



The Beacon

“Jesus says: The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed;
Nor will they say, ‘Look, here it is!’ or ‘There it is!’
For, in fact, the kingdom of God is among you.”
Luke 17:20-21

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

Trinity
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
Fort Loudon

JULY 2013

Newsletter Dates

Deadline Tuesday, July 23
Church Pick-up/Email Sunday, July 28
Postal Monday, July 29

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!



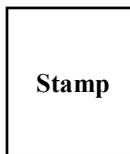
This month: **Stay cool.** Air conditioners use a lot of electricity, sending excessive amounts of carbon dioxide into our atmosphere. Keep your house cool by closing blinds and curtains against sunlight. Use fans to cool a room. If you do have to use air conditioning, try setting it one degree higher than you usually do (or even two?). You will hardly notice a difference (only on your electric bill), but our planet will.



Fort Loudon Community Vacation Bible School

Fort Loudon’s Community Vacation Bible School will be held at the United Methodist Church this year, from **Sunday, July 14, through Friday, July 19, from 6:30 – 8:45 p.m.** Children of all ages are welcome to learn about the Bible, sing songs, do crafts, and make new friends. Please contact Linda Best or Pastor Valeria if you are able to volunteer.

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



Message from Your Pastor

**“Jesus says: The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed;
Nor will they say, ‘Look, here it is!’ or ‘There it is!’
For, in fact, the kingdom of God is among you.”
Luke 17:20-21**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Usually, when people speak about the kingdom of God, they think of heaven: a place far away where good people go after they die. And that’s why we have to try to be good, to make sure that we will get to heaven.

Then there are others who say you have to believe in Jesus, or you will never get to heaven, no matter how much good you do. If you don’t believe in Jesus, you will go to hell.

This is a highly controversial and emotional topic because people often feel very strongly about their beliefs and get upset, offended or very judgmental when someone does not share the same beliefs.

This month, I would like you to celebrate the fact that you are part of the United Church of Christ. We are a Christian church, we do believe in Jesus, the Son of God, we try to follow the path he showed us, and we believe that he has the power to forgive us when we fail, and to save us from any kind of evil – within ourselves and without. I think and I hope that is something we can all agree on.

However, there are many other beliefs or convictions that we may not all agree on. Some take the Bible literally, the way it is written. Others look at the time and context that it was written in and take into consideration that our society has changed greatly since then.

Some like traditional worship services with a well-known liturgy and old-time hymns. Others enjoy a less formal, more contemporary style.

Those are just two examples of how people with some very different views and beliefs can still worship together in the same church. The reason why we can do that is because we are a *United Church of Christ*. We stand together despite some of our differences. We focus on what we have in common: Jesus, and our calling as his disciples. We try to accept and respect each other in our different views, and we try to learn from one another.

That is why I love the United Church of Christ: because it is open to anyone. We don’t test people’s beliefs before we let them join us. And we don’t ask them to leave their brains at the door. We welcome their questions and value their opinions.

Many churches claim to be welcoming to all. And I know we don’t always live up to our claim. But ideally, as a United Church of Christ, that is who we are. And our motto is: No matter who you are, or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.

No matter where you are on your faith journey, you are welcome here. None of us have arrived yet at our final destination. We all still have much to learn.

What a joy it is to have you along for the ride.

In closing, I invite you to read again the above passage from Luke: “The kingdom of God is among you.” One could also translate, “The kingdom of God is within you.”

I hope and I believe that we still have much to expect from God. But for now, his kingdom is right among us, and it is within us.

What if we lived like that? What if we lived as though God’s kingdom were here?

I will keep my heart and my eyes open, and I invite you to do the same.

In Jesus’ Name,
Pastor Valeria.



Trinity's Peach Festival

Plans for our third annual Peach Festival are underway, for **Saturday, August 17, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** at the Community Grounds. Please plan to make lots of peach pies and cobblers! We sold out quickly last year and are expecting an even larger turnout this year.

Craft vendors and home-based businesses, please contact Eileen Hornbaker for an application (328-3538). If you are interested in participating in the **art show**, please contact Linda Best (369-2249). Enter your peach pie in our **pie baking contest** to win \$50! Contact Corinna Rotz (369- 4804) for an application.

Bus Trip to See "Noah" at Sight and Sound

Trinity is sponsoring a bus trip to Lancaster on **Saturday, November 2**. Tickets are \$115 for adults, \$81.75 for teens (13-18) and \$61.50 for children (3-12). This includes transportation, a meal, and the show tickets. We have reserved a 57-passenger bus and seats usually fill up quickly. To make a reservation, contact Anna Rotz (369-3318). Please make checks payable to Trinity United Church of Christ.



Items to be Donated for Trinity's Next Food and Clothing Event

Fort Loudon's United Methodist Church has begun participating in "Bountiful Blessings", a program that hands out toiletry items to local residents. In order to best meet the needs of our town, we will focus more on food and clothing for our **October 12** event. We will start collecting canned goods, pasta and cereal closer to the date. Fresh produce, bread, eggs, etc. are also welcomed. When donating clothing, please remember that if you no longer want to wear it because it is faded, torn or stained, nobody else will want to wear it either. Thank you for your generous contributions!



School Supplies

Both of our churches will be supporting local families by collecting school supplies again this year.

A collection box from the Fulton County Catholic Mission will be at **St. Paul's** during the month of July, for items to be distributed to local families on Friday, August 16. Items needed are:

#2 pencils, pencil cases, pens, three-ring binders, loose leaf paper, erasers, crayons, composition notebooks, highlighters, two-pocket folders, one subject notebooks, glue sticks, color markers. Monetary donations are also appreciated.

Trinity will participate in the Community Back to School Rally on **Saturday, August 10, at 5:00 p.m.**, at Freedom Lighthouse Ministries. Items needed are: spiral notebooks, pencil cases, rulers, backpacks, colored pencils, glue sticks, pens, scissors, markers, hand sanitizers, three-ring binders. There will be a collection box at the church.

Thank you!

Trinity Goes Swimming

Ernie Gish has graciously agreed to let us use their pool again. ALL (kids or adults, church members, family and friends) are welcome to join us on **Wednesday, July 10**, starting at **6:00 p.m.**, for a fun time! The address is 5625 Path Valley Road. Hot dogs, chips, drinks and smores will be provided. **Please RSVP to Pastor Valeria by Sunday, July 7.**



Notes from St. Paul's Consistory Meeting

Tuesday, June 18, 2013

TREASURER'S REPORT: Treasurer's Reports for May 2013 as prepared by Denise Grissinger were reviewed. The reports indicated: Income for May: \$19,319.25. Expenses: 24,173.94 (included \$14,724.00 transfer for final payment of the new organ, and \$500.00 from the sale of the old organ.) **Loss for month:** \$4.853.20

CHURCH WOMEN UNITED: The final profit for the annual church yard sale netted \$1,200.00. June Strawberry Festival profit was \$800.00.

PARSONAGE ROOF: Jo-Ann Sheffield announced that a bid request for the replacement of the parsonage roof will be published in the local newspaper the week of June 26 and action will be taken on this project at the next consistory meeting in August.

INSPECTION OF FURNACES: Kirk Cover volunteered to check on cleaning the furnaces in the church and parsonage this summer with the help of Charlie Baker.

PONSORED CHILD: We received a letter from Child Fund International stating that the basic needs for child support had increased 40% in the last five years and also funds were needed to support the office staff. The letter asked for consideration to increase our monthly support from \$33 to \$37. A question was voiced concerning if the increase would support our sponsored child or be used for administrative expenses. It was decided to check for more information regarding this and take the matter under consideration when the 2014 proposed budget is prepared.

SCHOLARSHIP FUND: Mary Haubrick gave a report on the Scholarship Fund and the percentages of the average total value of the fund for the four quarters of 2012 which was \$44,892.45. The only applicant was Melinda Headley who is studying for a nursing degree. The scholarship fund will be on the August agenda for a full vote.

CHOIR: The adult choir of the church, which is usually only four ladies, will not be singing for the summer services. Plans to resume this current choir in the fall may not be happening due to the age and health of the members. Pastor Valeria asked for input and suggestions of volunteers to form another choir or offer special music for the church services.

BASEMENT DRAIN: The church basement had another water leaking damage. It was discovered that the outside drain at the basement entrance had become clogged and did not allow proper drainage. This was cleaned, however this will need to be monitored and cleaned on a regular basis. After discussion, it was decided by general consensus to prepare a **MAINTENANCE LOG AND INFORMATION DATA OF NEW IMPROVEMENT AND BUILDING PROJECTS** for the church and parsonage. Jo-Ann offered to work on this and Mary stated that she would check the old minutes for info on the improvements made.

PARSONAGE MOWER: Pastor Valeria announced that the parsonage mower had been serviced with thanks going to Charlie Baker.



Strengthen the Church Special Mission Offering at St. Paul's on July 21

Your gift to *Strengthen the Church* builds the UCC's future by funding the Stillspeaking Ministry, new and renewing churches, youth and young adult ministries, and lay and pastoral leadership formation. Please support these various forms of ministry with your offering on **July 21**. Thank you!

Trinity's Financial Update

Month	Received	Budget	Expended
Jan.- May	\$24,268.13	\$28,986.25	\$22,812.92
June 1-23	\$4,122.37	\$4,459.50	\$7,266.19
TOTAL	\$28,390.50	\$33,445.75	\$30,079.11

Congratulations to Bethany Crouse. On June 16, Trinity's Scholarship Committee awarded her a grant of \$480.07 to assist her with funding 2013-14 studies at Eastern Mennonite University. Beth is now a college senior!

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www.pccucc.org (Penn Central Conference)
www.ucc.org

Recently, Laurich Company completed repairs to the church chimney. The firm agreed to additionally paint the base area of the tower while its equipment was on the premises, and the costs for this extra work were covered by a donation from Ruth's Bible Class. Thanks to everyone who contributed to the building fund to help cover the cost of this maintenance project.



Peace Camp

Thank you to everyone who supported Penn Central Conference's Peace Camp in June. Here are some closing statements from two of the participants:

"I just want to say a big thank you to all of the churches and people who made Partners in Peace possible. I feel so blessed to have had this experience. I plan to do many great things with peace building maybe even a job in peacemaking, now that I know what's out there. I just know that now even though everyone is home our job isn't over. Thank you for your prayers, support, love, and food. May the peace of Christ be with you!"

"I had an AMAZING two weeks with the [Partners In Peace](#) group and I already miss you all! Thank you to the [Penn Central Conference UCC](#) for planning and funding for everything! I cannot wait to see how this partnership impacts all of our lives as we go back to our home communities and move boldly forward with the lessons we have learned!"

Summer Program for St. Paul's Kids

With Sunday school on summer break, we are offering a program for kids at the church, at **6:00 p.m.** Join us to sing songs, explore the church, learn about the Bible, and have a fun time together! We will meet on **Monday, July 8 and 22**. See Pastor Valeria for more information.



Picnic at Trinity on Sunday, July 28

We will gather at the pavilion behind the church on **July 28** after morning services, around **12:00 p.m.** Hot dogs and drinks will be provided. Please bring your place settings and a covered dish to share. Weather permitting, Joey Rotz will take us on a hayride after the meal.



HAPPY JULY BIRTHDAY

- 3 Stephanie Crouse
- 9 Jason Armstrong
- 14 Jeff Lawyer
- 16 Warren Daniels
- 17 Preston Mellott
- 21 Chelsi Hornbaker
- 25 Todd Alexander
- 26 Thurman Hassler
- 31 Barron Barley



St. Paul's Flowers

Elaine Armstrong (485-5309)

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

St. Paul's Ushers

***Arnetta Mellott
Elaine Armstrong***

Thank You for Serving!

Trinity's Ushers

***Nancy Lawyer
Beth Crouse***

Thank You for Serving!

PRAYER LIST

Bertha Byers
 Betty Daniels
 Betty Grissinger
 Bob and Nancy Lawyer
 Dorothy and Paul Stevens
 Gene, Elsie and Barb Bricker
 Harold and Betty Keefer and family
 Joyce and Thurman Hassler
 Military and families
 Bob Carmack
 Peg Gordon
 Roger and Lois Byers
 Sponsored Children: Adrianus, Marc
 Philip, Thierry, Marcela
 Thelma Miller
 Zeis family
 Justin Jr. and Blaze Hege
 Jean McLucas
 St. Paul's Care Team
 Diane Baxter
 Janis Cutchall
 Sarah Gordon
 All individuals and families affected
 by cancer
 All Sunday school classes
 The people of Oklahoma



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



July 2013



Wednesdays	Trinity's Prayer and Praise, 7:00 p.m.
Thursday, July 4	Have a safe and happy Independence Day
Sunday, July 7	St. Paul's Contemporary worship and Salad Sunday
Monday, July 8	St. Paul's Kids' Program, 6:00 p.m. Trinity's Pool Party at Ernie Gish's, 6:00 p.m.
Thursday, July 11	Trinity's Peach Festival meeting, 6:30 p.m.
Sunday, July 14	Trinity's change collection for Hartman Center
Sunday, July 14 Through Friday, July 19	Fort Loudon Community Vacation Bible School at Methodist Church, 6:45 – 8:30 p.m.
Sunday, July 21	<i>Strengthen the Church</i> Special Offering Trinity's special offering for the Building Fund
Monday, July 22	St. Paul's Kids' Program, 6:00 p.m.
Sunday, July 28	Trinity's change collection for Hartman Center Trinity's Picnic at pavilion behind church, 12:00 p.m.
Sunday, August 4	St. Paul's Salad Sunday

