

January 2025

NEWS FROM PPC

New Beginnings in the Bible

The theme of **new beginnings in the Bible** offers a powerful message of hope and transformation. From the cosmic act of creation to the promise of a new heaven and a new earth, Scripture testifies to God’s ongoing work of renewal and restoration. This theme finds its ultimate expression in the person and work of Jesus Christ, who offers the possibility of new birth and new life to all who believe in Him.

As followers of Christ, we are called to embrace and embody this reality of new beginnings. We are invited to experience daily renewal through the work of the Holy Spirit, to participate in God’s ongoing work of restoration in the world, and to look forward with hope to the ultimate new beginning that awaits us in eternity.

May we, like the Apostle Paul, press on toward this glorious future, “forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead” (Philippians 3:13), confident in the God who makes all things new.

What does the Bible say About New Beginnings?

The concept of new beginnings resonates throughout the Scriptures, offering a powerful testament to God’s redemptive nature and His ongoing work of restoration in creation and in human lives. From the dawn of creation to the promise of a new heaven and a new earth, the Bible weaves a story of renewal, hope, and transformation that speaks to the very heart of the human experience and God’s eternal purposes.

The First New Beginning: Creation

The opening words of Genesis set the stage for the theme of new beginnings: “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). This cosmic new beginning establishes God as the author of all creation and the initiator of new realities. The act of creation itself is a demonstration of God’s power to bring forth something entirely new, setting in motion the grand narrative of redemption that unfolds throughout Scripture.

Written by Daniel Joelson Niranjana of Divine Disclosures



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“One Last Gift from Susan”

Luke 2: 41-52

Luke 2:41 “Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover.”

“Now every year...” These words speak of routine; they also speak of “time.” They may speak to “traditions.” They also speak to seasons. Why do I say this? Because this particular year, a family’s seasonal routine was broken; it was interrupted. As I dug a little deeper, my thoughts took me down a couple of different paths. The writer of the Gospel of Luke is the only gospel writer to include a story of Jesus’ boyhood years. In Matthew, we have the story of Mary and Joseph fleeing with the baby Jesus to Egypt—but no mention of his growing up years. In Luke, Mary and Joseph return to Nazareth; there is no flight to Egypt. Luke simply says, “The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of the Lord was upon him.” So, why this story of Jesus; why “insert” this story. What meaning does it hold for us?

As I thought about this story, I re-focused on the word Passover. This story shows that Jesus’ parents were practicing Jewish people. They made the trek to Jerusalem each year for Passover. The celebration of Passover remembers the Israelites redemption from Egypt—and the making of the Israelites into God’s people—forged in the wilderness trek from Egypt to the eventual Promised Land. The Passover was also when Jesus was killed on the cross and Jerusalem was where Jesus’ resurrection took place—another redemption but in this case—not only for those of Jewish ancestry, but for all who accept Jesus as their Savior. Is there some hidden meaning in the story—some foreshadowing?

At the time of this story, Jesus is twelve. This means, that Jesus has been to Jerusalem each year of his life—for twelve years. This is a routine for him too; he is comfortable. He stays behind when his parents leave. The focus of the story is on where his parents find him; they search everywhere but the one place Jesus figures they know he will be. In fact, his mother’s harsh words may have taken Jesus aback. As any parent would be, Mary is obviously upset with Jesus—as I imagine Joseph is too. Now, you would have thought that the teachers in the Temple would have been upset to have a “child” amongst them. You might also think that they would have been trying to find his parents. None of this seems to be the case. Jesus sits and listens and asks questions. It is easy to think that Jesus may have been the one “teaching,” but I do not think so. We are told that Jesus listens and asks questions. It is obvious that the elders are surprised at Jesus’ compacity to ask questions. At age twelve, Jesus is still considered a child. It is not until he turns thirteen that he is expected to fully embrace his ancestral traditions—and yet, here he is acting “older” than his age. Somehow, this does not surprise us; we expect this of Jesus. It would have been more surprising to have him “acting” his age. Perhaps his seeming defiance of his parents—in staying behind without letting anyone know might have been more age appropriate.

One commentator I was reading suggests that this story serves as a bridge. Living here near the Erie Canal, you are fully aware of what a bridge does—it connects. In the case of this story—it connects Jesus’ infancy stories with his upcoming ministry. In fact, the very next chapter introduces John the Baptism and his baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. It is interesting that this scripture is sandwiched by the verse I quoted before, “The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of the Lord was upon him,” and the verse, “Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor.” Both verses include the word wisdom. Wisdom is not exactly knowledge. One example of this I found on the internet says, “Wisdom is the fitting application of knowledge. Knowledge understands the light has turned red; wisdom applies the brakes.” We see this in much of Jesus’ teaching; Jesus does not spout knowledge; Jesus applies wisdom to knowledge. Where did Jesus learn this knowledge—and the ability to use this knowledge in application—that came from thirty years of life. It also helps us to focus on the fact that Jesus is both divine and human—the divine Son of God and the human son of Mary.

What did this passage say to people two-thousand years ago and what then does it say to us today? The element of “time” is important. It is easy to look at the birth narrative of Jesus and to forget the “time” element. Yes, God sent God’s Son to us—but it was in the form of a baby. A baby must “grow up.” This takes time. Could God have done this in a different way—did God need to send a baby? The answer is God could do whatever God wants—but God chose for God’s Son to “grow up” human—to experience and to



question, to contemplate and to reflect, to be corrected by a human parent when they did something that wasn't quite perfect, to be nurtured by human parents. I do think that Jesus was fully "human" but there was also something "different" about him at the same time. This glimpse at age 12, this "bridge" between boyhood and adulthood, is meant to give the listeners both then and now, this sense, that though Jesus was fully human, Jesus was also fully divine. "Older" than his years, he "listened" to the elders and in listening, sought to "understand" where they were coming from—but also, even at this early age, sought to "question" in a way that was beyond his years. I believe that it was these very experiences that helped to shape him and mold him into the "teacher" he would someday become—with an understanding and wisdom that amazed those who heard him—that made him different. This only happened with "time."

The problem with "time" is simply that...time is time. Our lives are full of waiting—full of growing up and then growing old; full of cyclical seasons—of cyclical holidays. We anticipate and get ready for Christmas, for a trip, for a cruise, to see family, and as soon as it has arrived it is over. Much like Joseph and Mary traveling to Jerusalem each year with family and friends to celebrate the Passover, we "do" and without intention, maybe we forget "why" we do what we do. This is the problem with tradition. I found a funny story about, "The Parable of the turkey: or the way things have always been done." The premise of the story—and I have heard other variations, is that newly weds are celebrating their first Thanksgiving and the bride asks her mother for the turkey recipe. She cooks the turkey to perfection; the husband then asks where the legs are—he likes those the best. She tells him they are on the "side." It turns out that her mother had gotten the recipe from her mother; so, they question why the legs must be taken off and the bones taken out and the meat cooked on the side. The grandmother laughs and explains simply that she did not have a pan big enough for the turkey.

God interrupted "time" by sending a baby. Jesus interrupted time when he stayed behind in Jerusalem. Perhaps, Jesus' time in the temple—the study and interpretation of God's word—is to help us with our priorities—to encourage us to take the time to reflect—to accept interruptions as a way that God breaks into our lives, encouraging us to take a closer look at what is going on around us, to address the question why we do what we do—not that it is wrong, but to be fully cognizant of the "why"—and especially to seek after God as Jesus was doing in the Temple at such a young age.

I leave you with a story that I found in my Upper Room that had great meaning for me. The writer, Alana Broyles, stresses that the celebration of Christmas comes and goes so quickly. She has created a way that the joy of Christmas can reside in our hearts all year long—and I share it with you. She calls it "Praying with the Nativity."

"As I began to remove the pieces of my Nativity set, each piece spoke to my heart and prompted me to pray: Lord, help me to be like a shepherd—to lead, nurture, and guide those around me to the Good Shepherd. Lord, help me to be more like the wise men—to hear your call and to use the gifts that you have blessed me with to serve others. Lord, help me to be more like Joseph and Mary—to rely on you completely and trust you throughout each day. Lord, help me to be more like Jesus—to show love, kindness, understanding, and forgiveness."

We too can remember the "why" we do what we do—we too can have a sense of hope and excitement for the new year and what it will bring for we don't just "sound joy" at Christmas, but "each year" we "sound joy", we interrupt our daily lives so that we too remember the angels, remember how God interrupted the status quo—and how even now, God is at work—in the process of redeeming and redemption. We, like Alana says in her prayer, must remember to be more like *shepherds—to lead, nurture, and guide those around us. To be more like the wise men—to hear God's call and to use the gifts that God has given us to bless and serve others. To be more like Joseph and Mary—to rely on God completely and trust God throughout each day. To be more like Jesus—to show love, kindness, understanding, and forgiveness* and in this way, we too will continue to be witnesses for Christ throughout this New Year 2025.



200th Celebration and Homecoming

Save the dates: (Sat. April 26 and Sun. April 27)

Next meeting: January 19, 2025 @11:15 AM following the worship service

Teams/Members:

Artifacts: Kris and Rick Bald, Gil Burgess, Eileen Taylor

Invitations: Kay Oosterling, Karen and Bill Doebler, Christine Stephens, Paul Salisbury, Anne Rogers, Bob Hanson,

Worship and Music: Natalie Lemmon and Sarah Humphrey

Food/Refreshments: Gwen Mix, Holly Burgess, Marilyn Wilson, Georgette Smith, Ginny Bodine, Cheryl Lotz, Karen Vanderbrook

Rock Team: Marilyn Wilson, Deb Compher, Henry Stephens, Josh McCrossen



WARMING TREE:

PPC will be collecting hats, mittens, gloves, and scarves for Pre-K age (2-5 yrs of age roughly) to be given in January to ABCD in Williamson.

“Agri-Business Child Development is in the business of changing and shaping lives. The work we do at our Migrant and Seasonal Head Start, Early Head Start, and Head Start centers, is aimed at providing a holistic approach to solving some of our society’s biggest challenges ~ closing the education gap and giving each and every child a head start in life! We make sure ABCD children and their families are encouraged to thrive by supporting their education and social needs.”

Any items larger than this will be donated appropriately to Lincoln and/or Perkins Elementary School or to Survivor Advocacy. Nothing will be wasted; all will be used.





Christian Fellowship

Hello everyone. I hope you found some peace and relaxation over the holidays! In welcoming in 2025, I'd like to thank Bill Doebler and Eileen Taylor for their continued service over the years with event planning, help setting up, being welcoming, serving, and with the cleanup that follows afterwards. We also appreciate Rick Bald and Scott Blondell, who set up our tables. We give thanks that Deb Compher, Georgette Smith, ET Trunick, Karen Vanderwall, and Marilyn Wilson have now agreed to join our team!

Upcoming Events

Dish to Pass, Sunday, January 12th after the Church Service: Our team looks forward to welcoming in the new year by spending time with you!

Game Day, Wednesday, January 22nd from 2-4:00 in the Lounge: Please consider joining us to play games or feel free to just socialize! Your friends are always welcome. We would appreciate it if a few people would sign up to bring a snack or treat to share with us.

Boy Scout Sunday, February 2nd with a Continental Breakfast Being Served after Church: Mark your calendars to come visit with our scouts and their families who use our church for their meetings. A sign-up sheet will be posted, if you wish to contribute.

Dish to Pass, Sunday, February 23rd after the Church Service: Let's show our appreciation and thanks to our ruling elders and deacons who are being installed or ordained on this day, those who have completed their terms, and those continuing to serve.

Our next Church Life meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 8th in the lounge at 3:30 p.m. We welcome your thoughts, if you would like to join us in our planning.

Our team wishes you all a Happy New Year!

Bill Doebler

Deb Compher

Georgette Smith

Eileen Taylor

ET Trunick

Karen Vanderbrook

Marilyn Wilson

Cheryl Lotz, Team Leader



January at PPC

Pulpit Supply

January 5: Josh McCrossen
January 12: Rev. Betsey Crimmins
January 19; Pam Gnagy
January 26: Rev. John Milne/Congregational Meeting

Flowers:

January 5: IMO Howard Faro by the Faro Family
January 12: IMO Raymond S. Wright by the Wright Memorial
January 19:
January 26: IHO Roxanne Rowe's Birthday by Sue Rowe

Liturgists:

January 5: Pat Hart
January 12: Anne Rogers
January 19: Sarah Humphrey
January 26: Sue Rowe
February 2: Natalie Lemmon

Deacon's Coffee Hour Schedule:

January & February Host: Sue Rowe



January Birthdays

January 2—Karl Schantz
January 12– Kelly Shay
January 22– Ann Ross
January 23– Gabby Taylor
January 24– Robert Humphrey
January 27– Roxanne Rowe

Newark Community Connections:

Newark Food Pantry: The Newark Food Pantry is located at 301 East Miller Street, Newark, NY 14513. There are many ways to volunteer your time at the Newark Food Closet. All Donations go to support the Newark Food Closet. We do not have paid staff; we are run solely by volunteers. If interested, please contact Lisa Barrett at (315) 332-8582 or (315) 351-6474.

Common Threads: Common Threads is located at 5694 Wood Lane, Newark, NY 14513. It is open 9AM-12:PM every First and Third Saturday of the month. Drop off for clothing is in Park Presbyterian lounge M-W, F from 9AM-4PM. Contact Sarah at shumphrey8008@gmail.com or call 585-409-4667 for more information.

Called to Care:

Park Presbyterian Women are supporting Called to Care; when needed they are supplying new and used bedding and household cleaning supplies. Contact Sue Rowe at srowe918@gmail.com or 845-791-0389 if you are interested in being on a list to help supply items when the need arises. Called to Care, Canandaigua, assists refugee families financially in their first few months with rent, utility payments, and other fees as well as helping them find housing, employment, English classes and provide for food and clothing needs; it also works in partnership with World Relief Western NY. Called to Care, Canandaigua, with its mission to promote and facilitate resettlement of refugees in Canandaigua by providing a support network to help them start a new life, invites interested individuals to join in the rewarding work of welcoming and serving some of the world's most vulnerable. For more information, contact Linda Werts at 315-447-0276.

Family Promise: In the United States, one child out of five lives in poverty. Families with children make up 35% of the people in this country who experience homelessness. Poverty in Wayne County is a persistent and continuing foundation of homelessness. From data provided by school districts in Wayne County, there has been a consistent number of over six hundred homeless children, both pre-school and school-age each year since the 2014-2015 school year. Contact Anne Rogers at 315-879-5478 for more information.

Laurel House: Laurel House is a not-for-profit volunteer community organization in Newark, NY, formed with its first meeting on November 7, 2014, and incorporated in May 2015. The idea of Laurel House, a volunteer-driven home providing free end-of-life care for Wayne County residents and their families, originated decades ago with Jean Cass, a nurse who watched one of her dear friends succumb to a difficult death from breast cancer. Jean's passion for a better way to care for the dying brought about the comfort care home, the House of John in Clifton Springs and was the impetus for doing the same in Newark. While Laurel House Comfort Care provides end-of-life care free of charge, it costs over \$200,000 to operate the home. Donations are appreciated! To contact them call 315-573-7028.

Survivor Advocacy Center of the Finger Lakes:

The Survivor Advocacy Center of the Finger Lakes' programs for survivors of domestic violence provides shelter and appropriate services for all victims. Their safe dwelling program provides housing for a maximum of fourteen residents. Their programs provide appropriate service for survivors of domestic violence, sexual abuse, stalking, dating violence, bullying, and child abuse regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, secular orientation, gender identity or expression, military status, gender, marital status, or disability. To contact them, call the office at 315-331-1171.

New Year Prayer for 2025
Here is a powerful New Year prayer:

by Divine Disclosures Daniel Joelson Niranjan

Almighty God, as we stand on the threshold of a new year, we come before Your throne with hearts full of gratitude and expectation. We thank You for Your faithfulness throughout the past year and look to You with hope for the days ahead.

Lord, we dedicate this new year to You. We pray for a fresh outpouring of Your Holy Spirit upon our lives, our families, our churches, and our nations. Revive us, O Lord! Ignite a holy fire within us that cannot be quenched.

Father, we ask for Your divine wisdom and discernment as we navigate the unknown paths of this new year. Order our steps and direct our paths according to Your perfect will. Grant us clarity of vision to see the opportunities You place before us and the courage to pursue them boldly.

We pray for a deeper intimacy with You, Jesus. Draw us closer to Your heart. May this be a year of spiritual growth, where we bear much fruit for Your Kingdom. Transform us into Your image with ever-increasing glory.

Holy Spirit, we invite Your presence to fill every aspect of our lives. Empower us to be effective witnesses for Christ. Use us as instruments of Your love, peace, and healing in a world desperately in need of Your touch.

Lord, we lift up our personal goals and resolutions to You. Align our desires with Your purposes. Give us discipline and perseverance to pursue the dreams You've placed in our hearts. May everything we do bring glory to Your name.

We pray for breakthrough in areas where we've faced persistent struggles. By Your power, we declare chains broken, strongholds shattered, and victories won in Jesus' name.

Father, we ask for Your protection and provision throughout this year. Guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Supply all our needs according to Your riches in glory.

As we embark on this new year, we choose to trust in You with all our hearts, leaning not on our own understanding. We commit our ways to You, confident that You will make our paths straight.

Thank You, Lord, for new beginnings and fresh starts. May this year be marked by Your supernatural favor, abundant blessings, and mighty works in and through our lives.

In the powerful name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, we pray. Amen.



We continue to pray for those in our midst—family, friends, and acquaintances—in need of healing, understanding, compassion, direction, safety, and safe keeping—for your shalom upon their lives—your wholeness. To this end, we continue to lift the following in prayer to you: Deb Compher, Roxanna Roe, Sue Rowe, Lila Serapilio, Mike Hopkins, James, Chris Agletti and Rachel Ide, Rev. Debbie Grohman, Krystel Harling, Artemis, Kurt Werts, Cara, James Cavallero, Karen, Debbie O-Sullivan, Daniel Allerton, Lisa Praino Babineau, Jan Smith, Orville VanDuser, Laura Ehle, Aya Gilad-Muth, Kelly Shay Velte, Dan Patsos, Connie Winsor, Roger and Victor Cox, Bill Mitchell, Mark Booth, Michael Bauer, Jonathan and Jeremy Burns, Moshe and Avital Gilad, Eleanor Brennessel, Susie Earl, Barbara Watson, Mary Jean, Jackie, Marilyn Bender, Jim Praino, Tobin Ide, and Jonathan Oosterling.

We continue our prayers for caregivers and to those needing care: Jeanne and Paul Salisbury, Bonnie and Thurlow Hammond, Ed and Cheryl Lotz, Barbara Brunner, Eileen Burm, Marian Maxwell, Jim and Anne Peck, Lynn Blodgett, Susan Chaffee, Mark Booth, Debbie and Pat O'Sullivan, Joan Boerman, and Sally and Jim Praino.

We continue our prayers for all those who grieve, including the friends and family of Ron Serapilio, David Wilck, and Bob Bowser.

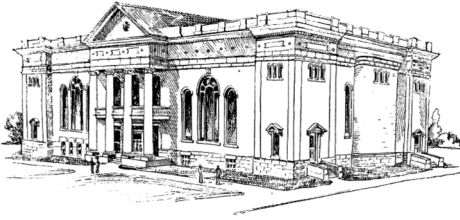
In your mercy, O God, hear the prayers of your people. **Amen.**

JANUARY



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3 <i>1PM Garden Club</i>	4 <i>6PM AA Meeting</i>
5 <i>10 Worship Service Communion Sunday</i>	6 <i>430PM Chancel Bells 6PM Back 2 Basics</i>	7 <i>1030AM Quilters 6PM Webelos Meeting</i>	8 <i>3PM Fellowship Meeting 6PM 138 Pack Meeting</i>	9	10 <i>6PM Wayne Gem</i>	11 <i>6PM AA Meeting</i>
12 <i>9AM Choir 10 Worship Service 1115AM Dish to Pass</i>	13 <i>430PM Chancel Bells 6PM Back 2 Basics</i>	14 <i>1030AM Quilters 3PM Mission Team 6PM Webelos Meeting</i>	15 <i>6PM 138 Pack Meeting 6PM Session Meeting</i>	16	17	18 <i>6PM AA Meeting</i>
19 <i>9AM Choir 10 Worship Service</i>	20 <i>430PM Chancel Bells 6PM Back 2 Basics</i>	21 <i>1030AM Quilters 6PM Webelos Meeting</i>	22 <i>2PM Game Day 6PM 138 Pack Meeting</i>	23	24 <i>*Parkview Submissions Due</i>	25 <i>10AM NA Planning 6PM AA Meeting</i>
26 <i>9AM Choir 10 Worship Service</i>	27 <i>430PM Chancel Bells 6PM Back 2 Basics</i>	28 <i>1030AM Quilters 6PM Webelos Meeting</i>	29 <i>6PM 138 Pack Meeting</i>	30	31	
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Park Presbyterian Church
110 Maple Court
Newark, NY 14513



***“Our mission is to make
Christ visible
by believing, living and
sharing the word of God.”***

***“Our vision is to be God’s
light – a beacon of love, in-
teraction, and guidance in
Faith and comfort. “***



Be sure to check out our Facebook page for a way to see the Sunday Services.

Facebook is at: www.facebook.com/parkchurch110

(Be sure to like and follow to get notifications when we go live.)

Find us on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-PmjX998CQTaJ3EEkSpl6w>

Be sure to subscribe and click the notification bell to be told when we upload videos.

