to the US she served at several churches before accepting the position at Second. Her involvement with Carlisle theater connected her with Aaron Gilbelius and by extension, Pastor Jeff. She had seen a snippet video of Pastor Jeff in the community mixing with other groups of peoples and thought "I would like to work with a pastor like that".

In addition to her position at Second she is the Artistic Director for Cantate Carlise and has also served as Musical Director for several productions at Carlisle Theater. She has also played in the pit for both professional and school musical performances. Michelle also offers piano and vocal lessons.

Michelle believes everyone has the ability to develop musical skills with training and practice. Talent is about hard work and the right exposure. She also has a strong desire to encourage young artists.

Michelle believes God was watching out for her through every step opening every door.

**Family Life:** Michelle has settled into Carlisle with her husband Will and two children, 9 year old Laurel and 7 year old Reed. Both children are home school students and are students at Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet and will be performing in the Nutcracker at Hershey Theater this year. Reed has also enjoyed assisting the hand bell choir keep the beat with the low bass bells. Both children, as well as their parents are involved in community outreach often setting up lemonade stands to raise money for others. Will works in logistical data analysis but is also very accomplished in woodworking. His work can be seen on his online surf shop as well as the at the beautiful storage space next to the organ at Second. Take a second to walk over and see the beauty of his work. The Trefren's also host students of Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet, providing a comfortable home away from home. In addition to the human family members, they also provide a home to 3 chickens, 2 dogs, and 2 cats. In her spare time Michelle enjoys running, reading, and ballroom dancing. Interesting facts: in high school she participated in cross country and track, was Home Coming Queen , and ran a half marathon in Japan.

Michelle's parents Russ and Venessa DiBona definitely provided the exposure for her. Her father was a very accomplished musician and she has memories of hanging out with him and his band members as a child. Her mother in addition to being a landscape artist was a musi-

cian and vocalist. Her mother worked hard to teach herself Moonlight Sonata and Michelle thought "if she can do that I can do that also".

Roles and Responsibilities at Second Presbyterian: General Position Description: The Director of Music Ministry (Employee) will carry out a ministry by performing specific tasks related to the church's musical programs . As we have all seen the performing specific tasks portion of this position description has expanded during her tenure, especially post pandemic.

We at Second have been blessed with Michelle's faithful service to our members of all ages and all levels of talent. Michelle not only works closely with Pastor Jeff and staff to provide uplifting and meaningful hymns during our worship services but she molds members of the Second Singers, handbell choir, and Kid's Praise. Her ability to work with the individual schedules and skill levels provides an atmosphere for all to be able to praise God thru music. Michelle is always willing to take on a new project for the benefit of the members of Second Family.

## What Others Say About Michelle:

"Michelle is a very kind and upbeat person. She always gives me tips on how to project my voice and sing in tune. She is always a joy to work with!" Arabella Best

"Michelle is always so cheerful. She makes last minute changes without batting an eye. I go to choir feeling tired and leave feeling energized. On top of everything else, she is a great musician!" Susan Hartman, Second Singer

"Michelle provides a comfortable setting to lift praise to God through music regardless of ability. She provides the skills and techniques to increase confidence in the musicians. Her selection of hymns during the service reaches all ages, from the older hymns to stretching our exposure to newer songs. Rehearsals are uplifting, enlightening, and just fun. Michelle's strong faith can be seen is all her activities. Her love of God shines through in all she does." Diane Tokach, Elder

Michelle is that rare kind of leader who makes everyone feel welcome, wanted, and gifted. Simply put, she brings out the best in musicians. No wonder she is respected by the best musicians in our area, starting with people in Second Church and all around Carlisle. She appreciates all genres of sacred music and makes people who love those genres feel seen and appreciated. From banjo to bagpipes, ukulele to cello, Contemporary praise to Classical chant, Michelle has led it all. I'm especially grateful for how Michelle has followed in the footsteps of Rev. Jack Larson by incorporating children into weekly worship in a variety of musical ways. When music is intergenerational it helps us to build the relationships that keep us singing as a Second Family. Michelle brings faith, flexibility, and contagious enthusiasm to her work for Jesus, and we are better for it. Pastor Jeff

We at Second are blessed to have such a talented and committed staff member on staff. Her love of God, love of her Second Family, and love of music provides so many opportunities for Second. Praising God through music is helping us work to our mission of Making Disciples Who Make a Difference.






# If You See Something, Say Something

## *A Message from the Second Church Connect Team*

We've all heard the familiar phrase, "If you see something, say something." The Connect Team would like to encourage you to think about what that phrase means within the life of Second Church.

On a Sunday morning, at a meeting, or during a phone call, staff members will sometimes hear a question like, "I haven't seen _____ lately. Has something happened?"

It's wonderful that we notice when someone is missing. It tells us that we care about one another and that our church family is important to us. But the Connect Team would like to take that thought one step further.

**Instead of simply asking someone else where a person has been, why not pick up the phone and call them yourself? If you need a phone number or address to send a note, please check the church directory.**

Let them know they are missed. You don't have to ask questions or feel that you need to know why they haven't been attending church. They may choose to share what's been happening in their lives, or they may not. Either way, that's okay! Sometimes, simply hearing, "We miss seeing you, and we wanted you to know we're thinking about you," is exactly what someone needs.

There is another way we can put this same spirit of connection into action. Perhaps you've been praying for someone whose name has appeared on our prayer list. Why not take a moment to send them a card or note that simply says, "I've been praying for you." Those few words can be a tremendous encouragement and a reminder that they are not forgotten.

If the person on the prayer list is a friend or relative of someone at Second Church, we encourage you to reach out to that church member and ask them to pass along your message. It is a simple way to share encouragement while respecting those personal connections.

The Connect Team believes that being a church family means more than gathering together on Sunday mornings. It means caring for one another throughout the week, noticing when someone is missing, offering encouragement, and reminding others that they matter.

So, the next time you notice someone hasn't been around, remember:

**Don't just ask about them. Reach out to them!**

A phone call, a handwritten note, or a simple message can make a bigger difference than you might ever realize.

Let's continue to be a church where people know they are loved, missed, remembered, and prayed for.

*With care,*

*The Second Church Connect Team*

# 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 your PW sisters for any or all these fun activities! Need a ride? You can always reach out and we'll pick you up :) Contact Lynn Kennaly/Diane Tokach, Co-Moderators.

Co-moderators for 2026:
Diane Tokash (717) 919-2680 drosen1057@gmail.com
Lynn Kennaly (717) 386-7004 dkennaly@yahoo.com



Your PW is celebrating! Bring a bunch of your favorite cookies for a cookie party with cocoa and all the fixings! **Monday, December 7th @ 5:30 pm** in the rotunda. We'll have carols and singing! Start your Christmas season off with us!

**December 13th @ 7pm** is the Dickinson Presbyterian and concert and cookie walk at Dickinson Presbyterian. Let's get a group together and carpool to this fun event!

You won't want to miss **Sunday, January 17th** when PW hosts a Situational Awareness talk and demo from the Carlisle YWCA @ 1pm. Pack your lunch and get ready for some great info. on how to keep ourselves and loved ones safe.




## 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
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