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"Doings" of the Advent Historical Society

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Support the Advent Historical Society

The Advent Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation [EIN 84-2266811] qualified to receive tax-deductible gifts to support the work of the Society.

Donations in the form of checks should be made payable to The Advent Historical Society and mailed to:

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P.O. Box 983
Milesburg, PA 16853

Credit card and PayPal donations can now also be accepted online via our website, our Facebook page, and by using the following QR code:



(Directions: Use the camera on your smart phone to scan the QR code, which will allow you to access the online donation site for Advent Historical Society.)

Music at the Advent: 2022 Event Schedule

The Advent Church has long been a place where family and community gathered to share music and food. The wonderful acoustics of this 1849 building still echo the legacy of generations of hymn tunes and musical talent. The newspaper columns and diaries of Emma Confer Watson chronicled hymn sings at the church, family songfests at camp, birthday parties, quilting bees, and dinners. Bringing music back to the Advent Church continues this legacy of singing and socializing. Special thanks to Jeffery Watson, Chair of the Music Committee, for his leadership and musical expertise to launch this new program.

All events will be held at the historic Advent Church at 1303 Moose Run Rd., Bellefonte, PA 16823. Following each concert will be a social hour with refreshments and opportunity to visit the on-site Museum and tour the Advent Cemetery.

Remembering Family

featuring The Stauffer Family Band



The first event of the series, Remembering Family, will be held on Memorial Day following the 9:00 am ceremonies at the Advent Cemetery. The Stauffer Family Band will play traditional music, hymns, and popular songs and will lead participants in a singalong. Following the program, please join us for a social hour featuring homemade pies, cakes, and other goodies, thanks to our Program Committee.

Memorial Day, May 30, 2022, at 10:00 am

Songs From Parlor and Pew

*featuring Susan Bender, soprano
& Jeffery Watson, pianist*

Our second event, Songs from Parlor and Pew, will be a concert of popular songs and hymns from the 19th and 20th centuries that trace our musical heritage from the founding of the Advent Church in 1849. This lively production, with singalong participation, will be followed by an ice cream social and tour of the historic site.

Sunday, July 17, 2022, at 2:00 pm



Harvest Home



Our third and final event for the year will be a fall festival featuring local musicians, arts and crafts vendors, and a cider and doughnuts social. Details on vendors and musicians will be published in our fall newsletter and via our Facebook page and website.

Sunday, October 23, 2022, 2:00–4:00 pm

For additional photos and information on future events, please visit us on Facebook or on our website.

Centre Gives Campaign

Mark your calendars! Centre Gives is a 36-hour online giving event designed to encourage community giving and to highlight and support the great work of local nonprofits. It provides a fun and exciting way for donors to choose the organizations they wish to support and see their gifts go further through a stretch pool and prizes.

Stretch your gift to the Advent Historical Society by pledging through Centre Gives **beginning at 9:00 am on May 10th and concluding at 9:00 pm on May 11th**. The Advent Historical Society will receive your donation PLUS a percentage of the matching grants from the Hartman Foundation and the Centre Foundation.

Visit <http://centregives.org/organizations/257> or donate via the Advent Historical Society's Facebook page or website. All major credit cards accepted. No cash or checks. Call-in pledges also accepted by calling 1-814-237-6229.



Remembering Family This Memorial Day

"Baked 4 mince pies...made doughnuts...made potato chips...baked 2 cakes and huckleberry pies...baked 2 chocolate pies...baked cookies...made ice cream."
— January 1931 Emma Confer Watson diary entries



This Memorial Day, we invite you to remember someone special by sharing a recipe that calls to mind the person, food, and memories you hold dear.

To participate:

1. Complete the enclosed form "Recipes in Remembrance" (a copy of which is also available for download from our Facebook page and website).
2. Either bring the completed form with you to the Memorial Day program, mail your form to our P.O. Box address (see above), or return it to us via email at AdventHistoricalSociety@gmail.com.
3. If possible, please attach a photo of your dessert to the form, and, if you choose, please prepare your recipe to share at the social hour following the Memorial Day program.

Thank you for sharing in the legacy of Emma Confer Watson. We look forward to seeing you at our Memorial Day program!

Millerites in Pennsylvania: Centre County's Advent Churches

"Millerites in Pennsylvania," researched and written by Barbara Franco, President of the Advent Historical Society, was published in the Winter 2022 edition of the journal *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies*. Her research documents the important role of Centre County's Advent churches, including the "Advent Chapel at Mash (Marsh) Creek." Following are excerpted passages from the published article.

By summer 1847 interest was strong enough to organize a camp meeting "on the land of Col. Greig, five miles above Milesburg." Andrew Gregg, Jr. (1799–1869) was a prominent ironmaster, businessman, and politician in Centre County and an owner of the Harmony Forge in Milesburg, in partnership with James Irvin (1800–1862). It is not clear whether Gregg himself was interested in the Advent message or whether he supported the effort on behalf of his employees and the community. During the 1847 camp meeting, Lemuel Osler preached at the Methodist Church in Milesburg and "while there, we were kindly entertained by Col Greigh, a gentleman of influence and wealth." Census records confirm that some of the Centre County Adventists worked as forgemen and colliers, while others were local farmers. Thomas Watson (1780–1857), a former collier who later retired to farming, was active in local politics and was one of the early converts along with his numerous sons and daughters and their spouses. His son George Watson worked as an iron forgerman as did sons-in-law Robert McMullen and William Stanley; Perry Aikens was a wagonmaker and Joseph Eckley a farmer.

A year later at the camp meeting in 1849, two Advent ministers, J. W. Bonham and Josiah Litch, described the proceedings which ended with the dedication of the Advent Chapel at Marsh Creek, making it one of the earliest churches built specifically for Second Advent worship.

On Lord's-day, Sept. 2d, the new Advent chapel at Ma[r]sh Creek was dedicated. When completed, it will be a neat building, 32 feet by 42. It stands on an eminence, and is surrounded by nature's enchanting scenery. It is built on a portion of an acre of ground, presented to the society by Gen. Irvin and Col. Gregg.



Josiah Litch (Courtesy: Center for Adventist Research)

Accounts of Pennsylvania Adventists provide further evidence that the movement allowed an active role for women, engaged in outreach to African Americans, targeted rural communities, and maintained connections with other nineteenth-century reform movements, including abolition, temperance, and eclectic medicine. Rather than disappearing after 1844, Millerites in Pennsylvania remained active into the twentieth century, providing an unbroken link to the new evangelical denominations that eventually replaced them.

Reprints of the journal article will be available by request (for a donation to defray printing costs).



Building and Grounds Committee Update

The Building and Grounds Committee, chaired by Don Wesley, helps keep the church in good repair. Solomon Zook was hired to replace damaged siding and stair rails and repair a hole in the eaves of the historic church. He also installed spouting and a new door on the museum and barn buildings. Special thanks to Dennis Reese, Harold Fetzer, Terren Smith, Connie and John Carr, and the Milesburg Historical Society for their help in clearing out the barn building so that it can be repurposed as a meeting and exhibition space for future programs. Thanks to everyone whose donations help sustain the property and support the ongoing work and mission of the Advent Historical Society.