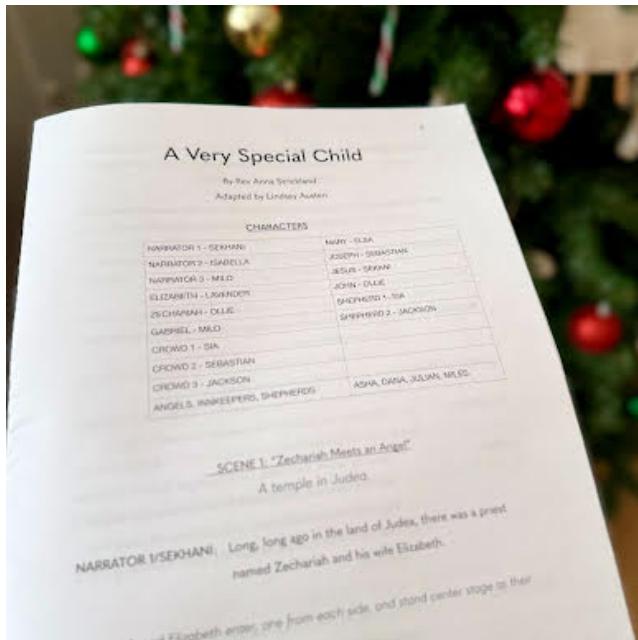




Connecting with PCL

Worship this Sunday



FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 21

Christmas Pageant

Special Thanks to our Pageant Director, **Lindsey Austen**

...and to all our **Sunday School Teachers** for preparing our children each week!

PreK/Younger Elementary Teachers:
Nicole Lehnbeuter, Vicky Li, Lindsey
Austen

3rd-5th Grade Teachers:
Keyla Garcia, Joe VanDeWeert, Levi
VanDeWeert

6th-7th Grade Teachers:
Suzanne Broffman, Jonathan Phillips

SUNDAY'S SCHEDULE

Sunday School for all ages at **9:30am**

Worship Service at **10:30am**

Activity Period is available for children 4th grade and younger following the Children's Message

SUNDAY'S LEADERS

Elder: Suzanne Broffman

Second reader: Susheela Varky

Candle Reading & Lighting: Emily Haines, Karen Walker, and Milo

Greeter: Karen Peters

Ushers: Nicole Lehnbeuter, Mineko Yajima

Coming Up

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING, COLLECTED THIS SUNDAY



This Sunday, we'll be collecting a **Christmas Joy Offering** for our denomination. Please consider giving —offering envelopes are provided in the pew racks and on the entry room table (ark).

Your gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering combine with gifts from thousands of congregations throughout our denomination as necessary resources to help repair the world and to ensure our siblings have the tools they need to flourish.

For more information on this year's special offering emphasis, please visit:

<https://pcusa.org/special-offerings/christmas-joy-offering>

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT, THIS SUNDAY



This Sunday, children will be featured in the worship service—playing instruments and putting on this year's Christmas Pageant called ***A Very Special Child***, which is Luke's telling of the Christmas story, beginning with Zechariah and Elizabeth. Many thanks to our pageant director, Lindsey Austen!

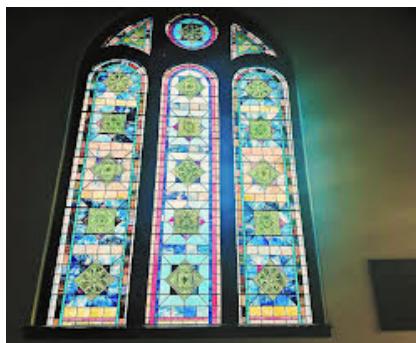
MANY THANKS in advance to our youth musicians who will be sharing their musical talents during the service:

Sebastian Lehnbeuter, piano

Sofie Hwang, oboe

Oliver Coleman-Thams, piano

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING, THIS SUNDAY



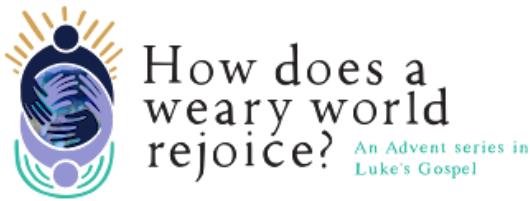
Mark your calendars to stick around following worship on December 21 for our annual congregational meeting to **elect officers**.

BollyX DEC/JAN OPPORTUNITIES



Get started on your **new year exercise routine** early! You may take part in a BollyX class at the church on Dec. 26 at 1pm, and/or Jan. 1 at 1pm. \$15/in person; \$10/Zoom per class. 50% of all proceeds go to PCL. For more information and to register, contact Susheela Varky at susheela@bollyx.com or (804) 432-9218.

2025 ADVENT THEME



This season, our worship has centered on the the idea that **Joy** is often a companion to many other emotions. We can feel joy in addition to feeling many other things at once: grief, anticipation, anxiety, excitement, disappointment, exhaustion.

Perhaps many of us live with the myth that joy is not something we deserve—or that it is wholly out of reach. But our joy is rooted in the truth that we belong to God. Can you tether yourself to that deep truth? You deserve to feel joy—fully. The world needs your joy, even if you are weary. Our joy is better when it is shared.

Our Themes

Nov. 30—We acknowledge our weariness

Dec. 7—We find joy in connection

Dec. 14—We allow ourselves to be amazed

Dec. 21—(*Christmas Pageant, Telling the Story*)

Dec. 24—We Make Room

"How does a weary world rejoice?" (adapted from a liturgy resource from www.asanctifiedart.org)

What is like to be on THE SESSION at PCL?



Cory Lehnbeuter

When Rev. Fowler approached me years ago about being on Session, I was a little surprised because I hadn't been coming to PCL that long. I was a little nervous because I wasn't sure what it was and it sounded intimidating. Yet here I am now required to take a mandatory break after voluntarily coming back multiple times, leading 4 different committees over the past 6 years. Turns out it wasn't so intimidating after all and I really enjoyed it!

I've built great friendships, found ways to use my skills and interests to help the church community thrive, and became inspired to dig deeper exploring my own personal relationship with God.

I realized 3 things during my tenure:

- 1) The Light and love of God shines brightest when believers take action and do something, not just contemplate it (any action, even if seemingly minuscule..think about it);
- 2) All of us rely on this building and community as vessels for our own refuge to help us keep going in life on a variety of levels as well as a tool to make a positive impact on our community and those less fortunate;
- 3) Number 2 doesn't just 'happen' or 'exist' to be used. It's all here for us week after week and even pastor after pastor because people are taking action to intentionally make it exist and using their time and talents to keep it alive.

I love this church family and the work we do in Jesus' name so it makes it an easy decision for me to get involved, even in smallest ways, starting with just being present to be part of it. I've realized this congregation isn't for us, it is us, so if not me, then who? If not us, then what? Jack Peters once told me "many hands make light work" and when everyone participates, I'm amazed how easy it is to get stuff done. Session has given me the opportunity to directly be part of and affect the action we take (Oelhaf House, Center for Food Action, Al Anon, blood drives, pop up food pantries, and supporting each other in times of need). I can see it and interact with that love and support that is provided here in so many ways, therefore I pledge because I want to see it continue and grow.

I hope my story helps others realize that involvement and presence isn't so hard, especially when we're all doing small pieces together. I took a leap toward faith with my involvement in Session and was able to accomplish and grow personally more than I thought. I just had to push aside my own made-up doubts and barriers and trust that God would help me find a way when I was completely unsure where to start. Sure enough, with the support and commitment that others in this congregation share, we're still here and still growing together.

But our joy is rooted in the truth that we belong to God. Can you tether yourself to that deep truth? You deserve to feel joy—fully. The world needs your joy, even if you are weary. Our joy is better when it is shared.

I hope you will join us for worship each week as we seek to answer the question: ***"How does a weary world rejoice?"*** (adapted from an Advent resource found at asanctifiedart.org)

JAN. MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR JOYCE HAMLIN



There will be a memorial service held for Joyce Hamlin at the church on **Saturday, January 17th at 11am**. Join us in-person or through Zoom* as we celebrate Joyce's life and the legacy she leaves behind.

Joyce Vail Hamlin

August 31, 1939 — November 25, 2025

*Link will be provided the week of the service.

This Week at PCL

December 21 (Sun)

9:30 am—Sunday School / Choir
10:30 am—Worship (w/ Christmas Pageant)
after worship—Congregational Meeting

December 24 (Wed)

8:00 pm—Christmas Eve Service

December 25 (Thurs)

10:30 am—Christmas Day Service (w/
Communion)

December 26 (Fri)

1:00 pm—BollyX Class

December 28 (Sun)

9:30 am—Sunday School / Choir
10:30 am—Worship

Rev. Mike Eller (he/him/his)

Interim Minister

revmike@leoniapres.org

(917) 687-5709

General Office Hours

Pastor's Office

Mon-Thurs: 10-3 pm

Sun: *Schedule with Mike*

The Presbyterian Church in Leonia | 181 Fort Lee Road | Leonia, NJ 07605