



The Beacon

The Newsletter of
St. Paul's
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
McConnellsburg

*By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us,
To give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
To guide our feet into the way of peace.*

Luke 1:79

Trinity
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
Fort Loudon

DECEMBER 2013

Newsletter Dates

Deadline	Friday, December 27
Church Pick-up/Email	Sunday, December 29
Postal	Monday, December 30

If you would like to get your newsletter emailed to you, please send an email with your name to: mcbucc@embarqmail.com and help us save paper and postage. Thank You!

Trinity Has New Website

Our former provider is no longer in operation, so we had to build a new website. Thanks to Bernice Crouse, it is now up and running: trinityucfcloudon.webs.com

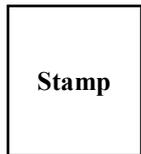
This month: **Wrap your gifts green.** Think about how quickly presents will be unwrapped, with the paper, bows, ribbons and bags ending up in the trash. Try reusing wrapping paper and bags. Avoid paper that is coated or made out of foil. Put your paper in the recycling bin instead of the trash. Or, be creative and use decorated newspaper and magazines to wrap your gifts!



Trinity's and St. Paul's children will be preparing a Christmas program to be presented during worship on **Sunday, December 22**. Celebrate our Savior's birth with a candlelight service of lessons and carols, with special music and Holy Communion, on **December 24 at 6:00 p.m. at St. Paul's, and 8:00 p.m. at Trinity.**

Christmas Services

The Fort Loudon-McConnellsburg Charge
of the
United Church of Christ
228 North 2nd Street
McConnellsburg, PA 17233



Message from Your Pastor

*By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us,
To give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
To guide our feet into the way of peace.*

Luke 1:79



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Over the last few weeks I have caught myself thinking, “It can’t be that time of year again – already?!”

Why do we dread this season? Because it is full of stress: Cooking, baking, shopping, decorating, parties, church events, family gatherings. That can’t be the point of all this? This is supposed to be a season of joy!

We all want our Christmas to be a lot of things: Full of joy. Memories. Happiness. Above all, we want it to be about Jesus. What we don’t want is stress. Or debt. Or feeling like we “missed the moment”. *Advent*

Conspiracy is a movement designed to help us all slow down and experience a Christmas worth remembering. But doing this means doing things a little differently. A little creatively.

It means turning Christmas as we know it upside down.

You are invited to join us for an Advent study at Trinity, on Sunday evenings during Advent, to inspire you to get to know Christmas all over again (read more about it on page 3).

The message of God becoming human is SO HUGE, we cannot truly appreciate it unless we open our hearts and prepare ourselves for God to come into our lives. We need deliberately to take the time and make the effort to take this in, or we will indeed miss it.

My favorite Advent hymn (and probably favorite hymn, period) is “Wie soll ich dich empfangen”, written by Paul Gerhardt in 1653. Some of you may be familiar with the English translation, “O How Shall I Receive Thee”, published with a different melody in the Evangelical and Reformed hymnal. It sums up beautifully that we need God’s help in welcoming God into our world:

O how shall I receive Thee, how meet Thee on Thy way, blest hope of every nation, my soul’s delight and stay? O Jesus, Jesus give me now by Thine own pure light, to know whate’er is pleasing and welcome in Thy sight.

Thy Zion palms is strewing, and branches fresh and fair; my soul, in praise awaking, her anthem shall prepare. Perpetual thanks and praises forth from my heart shall spring; and to Thy name the service of all my powers I bring.

Love caused Thy incarnation, Love brought Thee down to me; Thy thirst for my salvation procured my liberty. O love beyond all telling, that led Thee to embrace, in love all love excelling, our lost and fallen race!

He who alone can cheer you is standing at the door; He brings His pity near you and bids you weep no more. He comes, who contrite sinners will with the children place, the children of His Father, the heirs of life and grace.

Jesus is standing at the door, waiting for us to let him in.

Wishing you and your families a blessed season of Advent and Christmas, full of the hope, joy and peace that only Jesus can bring.

Yours in His Name,

Pastor Valeria.



Cookies for Carlisle Truck Stop Ministry

Cookies will be taken to Carlisle on Monday, December 2.

Trinity, please bring your cookies to church on **Sunday, December 1**.

St. Paul's, please have your cookies at the church by **Friday, November 29, 6:30 p.m.** to be packed.

Thank you for your support! It will be appreciated by many who will be on the road over the holidays.

Please also return your change containers to be taken to Carlisle that day.

Joint Advent Study

Tired of the consumerism that has come to define Christmas? Advent Conspiracy invites families, home groups, and churches to restore the heart of the Holiday. Unwrapping four simple but powerful concepts, this stirring DVD study with guide invites you to celebrate Jesus' birth more meaningfully by giving relationally to family, friends, and the less fortunate. Advent Conspiracy shows how readers can substitute compassion for consumption by practicing four simple but powerful countercultural concepts: Worship Fully—because Christmas begins and ends with Jesus! Spend Less—and free up resources for things that truly matter. Give More—presence: helping hands, healing words, humble hearts. Love All—the poor, the forgotten, the marginalized, the sick, in ways that make a difference.

This will be a joint study between Trinity UCC and Fort Loudon Methodist church. St. Paul's is also invited! Refreshments will be served.

We will meet at Trinity on the Sundays of Advent (December 1, 8, 15 and 22) at 6:30 p.m.



Advent Envelopes

During the season of Advent and Christmas, we try to remember those who are less fortunate than we are. At the beginning of Advent, we will be handing out Advent envelopes, asking you to fill them with whatever you can during the month of December, and to return them at Christmas. At **Trinity**, your donations will be sent to Maranatha Ministries in Chambersburg, to support them in helping those in need in our area. At **St. Paul's**, the money will go to the local Salvation Army. May God bless the givers, and the recipients.

St. Paul's Hanging of the Greens

Many helping hands will be needed to decorate the Sanctuary and the outside of the church for the Advent and Christmas season. Please join us for Contemporary worship on **December 1**, with lunch to follow, and decorating afterwards.

Christmas Party and Hymn Sing at Trinity

On **Saturday, December 7**, we will gather at Trinity for a meal at 6:00 p.m. Please bring a covered dish and your place settings. At 7:00 p.m., we will meet in the Sanctuary for an Advent and Christmas Hymn Sing. Get into the spirit of Christmas by sharing the gifts of food, fellowship, and music!

Annual Report Deadlines

Trinity's annual meeting will be **Sunday, January 19, 2014**. Please have your reports to the church office by **January 7 th**. This will get them ready to be distributed by January 12, 2014, for review before the meeting. St. Paul's annual meeting will be **Sunday, January 26, 2014**. Please have your reports to the church office by **January 14th**. Packets will be ready for the Sunday before the meeting.

**Trinity United Church of Christ Fort Loudon
Consistory Meeting Minutes
November 12, 2013**

Evangelism Report:

Free Food and Clothing events have been scheduled for next year on April 12 and October 4. Other scheduled items are January Pot Pie supper, Valentine Party and Hymn Sing, April Pot Pie supper and May chicken Bar-B-Que and bake sale at the church.

Old Business:

St. Lukes - Removal of the outhouse. It was thought that it might be more efficient to wait until a day with snow on the ground and simply burn it down and then fill in the hole.
Church Basement – A new quotation of \$7,695 was received from I.T.G. which would include a French drain along the interior perimeter of the basement and furnace room walls and two new sump pumps, one in each room. He also received a second quotation of \$4,000 from Gladhill Services to install a baseboard system along the entire interior of the basement including the furnace room. Other options would include mold treatment, sealing walls and floor and two Humidex systems bringing the total including the baseboard system to \$18,635. The church would have the option to select all or part of the quotation. Since there are still further questions concerning the quotations, no action was taken.

New Business:

Valeria inquired as to whether or not the church has a mission statement. It was thought that one had been prepared. Consistory members will look through church records to see if one is available.
December 1 is the first Sunday in Advent so the Christmas tree will be put up for that event.
The Advent offering will be given to the Maranatha Center.
Valeria will check with Barb Bricker about the Poinsettias for Christmas.
There will be a joint Advent study held with the Fort Loudon Methodist Church each Sunday during Advent at 6:30 in our church. Pastor Valeria and Pastor Laura will alternate leading the sessions.
Nominations for Consistory – Linda Best, Elder, Sam Burns, Trustee and Nancy Lawyer, Deacon have terms that expire this year. Nominations for replacements for their positions will be sought.
In honor of his service to the congregation over the years the consistory would like to make Roger Byers an Elder. A motion to have Glenn Crouse trade positions with Roger, making Glenn a Trustee and Roger an Elder was passed. Pastor Valeria will announce this in church next Sunday.
The Deacons will be preparing the 2014 budget during the next month. Glenn said that the cost of insurance for Pastor Valeria will be going up next year.
The outside lights are being looked at since they are not always working. The inside switch needs to be left on for them to work correctly.
John Hornbaker said the sump pump under the sanctuary seems to be working correctly.
The offering boxes for next year have arrived.

Other Business:

Glenn Crouse proposed that the church buy some pens with our church information imprinted on them.
A Nancy Lawyer/Jeff Layer motion to allow Anna Rotz to borrow the folding chairs for the Colonial Christmas at the fort site was approved.

Linda Best, Secretary

Trinity's Financial Update

Month	Received	Budget	Expended
Jan.-Oct.	\$52,513.09	\$57,972.50	\$53,068.62
Nov. 1-17	\$2,902.82	\$4,905.51	\$2,632.44
TOTAL	\$55,415.91	\$62,878.01	\$55,701.06

As December arrives, Trinity needs everyone's support to meet its 2013 budget of \$69,567.00 and enable the church to cover its routine end of year expenses. In addition, some upcoming basement repair work will involve extra cost. Please prayerfully consider what role you are able to play in meeting these challenges.

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Secretary - Pam Carmack
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 Fort Loudon, PA 17224
 (717)-369-4773
 tinityucc.webs.com
www.pccucc.org (Penn Central Conference)
www.ucc.org

Special Offerings at Christmas

On **Sunday, December 22**, our special offering will go to the United Church of Christ Christmas Fund. This fund supports lower-income retired clergy and lay employees, as well as active clergy facing unforeseen financial crises. Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks were sent to approximately 500 retired UCC clergy/lay church employees in 2012. Monthly Pension Supplementation was provided to 395 persons. Quarterly Health Premium Supplementation was provided to 228 families. Emergency grants were sent to 45 individuals and families. None of this would be possible without your support.

On **Christmas Eve**, we will be taking our special offering for Hoffman Homes for youth, a psychiatric residential treatment program for children located in Gettysburg. They provide therapy, physical health care, education, and a safe and comfortable home for up to 141 children ages 6-18 with mental health problems.

*Help us spread the joy of Christmas
 as you support these important ministries with you donation. Thank you!*

Christmas Caroling

Everyone at Trinity is invited to meet at the church on **Sunday, December 15, at 2:00 p.m.** to go Christmas caroling at Manor Care nursing home in Chambersburg.

St. Paul's will meet **Sunday, December 22, at 6:00 p.m.** to go Christmas caroling at some church members' houses

All singers young and less young are asked to join us. Let's spread the joy with singing!



ST. PAUL'S CONSISTORY SUMMARY OF OCT. MEETING

Submitted by: M. Haubrick, Secretary St. Paul's Consistory

All consistory members present except Paul Stevens, Jonna Baker and Denise Grissinger.

Discussion and action was taken on the following:

YEAR TO DATE PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT:

A report of the year January through October of income and expense was reviewed. The report indicated that the General Fund is **showing a \$4,900.00 total loss for the year.** It was noted that the parsonage wall/drainage repair was paid from the Building Fund, and the cemetery restoration and tree removal expenses were paid from money given through bequests. The purchase of a new organ was also paid by a bequest and donations. **The loss reflects just the general expenses of the church.** Consistory members expressed a hope that some donations to the church would increase at the end of the fiscal year and this would help with the deficit. Jo-Ann offered to do a comparison report of the monthly giving income of current month vs. last year's monthly giving income that would allow a closer watch of this situation.

MEMORIAL FUND: Balance of the Memorial Fund currently \$125.00. No action.

CHURCH WOMEN: Church Women will be preparing homemade cookie tins for the shut-ins and friends during the Hanging of the Greens on Sunday Dec. 1. An artificial Christmas tree has been donated to the church by Loy and Linda Garber. Denny and Pam Carmack have made a donation of a 3 tier serving cart to help with serving meals and the clean-up following. Thank you to the Carmack's !

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: The children's classes are going well. Additional help by Jennifer Brubaker in the Primary Class is very much appreciated. A volunteer to help Kimberly Pryor for the Nursery Class is needed at times.

PARSONAGE ROOF: Project still pending, to be done by Buterbaugh Construction.

PARSONAGE PAINTING: The painting of the aluminum siding has been completed. Waterproof painting of the patio/deck will be postponed until the spring because of weather conditions for proper application.

AIR CONDITIONER PROBLEMS: The compressor in the air conditioner for the church sanctuary has been successfully replaced. It was noted that the air conditioning that had been installed in April of 1989, or 24 years ago will need to be completely replaced in the near future.

BETTY GRISSINGER ESTATE; Church has been informed that a bequest in the amount of \$10,000.00 had been made to the church through the estate of Betty Grissinger.

NOMINATION FOR NEW CONSISTORY MEMBERS: Nominations for three new Consistory Members are needed. Terms expiring at the end of this year include Loy Garber, Denise Grissinger and Paul Stevens.

PIANO TUNING: Approved to have the sanctuary piano tuned.

BUDGET FOR 2014: The Deacon Committee will be working on the 2014 Budget proposal and the report will be presented at the December Consistory Meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS: CARDS AND NOTES:

A note of thanks from Fulton County Christian Social Services for our financial support of their organization. A letter from Frances Alexander Shoemaker, a former member of St. Paul's UCC, who is now a resident of Care Central of Homewood in Hanover was read by Pastor Valeria. The letter included a generous donation for the general fund for the church.

St. Paul's Financial Information

Treasurer's Report

Income for Oct.	\$13,335.50 *
Expenses for Oct.	\$11,317.70
Interest on Account	1.40
<u>Gain for month</u>	+ \$ 2,019.20

* - This amount included a transfer from the Bard/Shimer fund in the amount of \$8,280.00 for cemetery restoration. Actual giving amount for month was \$4,667.00

HAPPY DECEMBER BIRTHDAY

- 2 Jennifer Brubaker
 4 John Duffey
 7 David Brubaker
 8 Terry Pine
 10 Betty Keefer
 Tina Wood
 12 Roger Higgins
 14 Ronald Bricker
 15 Paul Dietrich
 Mary Ellen Ott
 16 Judy Dietrich
 20 Seleen Shives
 21 Ethan Barclay
 23 Betty Newman
 30 Mark Crouse
 John Hornbaker
 Karen Fox
 31 John Burns



St. Paul's Flowers

Mary Haubrick (987-3604)
Pam Carmack (485-4795)

Call the above person(s) if you wish to order flowers in memory/ honor of someone.

St. Paul's Ushers

Thank You for Serving!

Trinity's Ushers

Rosie Shives
Barb Bricker

Thank You for Serving!

PRAYER LIST

Arnetta Mellott
 Bertha Byers
 Betty Daniels
 Bob and Nancy Lawyer and family
 Dorothy and Paul Stevens
 Gary Stevens
 Gene, Elsie and Barb Bricker
 Harold and Betty Keefer and family
 Joyce and Thurman Hassler
 Military and families
 Peg Gordon
 Roger and Lois Byers
 Sponsored Children: Adrianus, Marc
 Philip, Thierry, Marcela
 Thelma Miller
 Zeis family
 Jean McLucas
 Diane Baxter
 Janis Cutchall
 Sarah Gordon
 Kylene McLucas Arwood
 All individuals and families affected
 by cancer
 All Sunday school classes
 Family of Arnetta Mellott
 Family of Doris Ray



Please let us know of any changes, additions or corrections to the Prayer and Birthday lists. Thank you!

DECEMBER



- Wednesdays** Trinity's Choir practice, 7:00 p.m.; Prayer and Praise, 7:45 p.m.
- Thursdays** *Joyful Noise* Band practice at St. Paul's, time 5:30 p.m.
Practice for Children's Christmas program, 6:15 p.m.
- Sunday, December 1** First Sunday of Advent
St. Paul's Contemporary Worship and Soup Sunday, & Hanging of the Greens
Advent study at Trinity, 6:30 p.m.
- Thursday, December 5** Fort Loudon Community Women's Christmas Party at Freedom Lighthouse,
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- Saturday, December 7** Trinity's Christmas Dinner, 6:00 p.m., and Hymn Sing, 7:00 p.m.
- Sunday, December 8** Trinity's change collection for Hartman Center
Advent study at Trinity, 6:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, December 10** Trinity's Consistory meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, December 11** St. Paul's Church Women United meeting **at the parsonage**, 7:00 p.m.
- Sunday, December 15** Trinity's special offering for the Building Fund
Trinity goes Christmas caroling. Meet at the church at 2:00 p.m.
Advent study at Trinity, 6:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, December 17** St. Paul's Consistory meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- Sunday, December 22** Trinity's change collection for Hartman Center
Christmas program during worship at both churches
St. Paul's goes Christmas caroling, 6:00 p.m.
Advent study at Trinity, 6:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, December 24** Candlelight Christmas Eve service at St. Paul's, 6:00 p.m.;
Trinity, 8:00 p.m.
- Sunday, January 5** St. Paul's Contemporary Worship and Soup Sunday
Joint Consistory meeting at St. Paul's, 2:00 p.m.

