

The Messenger

December 2009

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6

COMMUNION AND COFFEE HOUR

We will celebrate the **Sacrament of Holy Communion** on Sunday, December 6, during our regular Sunday Worship Service which begins at 10:30 am. After worship, we will gather in the Fellowship Hall for coffee and goodies. Please bring something to share and stay for a while.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9

TWILIGHTER'S MEETING

The Twilighters will meet on December 9 at 12:00 pm for a covered dish lunch.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12

YOUTH GROUP COOKIE BAKING

The Youth Group will meet on Saturday, December 12, to make cookies for their fundraiser. More info under Youth Group section.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION

The Annual Meeting will be held on December 13, 2009, immediately following our worship service. Please see inside this issue for more details.

YOUTH GROUP FUNDRAISER

The Youth Group will have a pre-Christmas bake sale after worship. They will also be selling bows for your Christmas packages. Please support our teens in their projects and programs.

CAROLING

After our Worship Service on December 13, we will travel to see our homebound members and to the local nursing homes to entertain them with songs of the season. So get your vocal chords tuned up to bring some holiday cheer to others.

YOUTH GROUP MEETING

The next meeting of the Youth Group will be on December 13 upon returning to the church after caroling.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19

SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PARTY

Our Sunday School Christmas Party will be held on Saturday, December 19, from 10 am to noon. This will also be the last day to drop off "care packages" for the McKinney Clinic. Please see inside this issue for more details.

THE GIFT – Dec. 11, 12 & 13

The Back Mountain Harvest Assembly will present *The Gift*, a musical drama of the Nativity. Please see inside this issue for more details.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

On Christmas Eve, we will begin our celebration of Christ's birth with special music at 7 pm. Our Early Candlelight service will begin at 7:30 pm and the Late Candlelight service is at 11:00 pm. During the 7:30 service, we will enjoy the Christmas Program presented by our children and youth with musical

selections sung by the choirs and everyone in the congregation. We hope that everyone will come to worship our new-born King. Come, let us adore Him.

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From The Pastor's Desk

WHAT!? It can't be time to get ready for Christmas already. But it is. It's time to get our hearts and minds ready to receive Christ into our lives. Have you ever thought about what you would have said if an angel had appeared to you and said God had chosen you to be the mother of God's child? Have you ever thought what it must be like to be that girl's fiancé and be visited by an angel to tell you what was going to happen?

If you have never considered those things you may need to look at your life and know that you are being called each day to accept things that don't seem possible -things that seemed pretty farfetched but that changed the whole world. What would this world be like with no Jesus - no God coming among us to show us how to live.

But the Christ Child was born. He lived among us, being human and yet divine. As we go about getting "ready" for Christmas with our decorating and shopping, let's keep all those Sunday school lessons we learned as children in our minds. Some of you may never have been an angel or a shepherd or a wise man in the church pageant but now you can come and enjoy our children as they get excited about acting out this wonderful story, seeing the joy that it brings. It brings joy to the children, to the parents, to all those who see the excitement in their eyes.

Let's out act it out now, getting excited about the angels and their proclamation of Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men. Let's be excited that, as the shepherds, we are able to spread the good word to everyone we see. We can bring gifts to our King as did the wise men. And we can live each day loving out what it means to be a Christian.

We are Easter people so we know the rest of the story and how it changed the world. We should be even more excited about the Christmas story than those who were there on that first night! Catch the fever - the JOY FEVER. Celebrate and invite others in to the celebration as well.

Christmas Blessings!
Pastor Penny

Our Condolences

Karen Baker, sister of Roy Baker and aunt to Kristina Walck, passed away after a long illness. Our thoughts and prayers go out to them and their families and we pray for God to ease their sorrow.

Warren Thomas, father of Paul Thomas, passed away on November 5. We offer our sympathy to

Paul and Angie and their family and pray for God's peace to help them through their sorrow.

Donald Moyer, brother of Steve Moyer, passed away on November 17. Our thoughts and prayers are given to Steve and Sharon and their families. Our heartfelt love and sympathy are offered to them.

Thank You

We received a card from Joy Hughes, Don Myer's daughter, who was recently on our prayer list. Her surgery went well and she is doing much better. Joy thanks us for keeping her in our thoughts and will keep us in her prayers. The card is on the bulletin board in the bell tower.

Steve and Sharon Moyer would like to thank everyone for their cards and expressions of sympathy at the loss of his brother.

The Hoch and Stein families would like to thank everyone for their cookie dough orders and monetary donations. This will really help with the expenses in connection with Sherri's kidney transplant.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held on Sunday, December 13, after our Worship Service. The proposed 2010 Budget was approved by the Consistory for distribution in the weekly bulletins and extra copies are available on the table in the Narthex.

NOTICE TO ALL COMMITTEES, TEAMS AND ASSOCIATIONS: In accordance with our Constitution Article 10, All committees should have a report prepared for the Annual Meeting of the Congregation.

"Article 10. ORGANIZATIONS, SOCIETIES. All organizations and societies of the Congregation are subordinate to the Consistory and shall make an annual report (Activities and Financial) to the Congregation."

CONGREGATIONAL CORNER OFFERING ENVELOPES

Your offering envelopes for 2010 are on the table in the Narthex for you to pick up. Thank you for your faithfulness in giving to Emmanuel UCC and its program and missions.

TWILIGHTERS

The Twilighters will meet on Wednesday, December 9, at 12 noon for a covered dish lunch. Bring your favorite dish and spend some time with us.

POINSETTIA SIGN-UP SHEETS

There are sign-up sheets on the tables in the Narthex and next to the fellowship hall doorway for you to

purchase poinsettias to decorate our sanctuary. The last day to sign up is December 14.

ALTAR FLOWER CHART

The chart for the altar flowers is on the table in the Narthex. The price is still \$12.50 per vase. Please pay Mary or Jim Rinehimer for the dates you sponsor.

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

A baby boy was born to Amy Polashenski and Doug Costello on November 18, 2009. His name is Connor Costello and he weighed 6 lb 6 oz and was 20" long. Connor is the grandson of Ruth Ann and Peter Polashenski and the great-grandson of Lex and Anna Mae Koons. Congratulations!

SPECIAL BIRTHDAY

The family of Esther Heller would like to invite you to join in celebrating Esther's birthday with a card shower. Esther will be 85 years young on December 2. Her address is 39 Acher Road, Wapwallopen, PA 18660. Happy birthday, Mom!!

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Our Christmas Pageant this year is "All Clear at Midnight" and will be held during the 7:30 Candlelight Service on December 24. Join ace reporter, Lost Soul, as he reports back to the news anchor, Christmas Message, the breaking news of a special birth in the town of Bethlehem. His news story will highlight the parents, Mary and Joseph, and their new baby, Jesus. Along the way he interviews shepherds, angels, and villagers, as he investigates the wonderful story of Christ's birth. The choirs will provide musical accompaniment and you will be invited to join in as we sing familiar Christmas carols and hymns.

Special Music For Christmas Eve

Anyone wishing to present music prior to the Christmas Eve Early Service is asked to see Denise Dean. We will begin at 7:00 pm and conclude at 7:30 pm. If you are more inclined to read a poem or selection, that would be very welcome also.

CHRISTMAS OFFERING

Please be generous in giving to our church ministries supported by this offering:

\$150 to Phoebe Devitt Home

\$150 to Bethany Children's Home

\$250 to Lancaster Theological Seminary

These organizations sincerely need and appreciate your support. Every penny counts with today's expenses, so please give generously.

The Giving Tree

We will be setting up the Giving Tree in the Narthex shortly. Bernie Baluta, at the McKinney Clinic, asks that we provide mainly men's gifts. There is a great hardship among our middle/older age men and she appreciates our help in ministering to their needs. Just take an ornament, purchase the item listed on it, wrap it and place it under the tree. You may also include a card from you and your family.

Sunday School News

THANKSGIVING DINNERS – Thank you to everyone who helped by donating food and giving money to purchase the turkeys. We again provided ten Thanksgiving dinners for families of the Clinic.

Lisa Rinehimer

Sunday School Fun

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Our Christmas Party is scheduled for Saturday, December 19, from 10:00 am to 12 noon. We are asking all the kids to **bring a piece of fruit for the baskets for our shut-ins and a new or "gently used" stuffed animal or toy** to be wrapped for the children of the McKinney Clinic.

We will also be gathering **care packages** to keep with our ongoing theme **"Giving without Thinking of Receiving"** for distribution to the people served by the McKinney Clinic. Bernie, the director of the clinic, has asked that we provide more men's packages. She says that they minister to more men than women and so there is a greater need for men's gifts. The packages should include:

new white socks, toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, comb, razor, hand lotion and a candy cane. If you would like to add anything else, please feel free (only nothing with alcohol in it). Also appreciated are gift cards from Walmart and K-Mart. A freezer bag holds the items very well.

Attach a card signed by your family and send it with your child(ren) to the Christmas party or drop it off in the narthex under the Christmas tree **before Saturday, December 20**. Thank you for all your generosity.

When making your care package, please talk with your child(ren) about how wonderful it feels to know

you will make someone's Christmas brighter by giving!

Thank you for all your support, Lisa Rinehimer

"THE GIFT"

Two performances of The Gift will be presented at the Back Mountain Harvest Assembly on Friday, December 11, and Saturday, December 12, at 6:00 and 8:00 pm. There will be one performance on Sunday, December 13, at 6:00 pm. This performance is really impressive with live animals (including a camel!) and over 100 actors. The show is approximately an hour long and is performed outside, so, remember your long johns. This fantastic pageant is free although they do ask for a free-will offering to help with the expense of the extravaganza. It's a great way to remember and celebrate the real reason for the season.

YOUTH GROUP

Thanks to everyone who donated canned/boxed food for the "Trick or Treat for God's Children to Eat" halloweeners. It's great that people look forward to helping our kids and are ready with donations. The donations have been given to the Food Bank.

The Youth Group had a great time bowling on November 15. There were 7 youth and 3 adults knocking down the pins.

PRE-CHRISTMAS COOKIES AND BOW SALE

CALLING ALL YOUTH to bake cookies at Pastor Penny's on Saturday, December 12. We will start baking and packaging Christmas cookies at 10 am. We will then sell them and Christmas bows after church on Sunday, December 13.

We would like to thank those who gave us the bake sale idea. If anyone has any other thoughts, we're open to suggestions.

Thanks again, Marc Davis

YOUTH Accomplishments

If you know of any of our youth who deserve recognition for their scholastic, talent or sports abilities, please let me know. Better yet, if there is a news article, cut it out and give it to me. Thanks, Denise

MMI Honor Roll: Keegan Farrell - Keep up the great work, Keegan!

mug shots

Check the front entrance bulletin board for the following mug shots:

Roy and Betty Baker are pictured at their new store, Dollar Basket Plus in the Georgetown Plaza, which is in Wilkes-Barre.

Check out those smiling faces pictured in the kitchen at Emmanuel. The Scouts from Pack 433 had a hoagie sale and some of them are shown assembling the delicious sandwiches.

Bethany Children's Home

CHRISTMAS GIFT LIST

Copies of the 2009 Wish List are on the table in the Narthex. Please consider the needs (and wants) of these children. Please note that the children at Bethany are between the ages of 13 and 18 years old, so when choosing a gift, think about the children you know who are teenagers. The Giving Guide asks that the gifts **not** be wrapped. Please place them in the Christmas-paper-wrapped box in the Narthex.

This year, we also received a "2009 Christmas Year Round" flyer which provides a list of items to which you can donate. For example: \$20 for a "Good Night's Rest" pillow or \$50 for a "Cozy and Warm Feeling" winter coat. Copies of the flyer are also on the table in the Narthex.

Letters from Jonathan Henning, CEO of Bethany are on the bulletin board in the Bell Tower. Please take the time to read these letters as he shares with us the importance of giving to these children.

HEIFER INTERNATIONAL GIFT CATALOGS

Gift Catalogs from Heifer International are on the table in the Narthex. Our Sunday School has previously donated toward livestock and other natural resources for underdeveloped countries. Heifer International makes a difference in the world through providing livestock and education for sustained living – not just a one-time gift.

UPCOMING DATES

Jan. 3 - Communion & Coffee Hour

Jan. 6 - Epiphany

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

CONSISTORY

The **Consistory** will meet on Thursday, December 17, at 6:30 pm.

NEWSLETTER INFO DEADLINE

The deadline for information for the December Messenger is Monday, **December 21**. With Christmas that week, I will need extra time to get everything organized. Please get all information to me before this date.

Thanks,
Denise

VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE DECEMBER 2009

December 6

Greeters: Beverly Kramer & Doris Yurchak
Liturgist: Dave Myers

December 13

Greeters: Carol Duffy & Eileen Bonczek
Liturgist: Meredith Martin

December 20

Greeters: Jayne & Rich Rotski
Liturgist: Beverly Kramer

December 24 - 7:30 Service

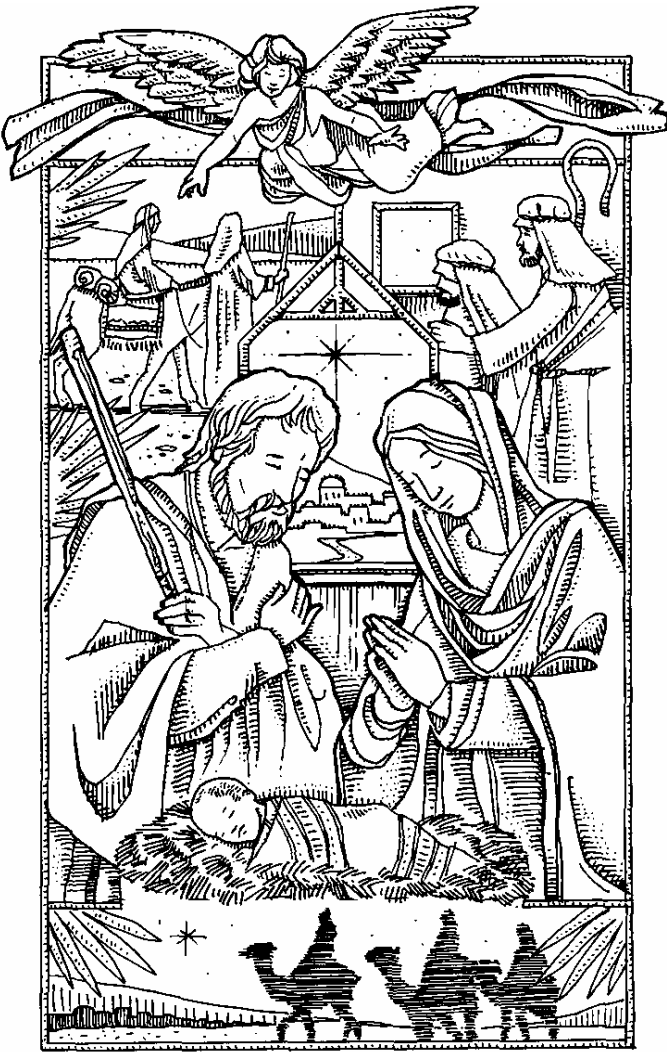
Greeters: Sharon Moyer & Meredith Martin
Liturgist: Mary Martin

December 27

Greeters: Donnie Myers & Bob Heller
Liturgist: Sami Dauber

OUR CLEANING VOLUNTEERS

Dave & Rosemary Myers
Clifford & Gladys Readler



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1 Kayla Supkowski	10 Lorrie Slusser	24 Lonnie Rinehimer, Sr.
1 Ronald Kania	10 Billy Martin	25 Anthony DiMaria
1 Harry Henry, Jr.	15 Andrew Horensky	26 Russell Koons
2 Esther Heller	15 Kelsey Rinehimer	26 Linda Byrnes
2 Bonnie Shafer	17 Danielle Pallando	26 Meredith Martin
3 David A. Myers	18 Brandon Ring	28 Lonnie Rinehimer, Jr.
10 Michael Belanchik	20 Darlene Stein	30 Angie Thomas
	21 Mary Rinehimer	

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Dec. 13, 1968.....Lonnie and Mary Rinehimer
Dec. 15, 1984.....Peter and Gwen Sakowski

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