

Light of the World

By Jean LaRosa

The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. (John 1:9)

I struggle with the short days of winter. It seems like it is dark all the time. But around this time every year I notice that the sun is setting just a little bit later. Yesterday I was looking out the window and realized that although it was 5:00 pm, it wasn't quite dark yet. This was an occasion for celebration, because I hate the long, dark days of winter. I crave light.

Although the winter solstice has the shortest amount of daylight, the earliest sunset where we live is around December 7 or 8. The earliest sunset happens before the solstice because of the Earth's tilt and elliptical orbit, which make solar time drift from clock time. So ever since then, the sun has been setting a little later every day. At first the change is almost imperceptible – a few seconds a day. But then it picks up steam. By the end of January, during what are usually some of the coldest days of winter, the sunset is already nearly forty-five minutes later than it was at the earliest sunset in December. This gradual transition reminds me of how God works in ways we don't always expect or notice. Light may be dawning even when everything still looks dark to us. Change may be taking place so slowly that we don't notice it.

We will soon observe Groundhog Day on February 2. According to Pennsylvania Dutch folklore, if a groundhog sees his shadow that day, we're in for a longer winter, but if there is no shadow that day it means an early spring. This tradition was a carryover from a European tradition that if a hedgehog saw its shadow on Candlemas (also February 2), winter would continue. Candlemas is a feast day that commemorates the presentation of Jesus in



the Temple on the fortieth day after his birth. It's a religious and cultural tradition observed by Catholics, Episcopalians and Lutherans, more widely celebrated in Europe than in the United States. The feast celebrates Christ as the light of the world. Luke 2:30-32 describes the prophecy given by the aged Simeon upon seeing the infant Jesus. Simeon praised God and proclaimed,

*“For my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the sight of
all nations:
A light for revelation to the Gentiles,
And the glory of your people Israel.”*

The feast came to be called Candlemas because candles were blessed at Mass as part
Continued on page 2...

“Light of the World,” continued...

of the celebration and served as a tangible reminder of God’s presence.

In John 8:12 and in John 9:5, Jesus identified Himself as the light of the world and said that whoever follows Him will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life. And in Matthew 5:14-16 He tells His followers, “*You are the light of the world,*” and instructs them, “*Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*”

Jesus called Himself the light of the world, but He also told His followers that they were the light of the world. Light dispels darkness. Jesus is asking His followers to live in such a way that God’s character becomes visible through their actions. What that looks like for each of us may be as unique as we are. Sometimes I feel like my light isn’t very bright. But I have started considering the question – how could I let my light shine today? I think the world is hungry to see believers living out the truth of Jesus’ teaching, with lives characterized by love of neighbor, kindness, and humility. And perhaps especially difficult in a season of darkness and a culture that surrounds us with bad news, we can demonstrate an authentic hope that God is present and active in the world, even when we can’t quite see what He is doing.

Perisseia:

Our women’s growth group has begun an eight-week series as we continue to look at the cloud of witnesses that the Lord has provided for our benefit even as we become part of that cloud! For this series, we will focus on women in the New Testament who were used by the Lord in powerful ways. This series will be via Zoom, 7:00-8:30 pm. If you would like to join us and are not on the Perisseia email list, please feel free to contact Cindy Bills (cynthialbills@gmail.com).



Happy Birthday!

Blessings to all who celebrate a birthday this month. May you feel the love, joy and presence of the Lord as we all celebrate your special day with prayers and warmest wishes.

Helen Cull	February 3
Tom Taylor	February 16
Sandy Ober	February 17
Ella Bernheisel	February 21
George Hill	February 24

*Congratulations to
Barbara and Ed MacQueen
On the birth of their daughter
Hazel Valentina MacQueen.*



*Hazel Valentina was born
December 12, 2025.*

**There are two ways to live your life.
One is as though nothing is a miracle.
The other is as though everything
is a miracle.**

Albert Einstein

Elders' Corner

By Ken Bills

Cindy and I have been blessed to live with a wonderful dog and three amazing cats. As I am writing, Caspian, our oldest Cornish Rex, has lost a long-running battle with digestive issues, and we will have him put to sleep tomorrow. Tonight, we are already grieving the loss of our furry little friend of fourteen years. The death of pets comes with the territory, but that does not lessen the feelings of loss. And as I ponder it all, I decided to share some thoughts with you.

First, it's okay for believers to hurt. The joy of the Lord is our strength (Nehemiah 8:10), but sad and difficult things remain sad and difficult, and Christians are not obligated to pretend to always be happy. We live in a fallen and broken world, and in this world we will have tribulation, said Jesus (John 16:33). Our struggles and sorrows are not a surprise to Him. "Jesus wept" at the death of Lazarus before raising Him from the tomb (John 11:35), and we should not minimize the depth of His sorrow. The Lord understands why we grieve.

Second, we are called as a body of believers to "rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep." (Romans 12:15) We need to allow one another room to grieve and find ways to come alongside. I confess that too often I fall short in this area. I am asking the Lord to help me to be able to share the joys and sorrows of my brothers and sisters in the Lord. As in so many areas, Jesus is our example. "Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows" (Isaiah 53:4) and ultimately the Lord is our comforter. (Psalm 119:76) "But take heart," Jesus reassured his disciples, "I have overcome the world."

Third, in the midst of the pains, frustrations and sorrows of this world, we believers can look forward with longing to a better time and a

better place. But the scriptures seem to promise that not only believers but creation itself will be renewed. This world has been "subjected to futility" says Paul in Romans, and "we know that the whole creation has been groaning together." (Romans 8:20, 22) But one day, "the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption." (Romans 8:21) In that day there will be a new heaven and new earth, and "the wolf and the lamb shall graze together, the lion shall eat straw like an ox... They will not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain, says the Lord" (Isaiah 65:25; Revelation 21:1). We can hold fast, even now, to God's promise: "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." (Revelation 21:4)

Gert Ferst has been gratefully blessed with her fourth grandchild Eden Marie.



Eden Marie was born on December 31, 2025. She weighed 7 pounds and 8 ounces.

Youth Outreach Ministry

By Darrell S. Bernheisel

They say a picture is worth a thousand words, yet even the photos attached may not fully convey the significance of what God is doing in our church right now. Just one year ago, we were without a pastor. Today, we not only have Pastor Jame and his family faithfully serving with us, but we are also witnessing renewed energy within our congregation as members step forward with fresh ideas and a heart for ministry. What a blessing and a reminder of God's provision.



One such example is Windsor Chapel's new children's outreach, an effort envisioned

and launched by Jasmine and Tingting with assistance from the Elder Board. Using their gifts, Jasmine in ping pong coaching and Tingting in organization, signage, and design, they've created a weekly program combining ping pong instruction with a short time of fellowship and Bible teaching. The program runs Saturday evenings from 7:00–8:30 pm.

The photos show a lively and enthusiastic group of kids, ages 7–17, coming together to play, learn, and compete.



Many others from our church family contributed behind the scenes as well—providing drinks, baking cookies, and helping set up.

Our first session concluded with a twenty-minute lesson rooted in Romans. Using edited scenes from the movie Titanic, I illustrated the idea of a sinking ship as a



metaphor for the cost of sin (Romans 3:23: *"all have sinned and fall short"*). In contrast, we looked at the hope of the Gospel—the lifeboat, freely available to each of us if we choose—through Romans 10:9 (*"If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."*)

I ask that you continue to pray for this outreach and for the others that are beginning to take shape within our church family. If you feel led to get involved or to support this ministry directly, please reach out to the Elder Board. Above all, please pray that this outreach will have a meaningful impact on those unfamiliar with the Gospel and that it will be a blessing to everyone involved.

If anyone is interested in joining the youth Ping Pong class on Saturday evenings, please contact windsorchapel.community@gmail.com.



Thanks to Tom and Kate Taylor who organized the wonderful Christmas pageant and all the children who participated in this annual presentation.

Christmas Luncheon



Further Up and Further In

*Inviting dialogue to encourage growth in
and among us*



By Cindy Bills

The Februaries of Our Lives

We worship and serve a God who wants to be known. The Lord has revealed Himself to us in His Word, by His Spirit, in the Incarnate Christ, and in His creation. And while there is no substitute for the Lord's direct communication by His Word, I very much appreciate the lessons that nature can teach us. February is an ideal time to think about this.

There are few people indeed who would name February as their favorite month. Plants are dormant, and it is grey, chilly, dreary, damp.... Conversations about the weather generally head toward the future: Spring is coming! We take encouragement in this knowing that warm, sunny weather is coming even though we can't see any hints of it.

But this annual phenomenon can encourage us in our walk of faith. There are times of struggle, trial, suffering; there are times when we are unable to see the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel. The Lord's sovereign goodness and redemptive purposes can be beyond our imagination. But just like the transition between winter and spring, the seasons of our lives can deeply connect us with our Redeemer, with Life Himself! While there is little or no appearance of life in our flowers, shrubs, and trees, much is happening below the surface. These plants are becoming prepared and ready to burst forth with new life. And in our times of struggle, there may be few signs of spiritual life, but the Lord can use such times to bring us to confession and repentance if needed, to restore us, to enable us to depend on Him as we are exercising perseverance,

and to build our faith as we walk in the conviction of truth that we cannot, at the moment, see.

To be sure, struggling through challenges and trials, both large and small, is not fun. The fall was not the Lord's intent or desire for us; it is not what He created us for. But our God is not only our Creator; He is our Redeemer. He has promised to work all things—even the worst of things—for our good. And not only that, He will use our suffering and the good He works out of that suffering to enable and equip us to help and encourage others in their faith walk. No hardship will go unredeemed. All will gleam in glory.... May we persevere in that truth...!

Please feel free to contact Cindy (609-275-8557) or cynthialbills@gmail.com to continue the dialogue....

Financial Update

(Through December 31, 2025)

	Actual	Budget
Income	\$168,967	\$144,000
Expense	\$136,805	\$144,000

Benevolence Fund Giving this year \$3,833

*"And my God will supply all your needs according
to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus"*

Philippians 4:19

Praise God!

If you have any items or information you would like to share in the newsletter, please e-mail:

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