
THE CORNERSTONE

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

www.stpaulsbirdsboro.org

February 2012

Our Calling in Service to Christ

*Nurture discipleship in those who claim
Christ;*

*Boldly love those whom Christ claims;
Passionately celebrate the living presence
of our Lord.*



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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Worship Schedule	Pg. 2
Mark Your Calendar	Pg. 3
Consistory Corner	Pg. 4
Around the Church	Pg. 6

OPEN TO GOD'S LEADING

My heart pours out in thanks giving for you and your faithfulness to Christ. As we entered into the Winter Congregational Meeting this last month, I had a profound sense of God's presence. Something deep inside of me spoke the truth that God was going to lead and direct that meeting, and that my calling was to watch, and listen, and see what God was birthing to life in front of our eyes. And how awe filled I was as I watched that truth lived out!

There was much to be fearful and anxious about going into that meeting. Changes abounded and financial pressures were true. Yet, I sensed that God would not allow us to succumb to the fear, and that God would not allow his church to be divided. Indeed, as God shielded us from our propensity to fear, I witnessed a shared willingness to be open to each other and to God to discover where God is leading.

I saw this work of God as a Search Team was fully established less than a minute after announcing the dissolution of the Personnel Team. Not only did the team form quickly, but its diversity of people is truly a gift of God. Such a group will certainly discern well our future music ministry. Additionally I saw God at work in the willingness to try out a new summer worship time. Instead of holding to tradition for tradition sake, we listened to the needs of each other to discover what might be right for this time in our life together. But most especially I saw God's presence alive in the small group discussions that filled most of our time.

For nearly an hour, we simply listened and shared with each other our deepest love and concerns for this church. Joy filled my soul as I listened to the various and passionate conversations that yearned for more time. In that moment, we allowed God to form us into his church. In those conversations we put away everything that has the power to divide, as together we strived for that which is greater than ourselves. In that moment we powerfully lived the truth that we are St. Paul's United Church of Christ and in this community everyone has a voice to be heard.

Through this work, I believe God's Spirit has been unleashed in a new way in our congregation. Do we still have pressing issues and concerns? You bet! There is still a great deal of work for us to do. But I believe we have begun to gain the sense that we must do this work together. In the richness of our diversity, surrendered before God for the sake of Christ, we will know power of God's kingdom in this place.

Praise be to the living God who is working in our midst!

Yours In Christ, *Pastor Joe*



As the One Church One Book discussions come to a close we are left with the questions, “What is our purpose in Christ?” Just like individuals, God has uniquely gifted our congregation for ministry. When we come to know what that gifting is, God’s Spirit powerfully moves through us in unexpected and joy filled ways. Therefore let us share in the worship of God’s living Word.

- † February 5th, 10:30am – **Scout Sunday: Service of Word & Sacrament** (pew) – Today we celebrate our Boy Scout Troop and the blessing and support it offers to young men in our community.
- † February 12th, 10:30am – **Service of Word: Coffee Hour Following Worship** – Share in the celebration of God’s love as our puppet ministry offers a Valentine’s message.
- † February 19th, 10:30am – **Transfiguration Sunday: Service of Word** – On this Compassion Sunday, hear how our three sponsor children are doing and how you too might make all the difference in a child’s life.
- † Wednesday, February 22nd, 7:30pm – **Ash Wednesday: Word & Sacrament** (pew) – Join in this unique worship of preparation, as we make ready our souls to follow Jesus to the cross.
- † February 26th, 10:30am – **Service of Word & Children’s Sermon** – The temptation of Christ rightfully gives us courage to believe that hope is offered even unto us.

What is the **UNITED CHURCH** O F C H R I S T *Part 1 of 4*

You know that your church is a part of the United Church of Christ. However, you might not know what that means beyond being part of the name of your church. You may hear of Association events, or Conference staff, or General Synod resolutions, but have no idea what any of that is about. In order to understand these things and the wider scope of the UCC, we need to have some understanding of how the UCC is organized.

The structure of the UCC is designed to promote a sense of partnership amongst churches at every level. The basic unit of the UCC is the local church. Local churches, like St. Paul’s, are ‘autonomous’ but not independent. Meaning they are free to choose their own way, but only through prayerful discussion and reflection with the wider UCC.

As part of the wider body of Christ, local churches are joined together in Associations for mutual support and accountability. Our Association is the Reading Association and incorporates 23 other local churches in and around the Reading area. Two of the closest churches are St. John’s in Gibraltar and St. Paul’s in Amity.

Associations are then gathered together into Conferences which provide pastoral and administrative support to pastors, churches and Associations. They also provide resources and programs for the up building of our collective ministry. More specifically they help churches looking for new pastors, provide leadership training opportunities, and give opportunity for regionally based spiritual retreats. Our Conference is the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference (PSEC) which runs from Philadelphia to Schuylkill County, and is composed of seven associations.

Every two years the 39 Conferences of the UCC send delegates to General Synod, which gives direction to the national settings of the denomination. This body speaks to local churches on matters of faith and practice, inviting further discernment and reflection as each congregation discovers and shares its revelations of God’s leading.

This structure then allows us to be church together: sharing wisdom, providing encouragement, and ensuring that we live out the prayer of Jesus that they all might be one.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- Feb 5th Scout Sunday
- Feb 12th Puppet Ministry
Coffee Hour following Worship
- Feb 19th Compassion Sunday
Last day for Hoagie orders
- Feb 22nd ASH WEDNESDAY
Worship Service 7:30pm
- Feb 24th & 25th Hoagie Sale Pick-up
10:30am - noon
- Feb 29th Sanctuary Open for Prayer Time
7:00am – 8:00am

**Weekly Bulletin Announcements
Due Wednesday's by Noon**

LENT BEGINS FEBRUARY 22nd

You are invited to share in the power of Lent this year. Lent is the season of kneeling at the feet of Jesus to discover what it means to be made alive. At the same time it is the season in which we discover just how great is the love of God for us.

Join in this journey to life by participating in the 7:30pm Ash Wednesday service on Feb. 22nd, by dedicating yourself to 5 minutes of daily prayer, and even possibly by choosing to read through one of the four Gospels.

These forty days are a time of rich possibility. May your heart be opened to receive God's blessing.

E-NEWS STAY CONNECTED

The E-News is a weekly reminder and update of the activities coming up in the near future. You can sign up and unsubscribe to the list at any time. Simply go to www.stpaulsbirdsboro.org and click on the E-News Sign Up.



WEATHER CANCELLATION Policy for Worship & Sunday School

Notice of cancellation, whenever possible, will be posted by Sunday morning at 8am on the website, church answering service message, 69news, and Y102FM. Please note the TV and radio station reserve the right to broadcast or not broadcast our cancellation notices.

2012 GIVING ENVELOPES

By now everyone should have received their 2012 offering envelopes. If you have not, please contact the church office.

ENDING OF MAILED NEWSLETTER

With the congregational vote approving the 2012 financial mission plan, the church will begin the practice of mailing newsletters only to homebound members. All other individuals can receive a hard copy of the newsletter at the entrances to the church or by viewing it online. (To receive a notification of a newsletter posting please be sure to submit your e-mail address to the church office.) If you are not receiving a newsletter and believe you ought to be, please contact the church office.

DEAR FRIENDS IN CHRIST,

Were *you* part of St. Paul's winter congregational meeting? I hope so! If you were there, you had the opportunity to participate in some excellent discussion – conversations that were honest, thought-provoking, and inspiring. At the same time, people also had opportunities to make new friendships, and to deepen old ones.

In the weeks and months ahead, you will be hearing from Pastor Joe and from others of the congregation just what was on people's hearts and minds. And I assure you, the Spirit was breathing new and fresh life in our midst! Here's how one of these wonderful insights was expressed:

We, at St. Paul's, need to strengthen our core.

Carole Audette shared this expression with me, after Dane Dierwechter came up with the phrasing during their small-group discussion. I think it's exactly right. In the same way we strengthen the core, or center, of our physical bodies, we need to build up ourselves spiritually.

And many of the discussion groups, using their own words, came to this same conclusion: we need a strong core! It's only by building our spiritual strength that we can hope to grow, both as individual disciples of Christ and as a congregation.

Among the suggestions on how we at St. Paul's can challenge ourselves to *strengthen our core* were these two central thoughts: We can find ways to deepen our fellowship with one another. We can also face our spiritual hunger, and do something about it.

Hear this direct call to our congregation, from Paul's letter to the Ephesians:

We are to speak the truth in love, growing up in every way into Christ our head, from whom the whole body is joined together, and so grow as a body that builds itself up in love.
(adapted from Ephesians 4. 15-16)

May this be our call, and our challenge to *strengthen our core*!

In the Spirit of the Lord,
Janeen Adil

CONSISTORY CORNER

- Met with Mary Mazzone from Hopewell Love INC to strengthen our relationship with one another. Many thanks were given for our longstanding support.
- Approved letter of transfer request for Dick Green to Trinity UCC, Mt. Penn
- Loosed Bo Robinson from the covenant of membership
- Identified 38 members to be pursued over the next 9 months in an attempt to rebuild relationship
- Many celebrations lifted up around the congregational meeting and the powerful impact of the small group discussions
- Noted that the Furnace conversion is nearly complete though some details will take a few more weeks to fully resolve.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- The furnace conversion work is in progress and is expected to be completed soon. The “Fuel the Furnace” Campaign will continue in order to raise the necessary funds to decommission the underground oil tank. This is a needed step to ensure that the tank does not leak and contaminate the soil or ground water.
- The summer worship time was changed from 9am to 9:30am. This worship time will take effect following Memorial Day weekend and will continue through Labor Day weekend.
- A slightly better than anticipated ending balance for 2011 was reported which will provide a little financial flexibility in 2012. The official close of books for 2011 is January 18th.
- Six individuals answered the call to form a Music Director search team. The team members include: Sherry Hunter, Eloise Stevens, Robin Long, Janeen Adil, Joan Weaver, and Jonathan Audette
- Small group discussions provided powerful insight to the concerns and challenges facing our congregation and the need to join together for the rich call God has placed upon our congregation. More opportunities for discussion and dialogue are likely to occur throughout the year to add to the blessings.
- The 2012 Financial Mission Plan was passed as presented. The staffing changes will fully take effect as job descriptions are modified. The passing of the budget, as presented, also means the ending of mailed newsletters to all but home bound members.
- The ending of Wanda Druzba’s and Denise Cisick’s service as Consistory members was honored. It was also noted that their vacancies will not be filled till the June congregational meeting.
- Harold Myers was elected as Consistory Secretary
- The calling of Julie Essig as interim Organist was celebrated. Julie’s contract runs till the end of June.
- The calling of Megan Myers as the new church bookkeeper was also celebrated.

General Fund December Financial Report

	<u>2011 YTD</u>	<u>Previous YTD</u>
Starting Balance	\$9,864	\$10,259
Blessings Received (Income)	\$142,173	\$139,220
Ministry Investments Made (Expenses)	(\$150,159)*	(\$139,615)
Ending Balance	\$1,878	\$9,864

**The difference in expenses between 2011 and 2010 is largely due to a change in accounting for quarterly bill payments. Therefore, 2010 only had three quarterly bills, while 2011 had four.*



REFORMING CHOIR INTEREST

At the congregational meeting there was a clear and univocal desire build up our choir and music ministry. February 12th will be your first chance to explore what that might mean. That day, following worship, we will be holding a gathering for individuals interested in discussing the next steps in our choir ministry. Pastor Joe and our Interim Organist will be there to answer questions and facilitate the discussion.

This gathering is open to individuals of all ages and every ability. Simply gather for the coffee hour where we will begin the conversation of our next steps in the choir music ministry.

BOY SCOUTS

Boy Scout Troop 595 held their Court of Honor in December 2011. On Sat. Jan.14, 2012 the Boy Scouts put on a Klondike Derby for the cub scouts. Fun was had by all. We are having a camping outing on Fri. Jan. 27 – Sun. Jan 29, 2012, Bernville Camping/BSA Klondike Derby at Hawk Mountain Scout Reservation. Feb. 5, 2012 is Scout Sunday at the 10:30 am service, and on Fri. Feb. 24 – Sat. Feb 25, 2012 we will be doing a hoagie sale with St. Paul's for a fundraiser to help us pay for Boy Scout camp at Hawk Mountain in the summer.

LET'S GO FISHING! *How To Grow Your Church*

We are looking for 7 people excited to give of their *time* to learn how to grow our church!

Workshop: Held Friday May 4th (6:30-9pm) and May 5 (9am-4pm) at Mensch Mill (40 minutes north of Birdsboro).
To register, please contact Pastor Joe

Because of its powerful impact in September, the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference will again be offering a 2-day workshop on Church Growth. Entitled "Let's Go Fishing" this practical, intuitive, and relationship building approach to growing a church is accessible to everyone. Centered in a commitment to caring for people, instead of a hard sell, you will learn ways to connect with your community, grow relationships, and provide meaningful ways for individuals to become a part of your congregation.



**St. Paul's UCC &
Boy Scout Troop 595
Hoagie Sale
February 24th & 25th**



Order deadline is February 19th

****Pickup time is between 10:30am and 12:00 noon****

We need help both days any time from 7am until 12 noon.

**Questions: Contact Dee Christman at (610) 326-4985 of St. Paul's UCC or
Jackie Herring (610) 582-3926 of Boy Scout Troop 595**

CHANGES AHEAD FOR OUTREACH

Over the past few years, I have regularly provided – through the bulletin, newsletter, and congregational announcements – updates on the ministries being undertaken by the Outreach Ministry Team. It's been exciting to communicate to the congregation the good and important work that is being done in our midst! These updates have included both celebrations for the many projects this Team has completed and also acknowledgement of the challenges we've faced, those projects which simply need more time, money, and people to bring to fruition.

Perhaps it was a surprise, then, to read in the congregational meeting packet that I have released myself from Outreach leadership. This decision was made, of course, in discernment and over a period of time – and in fact, it's been a long time coming. There are others who are also releasing themselves from this particular Ministry Team. We are doing so in order to focus more fully on God's calling of us in new ways.

Naturally, then, this is a time of transition and re-assessment. We know that some of Outreach's ministries will be wrapped into Worship and perhaps into other Teams, as well. And some of our work will be carried on by individuals or small task-force groups for whom a particular issue or short-term ministry holds great importance.

Even as change is taking shape, the bigger questions remain: How do we – as individual disciples of Christ and as a gathered congregation – live out our lives in a ministry of outreach and evangelism? How do we in fact share the Good News that God has brought into our lives through Christ our Lord? For we all have a story to tell – and there is someone aching to hear that story, one of promise and love and redemption.

I welcome any conversation, whether a question, a concern, or a vision for the future!

In Christ,
Janeen Adil

December 22nd, 2011

Dear Pastor Joe,

Greetings from Bethany Home! During the holiday season, we are blessed with the support of our friends who wasn't to make Christmas special for our kids. We appreciate your willingness to purchase gifts for our kids and brighten their Christmas morning.

Through the generous support of individuals, like you, all of the kids at Bethany will have a wonderful Christmas this year. They will be sure to enjoy the presents you have provided.

May your holiday season and New Year be filled with joy, peace & love!

Sincerely,
Jon Henning

Thank You!

Dear Pastor Joe,

Many thanks for your continued outreach to help our needy students and families (through your Christmas food basket collection). Your generosity brought tears to the eyes of the parents who otherwise would not have food for Christmas dinner.

Sincerely,
Ann Marie Traymor
Daniel Boone School District

NEWS OF HANDS OF HOPE

It's hard for me to believe that the Hands of Hope is going into it's 6th year, and that we have our 5th mission trip coming up this June. A big *thank you* to everyone for their continued support of the necessary and worthwhile work that is being done. We will continue this year, to be involved in our community as well as in the mission field. Part of our community involvement is in conjunction with our adopted school, Daniel Boone Elementary Center. Two ways in which you can serve if you so desire, is to assist in their Backpack Program, which helps struggling families right in our own area by filling backpacks with food on Thursday afternoons to be distributed at the end of the school day on Friday to be sent home with children whose families are need of a helping hand in this struggling economy. If you are interested in helping to pack the backpacks, see Pastor Joe to find out more about this service opportunity. And as we had done at Christmas time with the food baskets, we will also be seeking donations for food baskets at Easter time as well. Pastor Joe has been a helpful liaison between the Elementary School, and HoH to ascertain more ways that we, as a group and a congregation can better show ourselves as a light in this community.

We also continue our ministry of service through our work with Opportunity House. We have 4 dates this year that we will be cooking and serving meals to the homeless. Our first date for this year is Saturday, February 25th. We will be serving lunch. If anyone is interested in helping to cook and/or serve, or if you are interested in making a food donation in support of the luncheon menu please contact me for more information at 610-507-6500 or nancystoner@hotmail.com.

Our destination for the mission trip this year is Frakes, KY. We will be working with the wonderful folks who run the community service organization of Henderson Settlement. If anyone believes that they might be interested in participating in this year's trip, I am looking for confirmation of that by no later than February 12th, so that I will be able to ensure that there are enough bunks available for all. For more information on the trip see me or contact me.

As Janeen Adil our Consistory President recently said, and it has struck a chord with me, "We must all have the courage to be who we are!" Thank you to all of the individuals involved in the Hands of Hope these last few years who have been courageous enough to be part of something that has grown more meaningful to me than I ever believed it could.

Blessings,
Nancy Stoner

December 21st, 2011

Dear Pastor Motz:

On behalf of Opportunity House and the individuals who receive our services, we are writing to thank you for making our holiday season a bit brighter through your generosity and support. With the kindness such as yours, a dream becomes a reality for parents like Sonia, Juan and Michele who can be assured safe and affordable childcare for their children at the Second Street Learning Center. You've helped families like the Stevensons, who are in need of professional services through the Children's Alliance Center/CASA, and you've helped individuals like John, who seeks guidance and encouragement to overcome difficult obstacles, through The Shelter and Supportive Housing.

Our staff and volunteers take great pride in the work that is getting done at Opportunity House. We appreciate your partnership in helping to make a difference and welcome you to visit us.

Sincerely,
Modesto D. Fiume

ANNIVERSARIES

Prayer List

In Need of Healing

Diane Sanchez
 Andrew Kersikoski
 Charlie Chepak
 Sadie Laboy
 Velma Simpson
 Rock Colon
 Catherine Boyer
 Phil McGraft
 Kenny Christman
 Dean Echert
 Susan Covatta
 Larry Rismiller
 Karissa, Rem & Christian
 Edna Jones

Long Term Care

Linda Wolfgang
 June Baer
 Emily Amodei
 Judy Stone
 Carol Miller
 Melissa Scaltrito
 Charles Yahner
 Brooke Hetrick
 Peggy Umbach



Joys and Celebrations

Calling Julie Essig as interim Organist
 Calling Megan Myers as Church Bookkeeper

Loosened from Covenant of Membership

Bo Robinson

February

02/18/1989 Carole & Gilles Audette
 02/24/1951 Jeannette & John Marquet
 03/05/1983 Brenda & Tom Hessels
 03/13/1971 Wanda & Paul Druzba
 03/24/1973 Susan & Tim McGee
 03/24/1990 Dorothy & Eric Dragan



February

02/01 Donna McQuate
 02/01 Jeffrey Stone
 02/02 Shaun Spittle
 02/04 Lorraine Long
 02/04 Andrew Bordic
 02/05 Amber Turner
 02/09 Tara Flanagan
 02/12 John Marquet
 02/12 June Baer
 02/13 Jeff Baker
 02/14 Dee Christman
 02/14 Stephanie Getty
 02/16 Kristin Baer
 02/17 Kathy Fister
 02/17 Megan Myers
 02/20 Emily Machermer
 02/23 Pat Smith
 02/24 Mitchell Rissmiller
 02/24 Andrew Dragan
 02/25 Betty Care
 02/27 Joseph Cisick
 02/28 Shirley Goheen
 02/28 Danielle Baer
 02/29 Martha Paine



WORSHIP LEADERSHIP SCHEDULE

WORSHIP DATE	WORSHIP STEWARDS	GREETERS	ACOLYTES	NURSERY	USHERS
February 5 th	Marty Darocha	Boy Scouts	Boy Scouts	Jeanie Dierwechter & Anna Oister	Nancy & Blaine Stoner Dawn & Dyck Fear
February 12 th	Tim McGee	Marty Darocha & Danielle Baer	Jacob Baker	Dawn Fear & Wanda Druzba	Eva Stone & Eloise Stevens
February 19 th	Robin Long	Paul & Wanda Druzba	Owen Powell	Denise Cisick & Rachel Statzell	John McQuate & Marty Darocha
February 22 nd Ash Wednesday	Janeen Adil	Robin Long	Jacob Baker		Wanda Druzba & Barb Kerper
February 26 th	Sherry Hunter	Megan & Harold Myers	Dakota Flanagan	Barb Kerper & Jean Johnson	Nancy Dragan & Robin Long

ST. PAUL'S UCC LEADERSHIP

Ministers of the Gospel of Christ

All Members

Supporting Ministers

Rev. Joseph Motz, Pastor • Luwaina Baker, Secretary • Julie Essig, Interim Music Director
Barbara Kerper, Sexton • Toni Powell, Treasurer • Megan Myers, Bookkeeper
Tim McGee, Financial Secretary

Consistory

Janeen Adil, President • Blaine Stoner, Vice President • Wanda Druzba, Secretary
Barbara Kerper • Dawn Fear • Denise Cisick • Pat Babel • Dyck Fear • Joe Cisick • Jeanie Dierwechter
Nancy Stoner • Toni Powell

Ministry Team Leaders

Jeanie Dierwechter, Buildings & Grounds • Toni Powell, Christian Education, • Dyck Fear, Finance
Nancy Stoner, Hands of Hope • Pat Babel, Puppet Ministry • Dawn Fear, Special Events • Rev. Joseph Motz,
Stewardship, Worship • Megan Myers, Stewardship • Robin Long, Helping Hands • Luwaina Baker, Vacation
Bible School, Stewardship • Sherry Hunter, Youth Group

To become more actively involved in the life and ministry of St. Paul's United Church of Christ in our mission to Nurture Discipleship, Boldly Love, and Passionately celebrate the living presence of our Lord, contact a ministry team leader or contact Pastor Motz to see where you might begin.