



# The Beacon

*“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.  
Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.”  
Philippians 4:4-5*

The Newsletter of  
**St. Paul's  
UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST  
McConnellsburg**  
**Trinity  
UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST  
Fort Loudon**

**DECEMBER 2014**

**Deadline for Jan. News**      **Tuesday, Dec. 23**  
**Church Pick-up/Email**      **Sunday, Dec. 28**  
**Postal**      **Monday, Dec. 29**

*If you would like to get your newsletter emailed to you, please send an email with your name to: [mcbucc@embarqmail.com](mailto:mcbucc@embarqmail.com) and help us save paper and postage.*



## Christmas Services

Trinity's and St. Paul's children will be preparing a Christmas program to be presented during worship on **Sunday, December 21**.

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 Trinity, and 8:00 p.m. at St. Paul's.**

## Photos from Trip to South Dakota

Pastor Valeria will give a presentation about her experience traveling to our Native American partner churches in South Dakota on **Monday, December 1, at 7:00 p.m.** at St. Paul's.

## This month:

**Wrap green.** Avoid plastic and foil when wrapping your gifts, as they will end up in the landfill. Reuse gift bags, or wrap your gifts in paper which can be recycled.



## Christmas Party for Kids

The United Methodist Church in Fort Loudon will be hosting a Christmas party for school-age children on **Saturday, December 20, at 2:00 p.m.** All are welcome for games, snacks, and fun.

## Fort Loudon Community Christmas Caroling

On **Sunday, December 21**, members of all three churches in Fort Loudon will meet at Trinity at **1:00 p.m.** to go Christmas caroling through the streets of Fort Loudon. Join us as we spread the joy!

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

Stamp

## Message from Your Pastor

*“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.  
Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.”  
Philippians 4:4-5*

To those of you who did not attend worship on November 23 and have not yet heard through other channels: I announced to the congregations that I had given my 90-day notice to the Consistories to resign from the position of Pastor at Trinity and St. Paul’s United Churches of Christ, effective February 8, 2015. On February 16, I will begin my ministry at Trinity Church in Northborough, Massachusetts. This is a decision I needed to make in order to be true to myself and to where God is calling me. But I will always be thankful that I got to meet all of you, that you welcomed me into your community and your lives, and that you placed your trust in me. I consider myself very blessed and it has been my privilege to have served as your pastor.

Those of you who have patiently sat through many a sermon that I preached lately may have noticed a theme developing: That Jesus sends us to those who are in need of material, emotional or spiritual help. And that only if we follow him there, will we find the true meaning and purpose of being a Christian, and only then will we feel true contentment and peace. I watch our society going down a road that is increasingly materialistic. We focus on things and appearances rather than meaningful relationships. This genuinely concerns me and it makes me sad for the many people who are missing out on the depth that this life has to offer when we open ourselves for God, and for each other.

You know I am very critical of the materialistic overload that Christmas has become. I actually hear many people complain about it, but yet we all still participate. I don’t want to spoil your fun. We all enjoy giving and receiving gifts. But let us remember whose birth we are celebrating, and who we should really be giving gifts to: the Son of God.

I encourage you to consider matching the money you spend on presents (again: for people who probably already have everything) with a donation made to a charity of your choice. Imagine how many lives you could touch by providing food, medical care, safe drinking water, education, and so much more to people in our community, and around the world. Imagine how good you would feel if you knew that you honored the Son of God by giving a gift to one of the least of his brothers and sisters. I think we underestimate people when we assume they expect an expensive gift. If we told them we would rather spend the money to help someone in need, I feel sure many of them would understand. Even children.

Call me naïve and idealistic: But I still believe that a better world is possible, and I still believe that it will happen through us, if we follow Jesus’ call.

Wishing you all a blessed and meaningful season of Advent and a merry Christmas.  
In the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,  
I remain faithfully yours,  
Pastor Valeria.



### Advent Envelopes

For most people, the weeks before Christmas are spent with shopping, decorating and preparations for family gatherings. In the history of the Church, Advent is a season of **fasting, repentance and almsgiving** – very much like the season of Lent. The idea is to make room in our lives and our hearts for the Son of God to come in; to consider what we might do differently in order to fully welcome God into our lives. Our Advent envelopes are an opportunity for you to set aside some of the money you might spend on gifts or food (probably for someone who already has more than enough!), and instead give it to someone who has very little. The envelopes will be distributed on the First Sunday of Advent, November 30. You may return them around Christmas as a gift to the Son of God, our Savior.

At **Trinity**, your gifts will support the Franklin County Prison Ministry. At **St. Paul's**, they will go to the Salvation Army's Red Kettle Fund, for their ministry in Fulton County.

### Franklin County Jail Ministry: Holiday Family Connection

For those incarcerated, the holiday season offers promises of despair and guilt. They have disappointed their families. Their separation adds to their sense of failure. To overcome these dreary promises with the joyful promises of God, the Franklin County Jail Ministry is creating the Holiday Family Connection. During the days just prior to Christmas, when an inmate's child visits, the inmate will be able to tell their child there is a gift waiting for them that the child can choose. In this way the parent will have the joy of providing a gift for their child.

You can help make this happen. We are asking you to purchase either a sports ball (soccer ball, football, etc.) or stuffed animal. Gifts should be less than \$15. Gifts may be dropped off at Salem United Brethren Church, 4349 Letterkenny Road in Chambersburg **December 8 – 12, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Do not wrap these gifts. (Please, no used toys.)**

If you have questions contact Chaplain Isaac Burkholder at 264-9513, ext. 21663.



### Hymn Sing at Trinity

On **Sunday, December 14**, we will gather at Trinity at **7:00 p.m.** to sing some of your favorite Advent hymns and Christmas carols. Take this opportunity to get into the spirit of the season, and bring the kids! Light refreshments will be served. Immediately preceding this event, Freedom Lighthouse will be hosting a live nativity from **4:00 – 7:00 p.m.**



**Trinity** members, families and friends are invited to participate in Christmas caroling at Falling Spring Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, 201 Franklin Farms Road, Chambersburg, on **December 14 at 2:00 pm.**



### *Tis the Month Before Christmas*

**Tis** the month before Christmas, we're all going nuts; With so much to do, there's no ifs, ands or buts.

Buy presents, hang tree lights, pop cards in the mail, Send gift packs, thread popcorn, find turkeys on sale. Decorations need stringing up all through the house. And you haven't a clue what to buy for your spouse. School concerts, receptions, open houses with friends,

Long lineups, short tempers, tying up the loose ends. With all our mad dashing, we're reeling from shock; Let's stop for a minute and really take stock.

It's crassly commercial, the cynical say;

If that's true, that our fault-it's us and not they.

Take time for yourself-though hard as that seems—

Enjoy your kids' laughter, excitement and dreams.

Take a moment out now, don't get overly riled,

Instead make an angel in snow with your child.

The shortbread can wait, and so can the tree;

What's important to feel is a child's sense of glee.

The holidays aren't about push, rush and shove;

They're for friendship and sharing and family love.

Hear the bells, feel the warmth, light up with the glow

Of a message first sent to us so long ago:

Peace, love and goodwill, and hope burning bright.

Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night!

Author Unknown

by: Pam C.

## Trinity's Financial Update

Month	Received	Budget to Date	Expended to Date
January-October	\$51,237.82	\$61,183.00	#54,433.83
November 1-23	\$6,196.42	\$5,106.74	\$3,651.14
TOTAL YTD	\$57,434.24	\$66,289.74	\$58,084.97

**Ruth's Bible Class** is collecting food from **November 30 through December 14** for distribution to local families before Christmas. All donations will be appreciated. Scarves, gloves and hats are also being collected for distribution to local shelters.

### Pastor - Rev. Valeria Schmidt

stpaulsparsonage@embarqmail.com  
(717)-485-3369

### Secretary - Pam Carmack

buckpcar@embarqmail.com

### St. Paul's UCC

228 N Second Street, McConnellsburg, PA 17233  
(717)-485-5554

mcbucc@embarqmail.com

Now on Facebook & [www.uccmccbg.weebly.com](http://www.uccmccbg.weebly.com)

### Trinity UCC

P.O. Box 253

13189 Main Street

Fort Loudon, PA 17224

(717)-369-4773

[trinityuccftloudon.webs.com](http://trinityuccftloudon.webs.com)

[www.pccucc.org](http://www.pccucc.org) (Penn Central Conference)

[www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org)

## Annual Report Deadlines

Trinity's annual meeting will be **Sunday, January 18, 2015**. Please have your reports to the church office by **January 7th**. This will get them ready to be distributed by January 11, 2015, for review before the meeting.

St. Paul's annual meeting will be **Sunday, January 25, 2015**. Please have your reports to the church office by **January 14th**. Packets will be ready the Sunday before the meeting.



## Trinity Consistory Minutes

Trinity's Consistory met on Tuesday, November 11.

The minutes were read and approved. Treasurer's report was also approved on a motion by Rosie Shives, seconded by Jerry Armstrong.

The Trustees are still waiting for the trees to be removed and the water problem in the basement to be solved. The storage area is currently being worked on by the family of Roger Byers and is nearing completion. Also, the door leading outside from the basement will need to be repaired.

The Evangelism Committee met on November 10 to plan activities for 2015. The Pork and Sauerkraut supper was not as well attended as hoped for, but many positive comments were made about the food. The Stewardship Committee sent a letter with a pledge card to active and inactive members. So far, only one pledge card has been returned.

The Thanksgiving Service will be held at Trinity on November 26. Next year, the churches are hoping to have a Community Service again. The offering taken up at the Thanksgiving Service will go to Vacation Bible School.

Advertisement for an organist will be placed in the Public Opinion and Mercersburg Merchant.

Nominations are needed for Consistory members. Members going off are Anna Rotz, Deacon, Glenn Crouse, Trustee, Sam Burns, Elder, and Jeff Lawyer, Trustee.

The meeting was adjourned with the praying of the Lord's Prayer.

Minutes submitted by Anna Hays.

## ST. PAUL'S CONSISTORY SUMMARY OF NOVEMBER MEETING

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

All consistory members present except Jonna Baker, Jo-Ann Sheffield and Nancy Barmont.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS: CHURCH WOMEN UNITED:** Hanging of the Greens is scheduled for Sunday, Dec. 7 following a Soup/Sandwich lunch. The church women are also preparing Christmas cookie tins on that date.

**PASTOR RESIGNATION:** Pastor Valeria presented a letter to members, giving a 90-day notice to resign from the position of Pastor at St. Paul's and Trinity United Churches of Christ. She stated that on November 16, she accepted the call to serve as Pastor at Trinity Church in Northborough, Massachusetts. She will begin her ministry there on February 16, 2015. Her last Sunday at St. Paul's will be February 8, 2015. After some questions and discussion, her letter of resignation was accepted on a motion made by Hillary Alexander, seconded by Carol Mellott. Loy Garber thanked her for the years of service she faithfully gave to the parish, and all members wished her well in her new position.

Loy will make contact with Penn Central Conference Associate Minister, Thom Webster, to discuss how to proceed in the Search and Call Process for an interim pastor and a call for a new pastor.

**STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE:** A pledge card and letter will be mailed to church members/friends. A thank you letter will be included with the annual contribution statement distributed to members/friends in January.

**MEMORIAL FUND REPORT** \$95.00 available. A request via phone answering message for money to fix a home leaking problem from a member of the community unknown to anyone at the meeting was discussed and suggested referral to Christian Social Services or Sister Margie as sources of help.

**OLD BUSINESS: NEW CHURCH FURNACE:** Kirk Cover reported that the new furnace has been installed and is working satisfactorily. Thank you to Kirk and his helper Charlie Baker for all the hard work in the installation of this new heating system.

**CHURCH SIGNS:** Loy reported that this project is ongoing with information to be provided at a later meeting. Some members expressed that due to the winter weather, this could be moved to the agenda for early spring of 2015.

### **NEW BUSINESS-**

**REQUEST FOR USE OF CHURCH FOR MEETINGS:** Pastor Valeria received a request from a Narcotics Anonymous Group asking for consideration for the group to use our church building for meetings on Saturday evenings from 7 to 8:00 p.m. This group tries to meet several times during the week at local locations, and does not have a facility for the Saturday night. Consistory members expressed their concern for the need to support this group, but would like to know more from the individual who would be in charge of the meetings and how the group operated. Pastor Valeria will contact the person and set a time to meet with consistory members before a decision will be made.

### **MERCERSBURG ASSOCIATION EMAIL REQUEST:**

An email was received from the Mercersburg Association seeking support and suggestions to increase communication among the Association and participation in Association events. They asked for an email contact person(s) from each church. Mary Haubrick volunteered to be the contact for St. Paul's.

## **St. Paul's Financial Information    Treasurer's Report**

Income for Oct.	\$ 6,036.50
Expenses for Oct.	\$ 3,251.63
Interest on Account	1.47
<b><u>Gain for month</u></b> +	<b>\$ 2,786.34</b>
<b><u>Gain for year to date</u></b> -	<b>\$ 1,995.57</b>

## POINSETTIA ORDERS FOR ST. PAUL'S

Pam Carmack and Mary Haubrick will be receiving orders for purchasing poinsettias to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas. The poinsettia may be given in memory or in honor of a loved one. A donation of \$6.00 is requested per six-inch pot. Any amount over \$6.00 is gratefully accepted by Church Women to fund their church activities. Information and an order form will be included with the Sunday Bulletins. You may also order by phoning Pam or Mary.

**Give money and order form to Pam Carmack (485-4795) or Mary Haubrick (987-3604 by Sunday, December 14, 2014.**



## ST. PAUL'S REMEMBER OUR SHUT-INS

Cards, phone calls and especially visits are always appreciated by those who are confined to the indoors. Take some time to share Christian love and fellowship with the following:

Paul and Dorothy Stevens  
Shook Home #205  
55 South Second St.  
Chambersburg, PA. 17201

Margaret "Peg" Gordon  
Providence Place Room #342  
2085 Wayne Avenue  
Chambersburg, PA. 17202

Jean McLucas  
FCMC Extended Care – Overly Meadows  
214 Peach Orchard Road  
McConnellsburg, PA. 17233

Meril Fetters  
323 Reservoir Road  
McConnellsburg, PA. 17233

Jane Lamison  
Juniper Village – Room #107  
1640 South Black Horse Pike  
Williamstown, N.J. 08094

## THANK YOU FOR FILLING A SHOEBOX

Mary Haubrick reported that St. Paul's UCC filled 54 shoeboxes for the Samaritan's Purse Christmas Child Shoebox Ministry. A special thank you to the students of St. Paul's Children's Sunday School Classes and teachers for filling twelve boxes and writing letters to the children who will receive their gifts. Several generous donations were also made to help cover the cost of shipping the boxes. Thank you to everyone for your generous support of this outreach ministry that touches the lives of children in need worldwide.



## Special Offerings at Christmas

On **Sunday, December 21**, 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 543 retired UCC clergy/lay church employees in 2013. Monthly Pension Supplementation was provided to 408 persons. Quarterly Health Premium Supplementation was provided to 239 families. Emergency grants were sent to 65 individuals and families. All of these numbers have gone up since last year.

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 your gifts. Thank you!*

## 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 and Pam Carmack***

*Thank You for Serving!*

### St. Paul's Ushers

***Ruth and Jennifer Brubaker***

*Thank You for Serving!*

### Trinity's Ushers

***Rosie Shives and Barb Bricker***

*Thank You for Serving!*

## PRAYER LIST

Family of Harold Keefer  
 Family of Bob Lawyer  
 Family of Sarah Gordon  
 Family of Thelma Miller  
 Family of Warren Daniels  
 Family of Susan Ott  
 Family of Arnetta Mellott  
 Family of Roger Byers  
 Bob Carmack  
 Bertha Byers  
 Betty Daniels  
 Dorothy and Paul Stevens  
 Gary Stevens  
 Gene, Elsie and Barb Bricker  
 Joyce and Thurman Hassler  
 Military and families  
 Sponsored Children: Adrianus, Marc  
 Philip, Thierry, Marcela  
 Zeis family  
 Jean McLucas  
 Diane Baxter  
 Janis Cutchall  
 Kylene McLucas Arwood  
 All individuals and families affected by  
 cancer  
 All Sunday school classes  
***Please let us know of any changes, additions or  
 corrections to the Prayer and Birthday lists.  
 Thank you!***



### Harold E. Keefer

Trinity lost another beloved member on October 26, when Harold Keefer passed away at age 94. His gentle nature and sense of humor will be greatly missed and we grieve with his family, but we rejoice that God has relieved H.E. from his suffering and welcomed him into his heavenly kingdom.

# DECEMBER 2014



<b>Wednesdays</b>	Trinity's Choir practice, 7:00 p.m.; Prayer and Praise, 7:45 p.m.
<b>Thursdays</b>	St. Paul's <i>Joyful Noise</i> Band practice, 6:00 p.m.
<b>Monday, December 1</b>	Photos from Pastor Valeria's trip to South Dakota at St. Paul's, 7:00 p.m.
<b>Tuesday, December 2</b>	Fort Loudon Community Women's Christmas Party at the United Methodist Church, 6:00 p.m.
<b>Sunday, December 7</b>	Hanging of the Greens at St. Paul's after contemporary worship and lunch
<b>Tuesday, December 9</b>	Volunteers at Food Basket, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. Trinity's Consistory meeting, 7:00 p.m.
<b>Wednesday, December 10</b>	St. Paul's Church Women United meeting, 7:00 p.m.
<b>Sunday, December 14</b>	Trinity's Change collection for Hartman Center Live nativity at Freedom Lighthouse in Fort Loudon, 4:00 – 7:00 Hymn sing at Trinity followed by light refreshments, 7:00 p.m. Sunday, <a href="#">December 21</a> Children's <a href="#">Christmas</a> programs during worship at both churches Trinity's special offering for the Building Fund Special offering for the <a href="#">Christmas</a> Fund Community <a href="#">Christmas</a> Caroling in Fort Loudon, 1:00 p.m.
<b>Tuesday, December 16</b>	St. Paul's Consistory meeting, 7:00 p.m.
<b>Sunday, December 21</b>	Children's Christmas programs during worship at both churches Trinity's special offering for the Building Fund Special offering for the Christmas Fund
<b>Wednesday, December 24</b>	Christmas Eve service at Trinity, 6:00 p.m.; St. Paul's, 8:00 p.m.
<b>Thursday, December 25</b>	HAVE A MERRY CHRISTMAS!
<b>Sunday, December 28</b>	Trinity's Change collection for Hartman Center
<b>Thursday, January 1</b>	HAVE A BLESSED AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!
<b>Sunday, January 4</b>	Holy Communion St. Paul's contemporary worship and lunch Joint Consistory meeting at Trinity, 2:00 p.m.