



Celebrate St. Paul's!



131 years of service

133 Church St. P.O. Box 177 Bowmansville, Pa. 17507 717-445-6256
www.stpaulsuccchurch.org Sunday Worship 10:30 am

Volume 14, Number 1
January 2018

What's Inside?

**Welcome 2018
Consistory**

**Congregational
Meeting**

Next Shelter Meal

**Grant Funds
Approved**

Next Messy Church

Sandwich Sale



There's More!

Imagine it's again Christmas Day. Your loved ones have gathered; everyone has shaken, weighed, and squeezed every package under the tree; and now it's time to open them. All settle in, the gifts are distributed, and the room resounds with the noise of tearing paper.

"Thank you! It's just what I wanted," someone cries.

"Wow, it's lovely!" another person exclaims.

"I'm going to put this to good use," says another.

You smile in return, pleased they're happy with your gifts. Then you notice no one has actually opened anything. They've all torn off the wrapping and delighted themselves with the unopened boxes.

"There's more!" you say. "Look inside!"

But they all refuse, disinterested in what the boxes contain. "I don't want anything else. This is perfect," Aunt Sally insists, lovingly stroking the unopened Amazon box containing the beautiful silk scarf you know she would love.

Your brother Steve is pressing down on his shoe box, testing its strength. "I think this will hold my laptop. I needed something to elevate it to the right height when I'm sitting at my desk." You cringe, knowing the box contains those gourmet barbecue sauces you bought on your trip to South Carolina.



Continued on page 2

Mission Statement

We, the congregation of St. Paul's United Church of Christ, who have accepted the gift of love and salvation through Jesus Christ, strive to take this message into the world through our prayers, words and deeds. We invite all people to accept these gifts with us.

There's More! ...continued from page 1

Your mom is holding her small box up to the light. You have waited a month to see her face when she glimpses the delicate necklace inside. And now, instead of opening the box, she says, "I think this is just about the same shade as the living room sofa. This will look so nice on the coffee table!"

After several more attempts to convince people to open the boxes, you realize it's futile. No one is even listening; they're enthralled with their new boxes. "We're happy with what you've given us," they say. "We really are. We don't want anything else." They're so eager to be satisfied by your gifts, they have convinced themselves the boxes are all they ever wanted. And all the joy you planned to give them is stuck inside those plain, ordinary boxes.

In the same way, many of us have lost our interest in what God will someday give us. We are so eager to be satisfied here and now that we turn our attention to the good things in our lives, and our constrained relationship with him, and insist our longings are fulfilled.

But they're not.

I don't care how peaceful, secure, or comfortable your life is. You live in a harsh, cruel world where humans can hurt and blithely devastate each other on any ordinary afternoon.

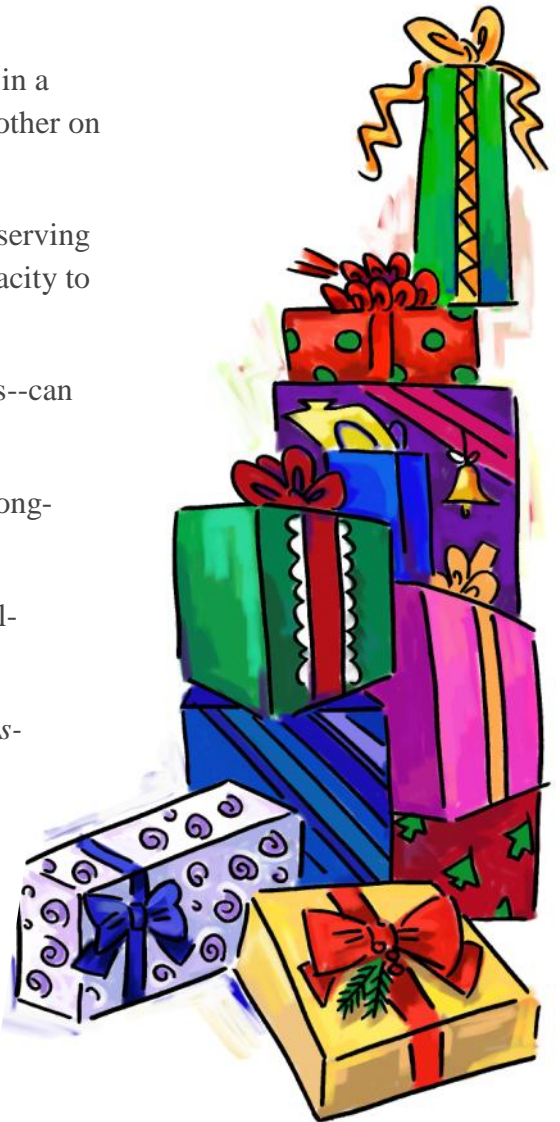
I don't care how much time you spend in prayer, reading God's Word, serving others, or any other faith-building activity--you don't have enough capacity to fully enjoy God's presence and power in your current circumstances.

There's no way any of us--if we're honest and in tune with our longings--can be truly, core-deep satisfied in a life like this one.

Wait a minute, you might say. Doesn't Jesus promise to fulfill all our longings if we follow him?

Sure, he does. But he never told us we should expect that kind of fulfillment today.

As Amy Simpson writes in her upcoming book *Blessed Are the Unsatisfied*, "Jesus doesn't fulfill all our longings in this life. He offers us his peace. He does not remove us from the fog of death and the ongoing consequences of rebellion against God. He does not give us a 'get out of suffering free' card. He gives us purpose and reconciles us to the God we were created to know and love. He redeems our suffering and uses it to reform us. He reshapes our desires and changes us from the inside out. But he does not make us comfortable with life amid decay, death, depravity, and disappointment. Why would he want to do that?"



Continued on page 3

There's More! ...continued from page 2

I suspect many of us are afraid to live in longing because we believe we can't survive it or we're afraid we might hope for too much. But we could never hope for too much from the one who created existence itself. In our fear of disappointment or discomfort, we settle for too little.

As [C. S. Lewis wrote](#), "If we consider the unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the gospels, it would seem that Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased."

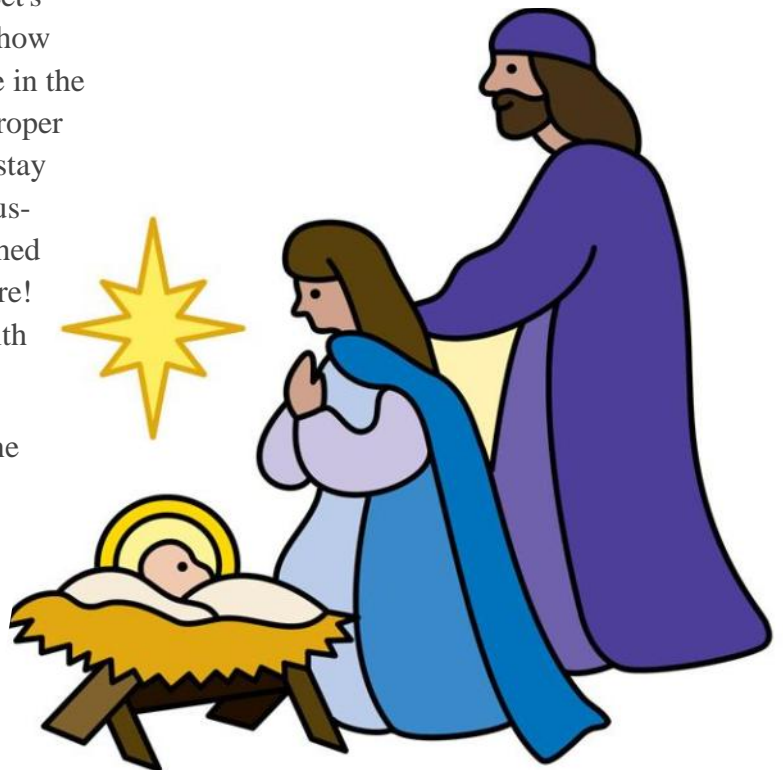
There's no reason we should be satisfied with life on earth as we know it. We were never meant for this world, full of corruption and the miasma of death. We weren't supposed to live with a blight of foolishness and rebellion that we can never eradicate on our own. We weren't meant to dwell at a distance from God, where objects of our own creation sometimes feel more real than the one who invented reality.

We are supposed to enjoy the good things God gives us and the gifts we share with one another. But they aren't supposed to be enough for us. And when we stop trying to convince ourselves (and others) they are, we can step into a new kind of freedom rooted in both acceptance and anticipation.

So let's be unsatisfied this Christmas Season. Let's exchange gifts, enjoy the people we love, and celebrate the incarnation of the only one who can restore this world and its inhabitants to their unstained beauty. Let's grieve losses and unmet yearnings. Let's light our candles and sing our songs and envision how our peace-loving choices might alter the landscape in the next year. And let's keep all these things in their proper place--they are shadows of what is to come. Let's stay in touch with our hunger and thirst for the righteousness of Christ, and all its side effects, to be unleashed in this broken world. God wants us to long for more! He wants more for us; if our hearts beat in time with his, they will never be satisfied in this life.

There's freedom here--you don't have to pretend the cardboard box is all you ever wanted. Thank God for what he has given you, and live in anticipation of the day when you'll have all you need.

Pastor Bob



Looking Ahead

January 1	New Year's Day
January 6	Epiphany
January 7	Baptism of Christ
February 14	Ash Wednesday
February 18	1st Sunday in Lent

Consistory Updates

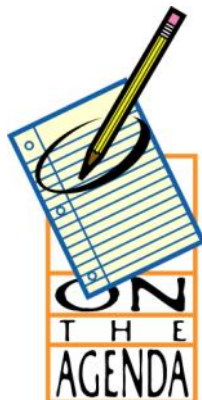
Welcome to our new consistory members for 2018.



Tim Lutz	President/Deacon
Clint Cooper	Vice President/Elder
Gretchen Martin	Secretary/Deacon
Alta Hoshour	Elder
Sharon Blechschmidt	Deacon
Pete Martin	Trustee

Lets be supportive of our new consistory team by becoming involved and encouraging of any new and old ideas they may have during the next year.

Congregational Meeting: We our having a congregational meeting to discuss the replacement of the garage on Sunday, December 31, immediately after worship. Please plan on attending.



Shelter Meal: We will be providing another meal at the Women's Shelter in Ephrata on Thursday, January 25th. If you would like to help with the meal by preparing a dessert or side dish or to help serve please see Tim, Nancy or Ron. We prepare a meal for approximately 15 women and children once a month on an ongoing basis.



Grant Approved: We have received a check n the amount of \$5,000.00 from the Anne Brossman Sweigart Charitable Foundation Grant to begin doing some improvements to our kitchen area. Thank you to Ron Frederick and Tim Lutz for spending the time required to file for the grant and attend a catered reception to accept the check.



Ash Wednesday: The Lenten season will begin on Wednesday, February 14th, with a special worship service at St. Paul's beginning at 7:00 PM. Please mark your calendars now and plan on attending as we prepare for the beginning of Lent.



The next consistory meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, January 2 at 7:00 PM.**

Prayer Concerns: We will be updating our prayer list monthly by starting a new list at the beginning of every month. Please continue to review the list and if there are any updates during the month please see Dee Sprecher. We also have prayer request cards located in the parlor room and in the pews upstairs for your convenience. You can fill out the request and hand it to Pastor Bob or place it in the offering plate.



As you continue your own prayers and concerns outside of the sanctuary this week, please remember the concerns we have raised as a community.

Our list of prayer concerns from December:

Barbara, Barbara M, Edith, James and his family, Jordan, Kevin, Alta's son-in-law, Andy and his family, Dee and her family, the fire at Stauffer's, prayers for the recital, Christmas caroling, the quilt ministry and our church.

Suggested Prayer... "Most gracious and loving God, we lift up our list of prayer concerns this day and every day that all who are listed might know and feel your presence with them in their time of need. God, continue in your support for all of our friends and family listed and those who are forever in our hearts so that they might feel you with them each day, Amen."



If you would like to ask for prayers for someone you may contact Pastor Bob. Below is a list of the individuals on our Prayer Chain that will pray for you throughout the week.

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Pastor Bob Peiffer | Lynda Cooper |
| Kieran Connelly | Nancy Caffrey-Schafer |
| Donna Ozga | Steve Renninger |
| Chris Storms | |

Remember our Shut-Ins

Please remember those members and friends in nursing homes and retirement villages in your prayers:



Ray Freeman
Brethren Village Retirement
Community Room 230
3001 Lititz Pike
Lancaster, Pa. 17606

Betty Sweitzer
Jim Waddell
Lois Kirkpatrick
Retirement Villages in Garden Spot Village
433 South Kinzer Ave, New Holland, Pa. 17557

Pastoral Visits or Emergencies

If anyone is in need of any pastoral assistance you may contact Pastor Bob Peiffer at 717-925-6520 or at his email rpeiffer55@gmail.com. You can also call the church office at 717-445-6256.



Church office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 8:00 am until 1:00 pm.



Messy Church

St. Paul's is preparing to hold their next "Messy Church" on Thursday, January 11th from 6:30 to 8:00 pm. It is for ages 5-10 and children must be accompanied by an adult. It is FREE and is being held on the 2nd Thursday of each month through May.



We are thrilled to be able to provide a new opportunity for learning and fellowship in the community. Spread the word to your neighbors, friends, and your family about this exciting new ministry!

If you have any questions or would like to register a child please contact Pastor Bob at 717-925-6520.

Teachers' Meeting



Our next Christian Ed meeting is scheduled for January 10th at Ranck's Restaurant at 11:30 am.

Winter Gift

"God ... does great things beyond our knowing. He says to the snow, 'Fall to the earth'; likewise to his heavy, drenching rain. He shuts up all humankind indoors, so that all people may know his work" (Job 37:5-7, NABRE).

Snow, ice and cold can make winter a hassle. "Snow days" due to a blizzard may thrill students but usually inconvenience parents. But now and then, winter blankets the earth so heavily that it seems to quiet everything. We're granted permission to hunker down at home, snuggle close with family or pets, enjoy a book or movie, make cocoa or cookies, and rest. It's like a surprise sabbath — the gift of grace-time — when no one's expected to get out the door or the driveway.

Perhaps indeed, as Job declared, God sees fit on such days to put our busyness on hold and shut us all indoors so we pause and remember his work — his place — in our lives. Praise God for snow days!

—Heidi Mann





Birthdays

January

- 5 Judy Enck
- 8 Holley Storms
- 12 Edith Weinhold
Charlie Storms
- 13 Betty Musser
- 16 Robert Storms
- 21 Karen Peiffer
- 23 Sharon Blechschmidt
- 29 Hadley Martin
- 31 Harold Good



Sandwich Sales:

The Women's Guild will be having their next sandwich sale on January 27th. They are selling Italian, ham and turkey subs for \$4.00. If you would like to place an order please see Alta or Dee prior to January 23rd.

Please pick up all sandwiches between 8 and 9 am on Saturday, January 27th.



Thank you for supporting the Women's Guild.

Happy Birthday!



Food Bank News

January need– Watch your bulletins for updated information on what is needed at the food bank for the month of January.

As our numbers go up, so do our needs at the Terre Hill Food Bank. To make it easier, each church is being asked to be responsible for one type of food item each month.

If you can provide any items please place them in the shopping cart by the side door entrance. Thank you!

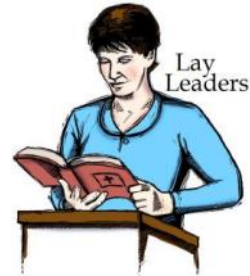


Anniversaries

None



Monthly Volunteers



January 7 Sara Renninger
 January 14 Dee Sprecher
 January 21 Cheryl Borja
 January 28 Mary Renninger

January 7 Kieran Connelly
 January 14 Deb Shelly
 January 21 Lynda Cooper
 January 28 Mary Renninger

February 4 Sara Renninger
 February 11 Dee Sprecher
 February 14** Cheryl Borja
 February 18 Mary Renninger
 February 25 Sara Renninger

February 4 Kieran Connelly
 February 11 Deb Shelly
 February 18 Lynda Cooper
 February 25 Mary Renninger

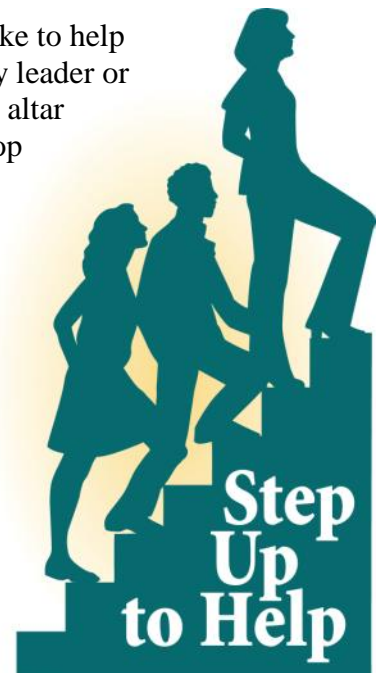
** Indicates communion



January 7 Patty Lutz
 January 14 Brian Martin
 January 21 Nancy Connelly
 January 28 Charlie Storms

February 4 Gretchen Martin
 February 11 Chuck Eckenroth
 February 14 Clint Cooper
 February 18 Steve Renninger
 February 25 Chris Storms

If you would like to help as a greeter, lay leader or be a part of the altar guild please stop by the church office for details.



Treasurer's Report

The monthly report for
November 2017:

Checking Account

Beginning Balance	\$70,545.80
+ Receipts	10,568.03
- Disbursements	9,843.41
- Transfers	0
Ending Balance	\$71,270.42

A copy of this information can also be found at
the mailboxes in the slot marked financial re-
ports.

Novembers offering only total was \$5,364.00.

Financial Report



Offering Ushers



January 7	Tim Lutz Patty Lutz Chuck Eckenroth Dee Sprecher
January 14	Pete Martin Sharon Blechschmidt Larry Shupp Carol Shupp
January 21	Brian Martin Gretchen Martin Kieran Connelly Nancy Connelly
January 28	Steve Renninger Mary Renninger Clint Cooper Lynda Cooper



If you are unable to usher on your Sunday please
find a replacement. If you have any questions re-
garding the schedule please see any one of the
Deacons.

The following individuals are responsible for counting
the offering after worship;

January 7	Tim Lutz & Patty Lutz
January 14	Sharon Blechschmidt & Pete Martin
January 21	Gretchen Martin & Brian Martin
January 28	Alta Hoshour & Clint Cooper



Sponsors



January 7	open
January 14	open
January 21	open
January 28	open
February 4	open
February 11	open
February 18	open
February 25	open



January 7	open
January 14	open
January 21	open
January 28	open
February 4	open
February 11	open
February 18	open
February 25	open

Flower and Bulletin Sponsor Sheet

The flower and bulletin charts for **2018 are posted**. If you would like to sponsor a week please sign your name on the chart for any Sunday you wish. Please fill out the appropriate form and see that Dee gets your dedication information at least one week prior to it going in the bulletin. The cost for the flowers is **\$30.00**. We will place silk flowers in the sanctuary and place your dedication information in the bulletin. If you wish to purchase real flowers you may still do so on your own. The cost of the bulletins is **\$10.00** each week. Payments can be given to Dee Sprecher. Thank you in advance for your support.

St Paul's UCC Celebrate

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133 Church St., P.O. Box 177
Bowmansville, Pa. 17507
Phone & Fax 717-445-6256
office@stpaulsuccchurch.org
www.stpaulsuccchurch.org



Editor:
Deidre Sprecher
dee@stpaulsuccchurch.org

Pastor:
Rev. Dr. Robert B. Peiffer
rpeiffer55@gmail.com

St Paul's UCC *Celebrate* is published monthly to keep members and friends informed of programs of the church and to report news about the community and its people.

Deadline for article submissions: The third Sunday of each month.



January

2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 New Year's Day	2 Consistory 7:00	3	4	5	6 Epiphany
7 Sunday School 9:30 Worship 10:30 Fresh Hope 1:00	8	9 Depression & Bipolar Support Mtg @ Zion's	10 Christian Ed @ Ranck's 11:30 Card Club 6:00	11 Messy Church 6:30	12	13
14 S School 9:30 Worship 10:30	15 PRC @ SP 7:00	16	17	18	19	20
21 S School 9:30 Worship 10:30 Fresh Hope 1:00 Newsletter Deadline	22	23 Sub Orders Due Depression & Bipolar Support Mtg @ Zion's 7:00	24 Card Club 6:00	25 Good Samaritan Shelter Meal 5:00	26	27 Sub Sale Pickup 8-9 am
28 Sunday School 9:30 Worship 10:30	29	30	31			