



The Courier

St. Paul's United Church of Christ of Indianland
DECEMBER, 2019



WAITING for CHRISTMAS

It is hard to think that in just a few short weeks we will be celebrating Christmas. We might remember when we were young how long a wait it seemed to be for Christmas to come. First the anticipation, then the joy, then the ???.

We read in our Bibles how God fulfilled the many prophecies that were spoken; about darkness turning to light. About a Messiah who would come to save God's people. About being prepared to welcome the One who comes in the name of our God. So, we enter into Advent preparing ourselves, expectantly waiting for the celebration of Christ's birth or His second coming to us.

Waiting is not something we are very fond of doing. Waiting for God is something we find difficult to understand and interpret its meaning. Yet that is what we now face and wait for; Christmas is coming, and it is coming soon. Joy to the World!

Some of us may be preparing for Christmas with an Advent calendar or special devotional for this waiting season. Others have moved through Advent and are in all out Christmas mode, celebrating, remembering, and even doing some necessary planning as well. The merchants are waiting for that purchasing frenzy that moves them into their profit for the year. And we who say we believe, we wait, we anticipate, we practice, we worship and yes, we wait. And God waits with us, He listens to our prayers, and He waits for us to come again into His presence. Coming each day and coming on the Sabbath to offer our thanksgiving and our praise for all that God has done, is doing, and will do for each of us.

My friends, as we wait during this season of Advent for what is to come and as we celebrate the Christmas miracle of love and life, let us prepare ourselves for a God who sent His Son to us for reconciliation and for reconnection to God. O come all you faithful, joyful and triumphant, for God is not only waiting for us. God is calling us, and God is expecting us, not only at this time of year, but all throughout our years on



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Christian Education News

Children's Program

The Annual Children's Christmas Program will take place during the regular Worship Service on **Sunday, December 22, 2019**. This will be a time for our children to tell the story of Jesus' birth. The Play our children/youth will be presenting is entitled "Christmas Gifts" by Tanis Harms and adapted by Anna Muhm.

On **Saturday, December 21**, there will be a day of rehearsal followed by the annual Christmas Party. We are hoping a special guest will be able to take time out from his busy schedule to visit here at St. Paul's. Please mark your calendars and plan to join us for this special day. If you have any questions, please see Beth Sikorsky.

Sunday School/Faith Formation: Adults Modeling Behavior for our children

I would like to invite all adults to attend the **Adult Faith Formation Class on Sunday Mornings at 9:00AM**. This is a chance to discuss and learn about the scripture passages we will hear in worship and in Pastor Nuscher's message. What a great way to understand more fully the message and possibly ask Pastor Nuscher questions about the passages. We didn't stop learning about our Christian Faith after confirmation, so let's model the need for continual learning and discussion. When we read scripture, or study the stories of Jesus' life among us, new ideas, understandings, or even seeing scripture in a new light is something that can happen when a group meets for discussion. We are **all** responsible for the Faith Formation of the people within our congregation. Faith Formation is a lifelong process. Our Christian Education Program **needs you** not only as teachers but also as students willing to learn and share your faith stories with our children/youth and also with other adults. We are the disciples of the 21st Century. If you have any questions, please see Beth Sikorsky.

A "NEW SERVICE" OPPORTUNITY

Our Sunday school has grown over these past few years. I see the faces of those children/youth who will one day help me see the face of Jesus through their love and support at St. Paul's. Before you know it the children in our nursery class will be graduating from high school then college or a career. Our teachers see them for one hour a week to help them know, guide and give them tools so they can have a personal relationship with our Savior and King, Jesus Christ. I know everyone in our congregation is happy to see all the young faces when they come forward for the Children's message. **Children in Sunday school and in our Worship service is wonderful news!** However, with additional younger new faces, comes the opportunity and continues the responsibility to **teach, guide, help, love, support, and care** for those younger new faces. The Christian Education of these children/youth will **not happen** unless we have teachers/mentors to teach them to know Jesus and to guide them in a deeper relationship with Jesus. As you read this article and **Jesus** is giving you that **calling nudge** to guide our children, please let me know and I will make sure you are able to share, guide, mentor and care for the children of God within our midst.

Sunday school Mission

This year seems to be passing so quickly. We are now in December and soon the ground will be white and perhaps even a White Christmas. With the Winter weather we will be putting on our

Church Happenings Now and Yet to Come

Ringers and Singers Needed

Our **2019 Cantata** is scheduled for **Sunday, December 15th** during the 10:30 am worship service. Those who are interested in singing with the Cantata choir are invited to join us on **Wednesday evenings at 7:00pm** in the Sanctuary. If you have any questions please see Robyn Hill on a Sunday morning.

For those who would like to ring bells, please speak to Dawn Vilanova. These **practices are on Saturday mornings at 9:00am.**

Financial Update

As we have now received financial information **through October** of this year, we are comfortable with our current financial situation, even though we are still in an overall deficit position in our General Fund. Here are some of the highlights of our financial year so far. Thank you to everyone for your continued generosity and support for the ministry and mission of St. Paul's church!

For the year, through October, we have spent **\$9,313 more** than we have received. Our overall deficit, however, is **\$2,270** better than it was at the same time last year. There are a few significant factors that are contributing to this as well as expense timing and those seasonal challenges we always face. **Last year**, at this time, **our deficit was \$11,582. Fuel oil** purchases and **snow removal** costs are a large expense from the winter season as well as grass cutting in the summer season which are all weather dependent. **Generosity and receipts through October are \$4,916 less than they were at this time in 2018** which is also contributing to our deficit position. We are hopeful that the November/December months will be as generous as they have been in the past as we celebrate the joy of Christ's birth and the greatest gift for our lives.

We offer our thanks to all of you for your generosity and support for the ministry of Jesus Christ in our midst, in our community and in the world. Blessings and peace to all as we celebrate God's love for us in Jesus Christ. We are looking forward to getting back to our full schedule and activity levels and for your participation with us. Blessings!

Confirmation Class

Confirmation class, online, is scheduled for **Monday, December 9th and 30th at 7:00pm.** Please contact Pastor Martin if you have any questions. His email address is pastor@indianland.org. Thank you.

Christmas Caroling

PRAYER LIST

Current Need:

Pauline Santee	Debbie Budinetz	Jessica Smith	Gary Geiss	Leon Borger
Dustin Miller	Sallie Weaver	Mark Thomas	Karen Hantz	Claudine Fritz
Joe Nierer	Angie	Robert Knot	Carol McDonald	Mike Hartman
Charlene and Michael Petruska		Theresa Carbonell	John Weaver	Jean Hankee
Robbie Moore	Nancy Costenbader	Judy Silnik	Evan Hantz	Nancy Green
Zachary Long	Courtney Bloom	Kristen Meeker	The Bauer Family	Kay Bolus
Pat Neff	Vicki Hall	Cole Ruch	Kevin Reilly	Nigel Mease/
Joseph Vadenya	David Jones	Linda Barkley	Aryiah	Becky
Harold Frable	Derrick Redcay	Jeff Reihoff	Donna Whitman	Charles Wagner
Linda Baumgartner	Logan Krick	Alyzah Borger	Jimmy Hurstman	Nadine Yakowy
Nadia Cosper	Julie Gelfuso	Jessica Harris	Kayla Bartholomew	Jeanette Haram
Stan Butz	The Thomson Family	Kim Rey	Sam Steinmetz	Faye Neff
Jim Miller	Howard & Ida Bachman	Edie	John Hine	Darlene Hock
Terry Carlton	Debbie	Keith Lenhart	Carol and Angela	Mike Miller
Carol Williams				

Longer Term Need:

Darryl Wentz	Tina Rehrig	Brandon Snyder	Franklin Dorshimer	Joe & Deb McGearry
Russell Blakeslee	Deborah Peterson	Dawn Stattler	Karen Bet	Bob Bakross
Michelle Brosious	George Borger, Jr.	Marion Bossard	Sharlene Weaver	Shirley Cressman
Smokey Hartzell	Lori Rader	Wanda Trexler	Susan Zachary	Joan Drey
Joanne Peters	Rose Lanus	Dorian Arnwine	Margo Roberts	Robert Custard
Vicki Eltz	Jeannie Yehl	Linda Becker	Laura Rannella	Gail Bauer
Noah Iucci	Lisa Dotson	Pat James	Amber Steffie	Corey Doolan
Katie & Maggie Paules	Karen White	Ryan Holmes	Peter Rosales	Clark Plummer
Janet Erickson	Cindy Hogman	Larry Rehrig	Gary Kresini	Louise King
Ashley Henninger	Mary Beatrice	Joan Cottier		
Richard Vesely	Pamela Martin			

Those Who Mourn

The family and friends of Warren Kuntz.
The family and friends of Bobbi Gordon.



DECEMBER 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:00A — Christian Education 10:30A — Worship Service	2	3 11:00A — WUFC at Blue Mountain Restaurant 7:30P — Elders	4 7:00P — Cantata Rehearsal	5	6	7 9:00A — Bell Choir Rehearsal
8 7:30A — Praise Worship Service 9:00A — Christian Education 10:30A — Worship Service	9 7:00P — Confirmation Class	10	11 7:00P — Cantata Rehearsal	12	13	14 9:00A — Bell Choir Rehearsal
15 9:00A — Christian Education 10:30A — Worship Service Cantata	16	17 7:00P — Consistory	18	19	20 January and February Newsletter Articles are Due!	21 10:00AM — Children's Program Rehearsal and Christmas Party
22 7:30A — Praise Worship Service 9:00A — Christian Education 10:30A — Worship Service Children's Program 5:30P — Christmas Caroling	23	24 3:00PM, 5:00PM and 11:00PM Christmas Eve Services of Carols, Communion and Candlelight		26	27	28
29 9:00A — Christian Education 10:30A — Worship Service	30 7:00P — Confirmation Class	31				

OFFICE HOURS: The office hours vary. Please call the office to schedule an appointment if you need to. General messages may be sent to office@indianland.org or call 610-767-5751. In Case of emergency, please contact Pastor Martin Nuscher at his home, 610-262-2906 or by email to pastor@indianland.org. Church website is www.indianland.org. Thank you.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

people & Places

Exceptional 80's Club:

- 1 — Debra Budinetz
- 9 — Janice Angstadt
- 12 — Connie Muschko
Alexia Drey
- 17 — Michael Graver
Devon Angstadt
- 18 — Marion Heffelfinger
- 19 — Tina Ressler
- 20 — Robert Shelly
- 22 — Cynthia Deppe
- 23 — Eli Nuscher
- 27 — Stephen Penchishen
Elliana Siegfried
- 28 — Robert Applegate
Charlene Petruska
Sierra Drey
- 29 — Keith Hantz

- 18 — Marion Heffelfinger
- 28 — Robert Applegate

Wedding Anniversaries

- 3 — Robert & Claudine Fritz —
53 years
- 4 — Monroe & Phyllis Balliet —
54 years



If we missed your birthday or anniversary, we apologize. Please contact the church office so we can add you to our listing! Thank you.



OUR MISSIONS

Noisy Offering for December is: Turning Point

Turning Point offers confidential resources to individuals and families.

Turning Point is a safe place where victims of abuse and their children can find refuge. We provide services in Lehigh and Northampton counties and reach nearly 2,600 people a year through our programs and services. Those include: a 24-hour Helpline, Emergency Safe House, Empowerment Counseling, Empowerment Groups, Legal Advocacy, Outreach Education, and Medical Advocacy.

All of our services are confidential and at no cost.

HELPLINE 24/7:

Local: 610-437-3369

Tollfree: 877-438-4957

TTY: 610-419-4594

Our Mission is to eliminate domestic violence in the Lehigh Valley through empowerment, education, and engagement.

If you have any questions or need our services, please call our 24/7 Helpline at (610) 437-3369 or (877) 438-4957. If you have general questions about our agency, its mission and work, please call our administrative offices at (610) 797-0530. We have bilingual staff available in English and Spanish. If there is another language, we have a translation line.

Turning Point of Lehigh Valley depends on the support and generosity of the community to sustain its programs for victims and survivors of domestic violence and their children.

There are many ways that you can help, including monetary donations, wish list items, and volunteering.

Please consider supporting the work of Turning Point. For more information, call 610-797-0530.

Your help allows us to bring safety and self-sufficiency to victims of domestic violence.

<https://www.turningpointlv.org> — Check out their website for additional information on donating, volunteering, getting assistance and learning about relationship abuse signs and what to do.

OUR MISSIONS

December Mission: The Christmas Fund

The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund is a Special Mission Offering that congregations have been supporting for over 100 years. The offering is administered through the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance, the charitable arm of the Pension Boards. Funds provide direct financial support to those who serve the church and are facing financial difficulties. Active and retired clergy, lay employees, and their surviving spouses may be eligible for the Supplementation of Small Annuities, Supplementation of Health Premiums, Emergency Grants, and/or Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks.

Our joy at Christmas is a response to God's promise of new life through the birth of Jesus. It is a joy we are called to share widely, through our witness and gifts, both to loved ones and to distant neighbors.

"It wasn't easy picking up the telephone to share with you my present situation. In fact, it was one of the most humiliating experiences of my life although it reminded me that grace still happens. Sometimes we as clergy persons lose sight of God's grace when the negative stuff comes into our lives."

"...thanks so much for sharing your time and ministry with me. Your most gracious gift is appreciated more than words can say as I continue to live in the 'meantime.'"

These eloquent words are from a pastor who is the recipient of the caring and concern of those who contribute to the Christmas Fund Offering.

You have the opportunity to be a part of this ministry that cares for the active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ through your participation in this year's Christmas Fund Offering.

Your gift to the Christmas Fund will not only assist pastors like the one above, but also provide for the Supplementation of Small Annuities, Supplementation of Health Premiums, Emergency Grants, and Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks next December to lower-income retirees.

Your gifts are needed more than ever to help the growing number of retirees whose low-income annuities make it difficult to meet increasing living costs. This is your opportunity to participate in God's promise of renewal by enabling this ministry of compassion and care.

2018: How the Funds Were Used:

379 lower-income retirees received a monthly Pension Supplement totaling \$1,435,050.

174 lower-income retirees received health premium supplementation totaling \$429,903.

Lay, Life and Work

Greetings from the LLW committee!! A special thank you is in order to anyone who has helped in any way during 2019 to make all of our events possible and widely successful. We are so blessed with all we have and do a great job of sharing our gifts with others.

This year, **St. Paul's will participate in a Giving Tree** to welcome the holiday season. A Christmas Tree will be in the Narthex with gift ideas for purchase to assist a family from Lehigh Elementary by providing Christmas gifts. **Please take a star with an item idea, purchase the item and return the item with the tag attached to church by Sunday Dec 15th.** Gifts will be delivered to Lehigh in time for Christmas.

Family Game Night on Friday, November 15th, 2019 was a fun time fellowshiping indoors with games and dinner. This is an opportunity to fellowship with others while enjoying a simple dinner and games. The next date will be planned for some time in January since December is such a busy month.

A **tithe of \$150** was sent to Dream Come True from the **DCT event and the Chili Dinner**. The Chili Dinner was enjoyed by many who were able to enjoy fellowship and a delicious meal. A **tithe of \$276** was divided equally between Allentown Rescue Mission and Bethany Children's Home from the **Gift Card BINGO** profit. We again had a wonderful day for BINGO with many happy winners.

The **College Care Package boxes** were sent mid November and bags are ready for delivery to local students.

The **Filling sale** was again well received and there will be plenty of food to share during the **Community Thanksgiving Dinner on Thursday, November 28th, 2019**. Thank you to all who will help in any way to provide to those in need of a home-cooked meal.

It is hard to imagine that 2020 is right around the corner but it is quickly approaching. **A Soup Sale will be held in January** with details to follow in the bulletin. **The Spaghetti Dinner and Donut sale will follow in February** with details available soon.

The next meeting will be held Wednesday, January 8th, 2020 after Worship and Arts.

THANK YOU EVERYONE!!!

Additional News For the Ladies

Women United for Christ

The ladies met on November 12 in the Fellowship Hall. The date of the next meeting will be **Tuesday, December 3**. This date was changed from December 10 which was reported last month. The meeting will be **held at the Blue Mountain Family Restaurant** in Danielsville and members will meet at the restaurant at **11 a.m.**

The report was given for the holiday sweet roll sale and it was a very successful sale. The rolls were delivered on November 21. **Thank you to everyone who purchased rolls and to those who were willing to gather orders for WUFC.** We are thankful for the extra help and support.

The **Christmas card box for members** to exchange greetings will be placed in the Narthex on Sunday, November 24th. You may bring in your holiday greetings up to **Sunday, December 15**. Donna Henninger and Phyllis Geiss will sort the cards and distribute them on **Sunday, December 22, and on Christmas Eve**. Take advantage of the card project and save postage!

The ladies made a contribution to the church fuel fund and a donation was made to Bethany Children's Home. The ladies served a funeral luncheon on November 4. They will also help to provide refreshments for the Homecoming Sunday on November 24.

There will be no regular meetings during the winter months and meetings will resume again in spring. Watch future newsletters for more information.

Worship Information

December 1st — 1st Sunday of Advent

Flowers: None Presented.

Bulletins: Presented by Pat and Carl James to the Glory of God.

OT: Isaiah 2: 1 — 5

NT: Romans 13: 11 — 14

Gospel: Matthew 24: 36 — 44

Greeters: Steph and Leon Prutzman

December 8th — 2nd Sunday of Advent

Flowers: None Presented.

Bulletins: Presented by the Drey Family for Alexia Skye Drey's birthday.

OT: Isaiah 11: 1 — 10

NT: Romans 15: 4 — 13

Gospel: Matthew 3: 1 — 12

December 15th — 3rd Sunday of Advent and

Cantata Sunday

Flowers: The first vase is presented by the Family Trust Fund in memory of Emma Gabel.

Bulletins: Presented by Pat and Carl James to the Glory of God.

OT: Isaiah 35: 1 — 10

NT: James 5: 7 — 10

Gospel: Matthew 11: 2 — 11

Greeters: Steph and Leon Prutzman

December 22nd — 4th Sunday of Advent and

Children's Program

Flowers: The first vase is presented by Pastor Martin, Ellen and Max Nuscher for Eli's 18th birthday tomorrow.

The second vase is presented by Charlene and Mike in memory of the Matuskowitz family and George Petruska.

Bulletins: Presented by Lisa Stroh in honor of all the children that performed in today's Sunday school Christmas Program.

OT: Isaiah 7: 10 — 16

NT: Romans 1: 1 — 7

Gospel: Matthew 1: 18 — 25

December 29th

Flowers: None Presented.

Bulletins: Presented by the Drey Family for Sierra Nicole Drey's birthday.

OT: Isaiah 63: 7 — 9

NT: Hebrews 2: 10 — 18

Gospel: Matthew 2: 13 — 23

Greeters: Steph and Leon Prutzman



The Consistory for December is Charlene Petruska and Dawn Vilanova.



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Submissions for **The Courier** are welcome at any time. If you have submissions please contact the church office by phone or email before the 20th of the preceding month.

Thank you for taking the time to “catch up” with St. Paul’s UCC of Indianland. We look forward to seeing you soon at worship or anywhere else God has our paths cross!

Celebrating Our 271st Anniversary —1748-2019



Please note that the next Courier for publication will be the **January/February 2020 newsletter**. Please plan your submissions accordingly and submit them by **December 20th**. If there are any questions or concerns please call the office at **610-767-5751** or email them to **office@indianland.org**. **Thank you very much.**

Traditional Worship Service — Sundays at 10:30 am—the 1st Sunday of each month is Holy Communion

Christian Education Hour— 9:00 am every Sunday

Praise Contemporary Worship — 2nd and 4th Sundays at 7:30 am—Holy Communion served

Please send any prayer requests to office@indianland.org or call and leave them on our answering machine at 610—767—5751. We love to **PUSH**—that is **Pray Until Something Happens**.