

TODAY AT ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Worship Leadership

Preacher: The Rev. John Ward-Diorio

Lector: 8:15 Joanne Miller

10:30 Deb Cashman

Ministry of Music

Organist: Sarah Myers

Minister of Music: Eric Dundore

Ministry of Service

Head Usher: Michael Gray

8:15 Richard and Michael Gray

10:30 Susan and Ronald Gabriel

10:30 Christine and Dave Grice

Greeters: 8:15 Carol and Bill Sizemore

10:30 Lois and Dave Ritter

Acolyte: 8:15 Mike Brown

10:30 Slater Ward-Diorio

Nursery:

Flower Delivery: Jim and Joan Quick

Fellowship Time: Plymette Family

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

626 Williams Grove Road

Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

717/766-7931

Web: saintpaulsucc-mech.org

Office email: stpaulstaff@verizon.net

John's email: revjohnwd@verizon.net

Welcome to St. Paul's United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

December 13, 2009

**Third Sunday
in Advent**



SHARING THE LIGHT



*Water &
the Holy Spirit*

Sacrament of Holy Baptism

GOD IS STILL SPEAKING

No Matter Who You Are, or Where You Are on Life's Journey You are Welcome Here!



ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
SERVICE OF WORSHIP

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 13, 2009

THE RINGING OF THE CHIMES
THE GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
THE PRELUDE AND LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

Organ "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" Smith

*THE CALL TO WORSHIP (Call and Response) From "O Come, O Come Emmanuel"

*THE HYMN NO. 107 "Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn" (vs. 1,2 & 4)

THE PRAYER OF INVOCATION (Unison)

Gracious God, help us to see how giving to others offers us an opportunity to connect more deeply with You and know the joy You seek for us to feel. Amen.

THE CALL TO CONFESSION:

We mostly live in fear of not having enough. When we are called to share half of what we have or even less, we recoil. When we are advised to be satisfied with what we earn and not to seek to cheat others in order to get more, we wonder why we should act differently than anyone else. Yet Scripture is filled with such calls, and they echo down to us today. Let us join in the unison Prayer of Confession.

THE PRAYER OF CONFESSION(Unison)

Merciful God, we have sinned in what we have thought and said, in the wrong we have done, and in the good we have not done. We have sinned in ignorance: we have sinned in weakness: we have sinned through our own deliberate fault. We are truly sorry. We repent and turn to You. Forgive us, for our Savior Christ's sake, and renew our lives to the glory of Your Name. Amen.

THE SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

THE WORDS OF ASSURANCE (responsive)

Minister: God receives our apologies and repentance, and has assured us that our sins are forgiven.

All: Let us receive and pursue the new lives, which Jesus showed were possible for all of us. Amen.

*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

*THE GLORIA PATRI



The **Mitten Tree** is in the Common. Don't forget to bring mittens, gloves and scarves for all ages not only to decorate the tree but to help bring warmth to those in need. Items collected will be taken to New Hope Ministries. Deadline to drop off is **Sunday January 3rd**.



If you have not paid for your poinsettia (\$6.25 each), please place your payment, in the offering plate or drop off at the Church Office, make sure you mark Poinsettia on the envelope. Thank you for purchasing the flowers that will help beautify the Sanctuary on Christmas Eve.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS for St. Paul's Annual Pork and Sauerkraut Dinner on Sunday, January 17, 2010. There will be one worship service on this day at 10:30, followed by the annual meeting and then a delicious pork and sauerkraut dinner in FH. Plan to stay and enjoy a wonderful meal and fellowship. Please see signup sheet on the bulletin board in the common area.

THE 2010 ENVELOPES are on the table in the Common area. Please pick up your box of envelopes and any of those that you can deliver. If you don't see yours, please check with Terry in the church office. Thank you.

Thank You Cards

Dear St. Paul Friends, It is with sincere appreciation that I write this note of thanks for your generous gift for my "retirement" as Director of Educational Ministries. The surprise reception on November 22 was truly a surprise! It's a great feeling to be a part of such a wonderful community of caring individuals. Thank you from the bottom of my heart! Jonneke Dundore.

Thank you so much for the beautiful Poinsettia on Sunday December 6th. Our only hour of peace and calm is Sunday AM and to get the flower was icing on a beautiful Service and Day – Wishing You All a Blessed Christmas and a Joyous New Year; Hugs and Prayers, Peggy and Don Seiler.

God so loved...He gave...You so loved, you gave. Thank you! Thank you on behalf of the family and families whom your gifts will incredibly bless; and thank you from the staff and volunteers of New Hope Ministries for allowing us the privilege of extending your gifts to them and sharing in their joy.

For 107 years, the **Christmas Fund Offering** for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund has been a way in which we, as members of the United Church of Christ and its predecessor bodies, have embodied Christ's compassion and care to those who serve our church. Our gifts are needed more than ever to help the growing number of retirees whose lower-income annuities make it difficult to meet increasing living costs. Specifically the funds go to monthly pension supplementation, quarterly health premium supplementation and emergency grants to families in need. The number of persons receiving assistance and the total assistance payments fluctuate on a monthly basis. This offering is our opportunity to participate in God's promise of renewal by enabling this ministry of compassion and care. **The Christmas Fund offering will be collected on December 20, 2009.** Please give to the best of your ability.

ST. PAUL'S CHRISTMAS MUSICALE will take place **next Sunday, December 20th** at the one 10:30 service. We will need several non-speaking actors and lots of children to carry the stick puppets and banners. Please see the sign-up chart in the common area. You **MUST** be able to attend the one and only rehearsal from 9:00-12:00 Saturday morning, December 19. All elementary children are invited and encouraged to be part of this enriching and fun activity. Preschool children are also invited, ages three and up, as parents think they are ready and would enjoy participating. Youth not singing in the choir are also needed to help direct! If you have any questions, please see Holly.

Thursday Evening Advent Discussions will conclude this Thursday, December 17, from 7 to 8:30 PM in the parlor. Missing a week will not hinder your ability to take part in the discussion. We will take the time to light candles on an Advent Wreath, offer some prayers, listen to some music and in general prepare together for the coming of the Christ Child. I hope to see you there. Peace, John

Living the Questions - The Adult 2 Sunday School class begins a new series called *Living the Questions*. *LtQ* is a study for the countless people of faith who have suffered in silence as the voices of fear and false certitude claim to profess the unchanging truth of Christianity. *LtQ* is a video and discussion series, providing a resource for discussing what is already believed and practiced by many faithful people still holding on within institutional religion while harboring a conviction that what some churches teach isn't the whole story. The short video includes comments from Jack Shelby Spong, Marcus Borg, John Domminic Crossan and many more. The questions addressed are the everyday questions that arise in churches, even ours. *LtQ* seeks not to provide easy answers, but serve as a resource for people who are in the midst of a life-long journey to discover the mysteries of faith and life. Join us as we discover new ideas and ways of living faithful! For more information, contact Shirley Keith Knox at 697-6946 or at skeithknox@comcast.net.

PRAYER OF BLESSING (Unison)

May God's grace be upon these shawls...warming, comforting, enfolding and embracing. May these mantles be safe havens...sacred places of security and well-being...sustaining and embracing in good times as well as difficult ones. May the ones who receives these shawls be cradled in hope, kept in joy, graced with peace, and wrapped in love. Blessed Be!

LIGHTING OF THE THIRD ADVENT CANDLE (Please see Insert—Both Services)

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM (8:15 Service Only)

Presentation of the Water

Gathering of Witnesses

Baptismal Address

Questions for the Candidate's Parents

Congregational Assent (unison)

We, as members of St. Paul's United Church of Christ and the Church Universal, hear your promises with joy and gladly welcome you as sisters and brothers in Christ into the family of faith. We covenant with you to share in the hopes, labors and joys of the Christian life, supported by God's love through this congregation.

We will weep with you when you weep, rejoice with you in your rejoicing, and encourage your growth in the new life Christ gives. These things we promise in the name and spirit of Jesus, our Savior. Amen.

Prayer of Blessing

Act of Baptism

Prayer for the Baptized

Procession

Let us offer a special welcome on her Baptism Day to Mackendra Lillian Shea and to her parents Tracy and Michael Shea, and her big sister Mackenzie.

Sing the Baptism Party to their seats: #325 "Child of Blessing, Child of Promise" (8:15 Only)

THE EPISTLE SCRIPTURE READING

Philippians 4:4-7

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 12:2-6

THE RESPONSE

One: God is still speaking.

All: Thanks be to God!

THE GOSPEL READING AND MESSAGE

Luke 3:7-18

"What Should We Do?"

*THE HYMN (10:30 Service Only) NO. 115 "The Baptist Shouts on Jordan's Shore" (vs. 1-3)

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER (unison)

(Debts and Debtors)

THE CHORAL RESPONSE (unison)

Lord, listen to your children praying, Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying, send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

THE OFFERTORY

8:15 Organ "Song of the Watchman"
10:30 Hand Chime Choir

Grieg

*THE DOXOLOGY (#780)

*THE PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

We rejoice, O God of peace, in the privilege of giving without fear. You come to us daily with blessings too numerous to count. You are the Holy One whose presence relieves our anxieties, feeds our hungers, and stirs our compassion. Through our offerings, we express our gratitude. As we give of ourselves, we respond to Your call to bear fruit and to make Your name known among the nations. Thank You for accepting all we offer. Amen.

*THE HYMN NO. 110 "Now Bless the God of Israel"

*THE BIDDING TO MISSION

*THE WORLD PEACE PRAYER

One: Lead us, O God.

All: Lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth.

Lead us from despair to hope, from fear to trust.

Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace.

Let peace fill our hearts, our world, our universe. Amen.

*THE BENEDICTION

THE POSTLUDE "Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates"

Ritter

*Those who are comfortable doing so are invited to stand.

We welcome warmly all who are visiting with us. Please register your attendance on the Friendship Form so that others may greet you in the name of the Living Christ. The person at the end of the pew should place the finished sheet in the offering plate.

References:

The Prayer of Confession is from A New Zealand Prayer Book, The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia, 1997, HarperSan Francisco.

The Prayer of Blessing is by Janet Bristow, 2008, www.shawlministry.com.

The Prayer of Dedication is from Gathered by Love, by Lavon Bayler, 1994, United Church Press.

."The World Peace Prayer" is a paraphrase of a verse from the Upanishads, the most ancient scriptures of Hinduism, and is also prayed daily by Roman Catholic Benedictine Sisters.

ALTAR FLOWERS

The altar flowers are given to the Glory of God

CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK OF December 13th – 20th 2009

TODAY 8:15/10:30 am Worship Services/Lighting of 3rd Advent Candle/
Blessing of the Prayer Shawls
Mackendra Shea Baptism @ 8:15 Service

9:00 am Choristers

9:15 am Sunday School

11:30 am Budget Meeting after 10:30 service (Sanctuary)

Pollyanna Cookie Walk after both services (FH)

Christmas Gift Wrapping after both services (FH)

3:00 pm Crafts and Cookies (FH and Rm 7/8)

MON

6:00 pm PFLAG Covered Dish Dinner (FH and Kitchen)

7:00 pm Bible Study @ Donna and Ron Chronister's

TUES

12:00 pm Pollyanna's Annual Christmas Lunch @ Mary Louise
Millers.

5:30 pm TOPS (Rm 13)

6:00 pm MASH Color Guard (FH)

7:00 pm Consistory (Rm 7/8)

WED

6:00 pm Hand Chime Choir (Rm. 5)

6:30 pm Youth Choir (S)

7:15 pm Chancel Choir (S)

THUR

7:00 pm Advent Discussion (Parlor)

FRI

7:00 pm Scouts (FH)

SAT

9:00 am Christmas Musicale Rehearsal (Sanctuary)

11:00 am FH/Kitchen in Use till 6pm (Pat and Greg Miller)

SUN DEC 20th

10:30 am Worship-Christmas Musicale/
Lighting of 4th Advent Candle

9:15 am Sunday School

MON 21st

Epistle Deadline

ANNOUNCEMENTS

POLLYANNAS Christmas Luncheon will be held on Tuesday, December 15th at Mary Louise Miller's at 12:00 noon. Please let Mary Louise know if you will be attending (766-6615).



CONTRIBUTIONS for the year 2009 must be in the church office by December 31, 2009. Monies received after the start of 2010 will be booked as a 2010 contribution.

Please try to pay your 2009 Altar Flower or Child Sponsorships by December 31st. If you have questions on your sponsorships, contact Terry in the Church Office. Thank You.

December 13, 2009



Tyler Derr
John and Jackie Diorio
Scott Eichman
Steven Keith
Les Gerber and Elaine McCracken
Clyde and Treva Miller
Dayne and Sue Miller
The Family and Friends of Dory Milletics
Steve Mitchell
Peg and Don Seiler
Clyde Strock
Susan and Natalie
Dave Thomas
Anna Thompson
All the people in the Middle East struggling for peace
All the people in the military and their families
All the people who have lost jobs and their families

Celebrations

Mackendra Lillian Shea's Baptism and Tracy, Michael and Mackenzie's, and the whole congregation's participation in this Sacrament.
Thanks to all the Pollyannas and all those who baked cookies or other goodies for the cookie walk.
Thanks for the volunteer gift wrappers.
Thank you to Betsy Rushong and Sue Mullin for creating Advent greens centerpieces and sharing them with some members of our congregation.
Thank you to Donna Chronister for coordinating and to everyone who purchased and donated gifts to the families associated with New Hope Ministries.

December 13, 2009



Tyler Derr
John and Jackie Diorio
Scott Eichman
Steven Keith
Les Gerber and Elaine McCracken
Clyde and Treva Miller
Dayne and Sue Miller
The Family and Friends of Dory Milletics
Steve Mitchell
Peg and Don Seiler
Clyde Strock
Susan and Natalie
Dave Thomas
Anna Thompson
All the people in the Middle East struggling for peace
All the people in the military and their families
All the people who have lost jobs and their families

Celebrations

Mackendra Lillian Shea's Baptism and Tracy, Michael and Mackenzie's, and the whole congregation's participation in this Sacrament.
Thanks to all the Pollyannas and all those who baked cookies or other goodies for the cookie walk.
Thanks for the volunteer gift wrappers.
Thank you to Betsy Rushong and Sue Mullin for creating Advent greens centerpieces and sharing them with some members of our congregation.
Thank you to Donna Chronister for coordinating and to everyone who purchased and donated gifts to the families associated with New Hope Ministries.

Lighting of the Third Advent Candle



JOY

8:15 Reading by Kathy and Art Williams
10:30 Reading by Leann, Tim and Zack Davinroy

SING THE READERS (Both Services) AND THE CHORISTERS (10:30 Service Only) TO THE FRONT Advent Hymn (Sung to the tune of Away in the Manger)

**A candle is burning, a candle of *Peace*;
A candle to signal that conflict must cease.
For Jesus is coming to show us the way;
A message of Peace humbly laid in the**

CHORISTERS (10:30 Service) "Prepare a Way for the Lord"

(8:15 & 10:30 Service) Everyone: **Thank you, God, for the gift of joy. Help us to recognize the moments of joy in our lives, and to live joyfully so that others may be filled with the joy that comes from knowing Jesus Christ. Amen!**

SING THE READERS (Both Services) AND THE CHORISTERS (10:30 Service only) TO THEIR SEATS Advent Hymn (Sung to the tune of Away in the Manger)

**A candle is burning, a candle of *Joy*;
A candle to welcome brave Mary's new boy.
Our ears fill with wonder and eyes light and glow
As Joy brightens winter like sunshine on snow.**

Lighting of the Third Advent Candle



JOY

8:15 Reading by Kathy and Art Williams
10:30 Reading by Leann, Tim and Zack Davinroy

SING THE READERS (Both Services) AND THE CHORISTERS (10:30 Service Only) TO THE FRONT Advent Hymn (Sung to the tune of Away in the Manger)

**A candle is burning, a candle of *Peace*;
A candle to signal that conflict must cease.
For Jesus is coming to show us the way;
A message of Peace humbly laid in the**

CHORISTERS (10:30 Service) "Prepare a Way for the Lord"

(8:15 & 10:30 Service) Everyone: **Thank you, God, for the gift of joy. Help us to recognize the moments of joy in our lives, and to live joyfully so that others may be filled with the joy that comes from knowing Jesus Christ. Amen!**

SING THE READERS (Both Services) AND THE CHORISTERS (10:30 Service only) TO THEIR SEATS Advent Hymn (Sung to the tune of Away in the Manger)

**A candle is burning, a candle of *Joy*;
A candle to welcome brave Mary's new boy.
Our ears fill with wonder and eyes light and glow
As Joy brightens winter like sunshine on snow.**