



# Danby Church News

"Adding to and Building up the Kingdom of God"

December 2023



hristmas



## From Our Pastor!

We enter the season of Advent with a sense of hope and purpose. At the same time, we recognize that fewer and fewer people around us share the abiding presence of our Savior Jesus Christ and our value system. We celebrate a season of joy, anticipating the anniversary of Christ’s birth, while enduring a secular society with religious trappings pushed to the periphery.

Advent has changed from what it once was for a large segment of people in this country. In fact, Christmas has replaced Advent as the prevailing secular holiday season, nurtured by nostalgia and powered by commercialism. Lighted decorations and store displays push us towards a buying frenzy. People are in hope that St. Nick will soon visit and businesses pray that you will buy until your credit card is exhausted.

Santa Claus has actually replaced Christ. Attending Church on Christmas Eve is a tradition rather than a celebration of faith. Today we are as firmly held captive by Amazon and Apple as Israel was by Rome at Jesus’ birth.

Across history Churches have had to recognize and deal with shifts in prevailing culture. Pervasive change comes slowly and is hardly recognized as taking place at any one point in time. But seen from the vantage point of decades and centuries, the changes are profound.

Consider the Danby Community Church culture of 200 plus years ago. Our church building has seen so much history pass by, that it boggles the mind. James Madison was President as our sanctuary was completed. The oak and pine timber above our heads were alive when Queen Elizabeth I was a girl. Attending Church was an all-day affair in the 1840s. Until 60 years ago Sunday was honored as a day of rest. Those ancient beams above our heads continue to hold our structure together as faith in Christ holds us in fellowship regardless of cultural norms. The Gospel of the Kingdom endures, no matter how hard folks have tried to bend and alter the truth of scripture and belief in Jesus Christ to suit their own desires. The Gospel of Jesus Christ remains the same.

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### Danby Church Officers and Leaders 2023

<b>Pastor:</b>	Ed Enstine eenstine@aol.com 607.592.8276
<b>Administrative Aide</b>	Lynn Kingston-Harris office@danbychurch.org 607.272.1687
<b>Administrative Council</b>	
Chair:	Paula Nelson sfcnelson@aol.com
Secretary:	Dave McDermitt davidmcdermitt@gmail.com
Treasurer:	Paula Nelson sfcnelson@aol.com
Financial Secretary:	Dave McDermitt davidmcdermitt@gmail.com
Trustees Chair:	Charlene Testut ctestut55@yahoo.com
<b>Area Coordinators</b>	
<b>Hospitality:</b>	Charlene Testut
<b>Spiritual Development:</b>	Sheila Enstine ssenstine@gmail.com
<b>Missions:</b>	Judy & Dale Horton therose8641@yahoo.com
<b>Staff, Pastor Oversight Committee SPOC:</b>	
Chair:	Katy Prince
<b>Praise Team Leader:</b>	Pup Martinez martinez789@yahoo.com
<b>Webmaster:</b>	Janet Gray jsg4@cornell.edu
<b>Newsletter Editor:</b>	Janet Gray
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### On the Cover!

### Blessed Christmas

Our building, like society, has gone through some alterations. In 1819, the sanctuary wasn't heated and light was provided by oil lamps and candles. In 2023 we're electrified with heat provided by programmed furnaces. Back in the day, single men were required to come in the right front door, single women in the left, and married couples and young family members entered through the center door. Today we pray for people to join us by any door they choose. Regardless of current style, this church is still a house of prayer and a center of worship. Within these walls Jesus Christ is still proclaimed as Savior and Lord.

Outside our doors, the world has advanced into a tragic mess seemingly bent on self-destruction. By virtue of technology, we are first-hand witnesses to the out working of hate and prejudice. Perhaps humanity is no worse off than at other points in history, but our awareness and sense of frustration is certainly at an all-time high.

Kind of gloomy, hey?

Well, we might just be seeing what has always been true but out of sight. The world has always been a dangerous place. Our present conditions are very similar to that of the people of Bethlehem at the birth of Jesus, minus the iPhone and internet. People have always done the best they could with what they had. After 2,000 years the basic human needs of body and soul have not changed. God is still calling people to come and experience peace beyond circumstances in Jesus Christ and the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit. Our harvest fields are as ripe as they ever were.

I pray that this year more people than ever before will heed the calling of the Holy Spirit to come and receive the gifts of hope, peace and salvation established through Jesus Christ. It is Advent, let us slow down and prepare ourselves to take our part in His ongoing story.

### ***Spiritual Development Update from Sheila Enstine***

#### **Important Dates for December 2023:**

**The Women's Christmas Retreat is scheduled for Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>**, from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM. This year's retreat is in memory of Judy Horton who was one of the founders of this annual event marking the beginning of Advent. Contact Glenna Dickson at 607-564-3134 to register.

**Advent begins on Sunday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>**. The liturgical colors are purple symbolizing royalty and pink symbolizing joy.

**The Blue Christmas service will be Thursday evening, December 21<sup>st</sup>**. This service recognizes that for some people the Christmas season is not joyful. Many are grieving losses at this time of year and the service is intended to help with the journey of grief.

**The Christmas Eve service** will be at 7:00 PM, Sunday evening, December 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Christmas Day** is Monday, December 25<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Adult Small Groups:**

**The Sunday morning group** is studying the Gospel of Mark. The class meets on Sundays at 8:45 am. Let Sheila Enstine know if you're interested.

**The Wednesday night Praise and Fellowship** gathers at 7 pm with the praise team. After worship, we have a time of koinonia (sharing our faith) and prayer.

**The Thursday evening Bible Study** begins at 7 pm. Pastor Ed is leading a study on the Gospel of Matthew.

**The Friday afternoon Women's Bible Study** meets at 1:00 PM in the All Saints Room. This group watched "It's a Wonderful Life" and is now discussing the spiritual themes presented in the movie. See Suzanne Walker for more information.

**Nursery:** The nursery is available every Sunday for babies and children through age five.

*Spiritual Development continued on page 4*

**Children's Church:** After the first set of worship music on Sundays, children ages 6 through 10 (about 5<sup>th</sup> grade) are welcome to attend Children's Church

**Prayer Opportunities:**

- **In-person Prayer:** Beginning with Advent, we will change the in-person prayer time from Saturday mornings to Tuesday afternoons from 5:30 to 6:30 PM. Ed and Sheila will be available for prayer at that time.
- **Prayer Chain:** Contact Katy Prince at [katyprince96@gmail.com](mailto:katyprince96@gmail.com).
- **Church Prayer Calendar:** Thank you to everyone who is participating in our Church-wide Prayer Calendar. Hard copies of the calendar are available at the church.

**Congregational Care:**

Thank you to Paula Nelson and Doug Nash for faithfully arranging for flower deliveries.

There is some interest in starting a community garden at the church. Stay tuned for more information. Let Sheila know if you're interested in this or if you have ideas for other types of ministry.

**Danby Community Church  
Administrative Council Meeting  
November 13, 2023.**

**Present:** Ed Enstine, Sheila Enstine, Charlene Testut, Paula Nelson, Gloria Miller, Katy Prince, and David McDermitt.

The meeting opened with prayer by Pastor Ed, 7:03pm

**CLERK'S MINUTES:** Meeting minutes from October - motion to approve (Gloria), second (Katy), Carried.

**FINANCIAL SECRETARY REPORT:** Dave gave report. Motion to approve report (Katy), second (Sheila), Carried.

**TREASURER REPORT:** Paula gave Treasurer's report. Motion to approve report (Charlene), second (Sheila), Carried.

**OLD BUSINESS:** New router is in place in the Fellowship hall. An upgraded projector is still being looked into. A TV monitor will be donated by Katy and Tommy for the sanctuary to help the praise team.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Priscilla Barber's estate made a donation that will go into the church's savings account for the time being.

**HOSPITALITY & FELLOWSHIP:** The election night dinner was held. A women's Christmas retreat will be held December 2<sup>nd</sup> from 10-2 with lunch. Plans are being made for a Blue Christmas service on December 21<sup>st</sup> as well as a Christmas Eve service.

**SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT:** Dates in the church calendar after Thanksgiving, 11/23: "Christ the King" Sunday 11/26 ends the church year by recognizing the Lord's full authority as King and Lord of the Universe; Advent Sunday which begins the Christian's calendar year is the following Sunday, 12/03; Blue Christmas service is planned for the shortest day length day of the year, 12/21, and Christmas Eve service on Sunday, 12/24 (so there will be 2 services that Sunday).

Small groups.

- Sunday morning study: the Gospel of Mark
- Wednesday evening: praise and worship
- Thursday night study: the Gospel of Matthew

***Do you have a question you would like to ask Pastor Ed? It can be about God, Jesus, the Bible, faith, the church, religion. Send your questions to Janet Gray at [jsg4@cornell.edu](mailto:jsg4@cornell.edu) and your question (and answer) may appear in the next Danby Church News***

- Friday women's group is discussing the movie, "It's a Wonderful Life", which they watched Friday, the 10<sup>th</sup>.

Nurse and children's church remains available as needed.

Prayer.

- Tuesday evenings 5:30 – 6:30. This time slot will replace the Saturday morning prayer time – beginning December 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Prayer chain continues.
- Prayer calendars continue.

Flower donation ministry continues.

The church is open to ideas for new ministries. Please contact Sheila.

**FOOD PANTRY:** Food pantry served 94 families last month. This month the food pantry is giving out turkeys, turkey breasts, whole chickens, and ham to those who have signed up for them, courtesy of a donation by Tioga Downs through the Southern Tier Food Bank.

**TRUSTEES:**

- The thermostat in the Fellowship hall has been fixed.
- Tommy and Katy fixed a water leak in the education wing.
- NYSEG installed a new gas meter that they can read remotely.

**MISSIONS:** We continue to provide \$50/month to 3 ministries: Second Wind Cottages for men, for women, and Renovation House Spencer. The East King adopt-a-highway fall cleanup was completed.

**SPOC:**

- Membership Sunday will be held in December; partnership Sunday will be next year.
- The pastor evaluation was completed.
- Discussions are underway to add an 'outreach coordinator' position.
- Nominations for church officers and areas of responsibility – contact Katy. Coordinators need to be church members/partners.

**SAP:** Meeting planned for Monday, November 20<sup>th</sup>.

Motion to adjourn (Gloria); Second (Katy). Meeting was adjourned at 8:19.

Pastor Ed prayer the group out.



This month's issue of the Danby Church News is on the web at <https://www.danbychurch.org/news.html>!

*A Word from SPOC (Staff Pastor Oversight Committee)  
By Katy Prince - SPOC Chairperson*

It is that time of year again when SPOC reviews the officers of the church and asks for nominations for next year. At this time, every office of the church is on a one year term except for one trustee and one SPOC member. When someone is nominated and accepted into an office for the Danby Community Church, their first term is for 2 years then every year after that is on a yearly basis.

Here is a list of the church offices and the current person who is in that office:

<b>Administrative Council</b>		
<b>Administrative Ministry Area Coordinator</b>		
	<b>Co-Coordinator and Council Chair</b>	Paula Nelson
	<b>Co-Coordinator and Council Chair</b>	Sheila Enstine
<b>Spiritual Development Ministry Area</b>		
	<b>Coordinator</b>	Sheila Enstine
<b>Hospitality/Fellowship Ministry Area</b>		
	<b>Coordinator</b>	Charlene Testut
<b>Missions/Community Service Ministry Area</b>		
	<b>Coordinator</b>	
<b>Outreach, Care, and Nurture Ministry Area (possibly being established in 2024)</b>		
	<b>Coordinator</b>	
<b>SPOC Chair</b>		Elected by SPOC
	<b>SPOC Designee</b>	Appointed by SPOC Chair
<b>Trustee Chair</b>		Elected by Trustees
	<b>Trustee Designee</b>	Appointed by SPOC Chair
<b>Church Treasurer</b>		Paula Nelson
<b>Financial Secretary</b>		David McDermitt
<b>Church Clerk</b>		David McDermitt
	<b>Backup Church Clerk</b>	Lynn Kingston-Harris
<b>SPOC Committee Members</b>		<b>Board of Trustees Members</b>
Katy Prince		Gloria Miller
Debbie Alve		<b>Dan Vorrasi (term ends 2025)</b>
Linda Hansen		Linda Hansen
Cindee Ball		Charlene Testut
<b>Joan Barber (term ends 2025)</b>		Diana Benson
Michele Dunning		Bill Dunning
		Doug Nash
		Tommy Prince

If you are interested in learning more about any of these positions, please contact Katy Prince after church, at 607-351-6410, or [katyprince96@gmail.com](mailto:katyprince96@gmail.com).

SPOC has also been reviewing the Danby Community Church Constitution and we are going to ask the membership at the annual meeting in January to consider changing the membership section of the constitution to more accurately define a partnership with the church.

**Did you know we are now on Facebook? You can access us from your Facebook page (just search for Danby Community Church) or press the Facebook link on our church website: WWW.DANBYCHURCH.ORG. You don't need to have a Facebook account to see our Facebook page, but you will need a Facebook account if you would want to "like" our page or post a comment.**



Here is the new wording we would like to include in the constitution:

#### Article 4: Partnership

- 4.1 Persons become partners by baptism and either by confirmation or profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior before the congregation.
- 4.2 Partners shall be in community with one another, attend the regular worship activities of the Church and the celebration of the Lord's Supper; live the Christian life; share in the life and work of the church; contribute to its support and benevolences; and seek diligently the spiritual welfare of the partnership and the community.
- 4.3 The partnership roll shall be kept in the church office.
- 4.4 Each partner shall have one vote at the annual meeting or special meetings called by the administrative council.
- 4.5 Partnership with the church shall be renewed annually. At least once per calendar year every person in the congregation will have the opportunity to update their partnership covenant with the church.

In conclusion... Do you feel a spiritual calling or a desire to serve and want to do your part in expanding and building up God's Kingdom? Do you have a love for your community, faith and belief that we are doing God's work here in Danby Community Church, and desire personal growth in your spiritual life? Do you feel a sense of stewardship, have leadership skills, and/or feel a sense of duty to Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior?

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, please contact me and join us in getting involved and to serving in a ministry area or becoming an officer of the church. We need you. God needs you. We want you. God wants you. Just as you are. You are a child of God and YOU are important to the growth of the family of God.



# Welcome HOME

a place where you belong

Sunday Worship Celebration @ 10 am  
Sunday Youth Church @ 10:30am  
Sunday Adult Education Class @ 8:45am  
Prayer Meeting, Tuesday, 5:30pm  
Wednesdays, Live Music & Conversation @ 7pm  
Women's Bible Study, Fridays @ 1pm



Danby Community Church  
1859 Danby Road  
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*[www.danbychurch.org](http://www.danbychurch.org)*

**Welcome Home!!**

What's Happening?!? in December??



**Family Movie Night - "The Star"**  
Friday, Dec. 15 @ 6pm

**Free Coffee and Donuts**

Monday, Dec. 18

8am - 10:30am

COMMUNITY COFFEE CHAT

**Blue Christmas Service**

Thurs., Dec. 21 @ 7pm

**Christmas Eve Service**

Sunday, Dec. 24 @ 7pm