

The Messenger

December 2011

THURSDAYS AND SUNDAYS IN DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM PRACTICES

Special practices have been set for the cast and Christmas Choir. Please see the article on page 3 for when you practice.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4

COMMUNION AND COFFEE HOUR

We will celebrate Holy Communion during our worship service on December 4, followed by a coffee hour in the Fellowship Hall. Bring a delicious delectable to share and have a relaxing morning with us.

YOUTH GROUP MEETING

The next Youth Group meeting will be at 5 pm on December 4. We need to plan our Cookie Bake Sale and other stuff we want to do during December.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION

The Annual Meeting will be held on December 11, 2011, immediately following our worship service. Please see inside this issue for more details.

YOUTH GROUP COOKIE SALE

The Youth Group will be selling cookies after the worship service to raise money for events and their next mission trip. This is a great way to show your support for our youth and save yourself some cookie baking time.

CAROLING

After our Worship Service on December 11 we will travel to see our homebound members and to the local nursing homes to entertain them with songs of the season. So come join us to bring some holiday cheer to others.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17

SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PARTY

Our Sunday School Christmas Party will be held on Saturday, December 17, 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.

DRESS REHEARSAL

Dress rehearsal for our Christmas Program will be at 12:30 after our pizza lunch. This will be a very important rehearsal and all cast, crew and choir members are asked to attend it.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18

SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRAM

The Sunday School will present their Christmas Program during the worship service on December 18. Please mark it on your calendars and show our children and youth how much you appreciate and support their efforts to tell the story of our Savior's birth.

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. Both services will include the Sacrament of Holy Communion. We hope that everyone will come to worship our new-born King. Come, let us adore Him.

Emmanuel United Church of Christ

7768 Blue Ridge Trail
Mountain Top PA 18707
(570) 868-5675

<http://www.emmanuel%e2%80%93ucc.org/>
emmanuel_ucc@hotmail.com

Rev. Penny Dollar
15 Old North Road
Mountain Top, PA 18707
(570) 678-5949
(570) 706-6476
preacherdollar@yahoo.com

Inside this Issue

Annual Meeting	p. 3
Around Our Neighborhood	p. 5
Bethany Christmas List	p. 6
Christmas Caroling	p. 3
Christmas Offering	p. 4
Christmas Program Practice	p. 3
Christmas Gift for Pastor	p. 4
Committee Meetings	p. 6
Congregational Corner	p. 2
CROP Walk Recap	p. 4
From the Pastor	p. 2
Giving Tree	p. 3
Operation Snowflake	p. 4
Picture Perfect	p. 6
Soup & Hoagie Sale	p. 4
Special Christmas Music	p. 3
Sunday School News	p. 5
Thank You	p. 2
Twilighters	p. 2
Volunteers Needed	p. 6
Volunteer Schedule	p. 5
Wap. Ministerium Mission	p. 3
Youth Accomplishments	p. 4
Youth Group	p. 4

From the Pastor's desk

Hope all of you had a wonderful Thanksgiving. Archie and I got together with some of his family and some of mine on the Friday after turkey day. But of course we were fed turkey and all the trimmings just the same. It was all wonderful and especially to go out and play ball with the kids and take a little time to relax.

Now - ADVENT - what a wonderful time set apart for preparation and looking forward to what is to come. We are to be preparing our hearts for the coming of the Christ child. Also we are to be preparing our hearts for the second coming of our Lord. As we look around the parking lots at the shopping centers it seems that many folks must do all this preparation by shopping. My lament for December - O that we would see the parking lots of our churches as full as those at the mall.

I received a wonderful email today with a song called "Where's the Line to See Jesus?" It's about a little boy who has been brought up in church. As he sees all the kids lining up to see Santa in the mall he asks the question, "where's the line to see Jesus?" Another lament - O that all the children raised in church would ask that question. You can listen to the song at (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OExXItDyWEY>)

It seems that I have several laments for this time of year and I try to do all I can to turn them around. I smile a lot. When I go shopping I try to encourage folks to be nice to those around them. If there is going to be pushing and shoving - O that the pushing and shoving would be in order to find a pew and have a seat in church. Yes, we will see folks here on Christmas Eve that we don't see any other time of the year so let's greet them with open arms and make them feel especially welcome.

The kid's pageant is always a wonderful way to celebrate the coming of Jesus. It peaks the excitement of young minds to learn about the birth of the Savior. Hopefully to have them light the Advent candles this year will bring more meaning into the significance of the light - that Jesus truly is the "Light of the World", and then hopefully that light will never go out for them.

I am excited about our goings on at Emmanuel during the month of December. The church looks beautiful all decorated for the season. Bring your friends along to feel the hope, peace, joy, and love that's in the air during this Christmastime - and hopefully all year long.

Christmas Blessings to all,
Pastor Penny

Thank You

We received letters from Phoebe-Devitt Homes and Lancaster Theological Seminary thanking us for our recent donations. Our gifts help to provide services and support for these organizations. The letters are on the bell tower bulletin board.

Thanks to everyone who helped with the Soup Sale. This is a delicious way to raise funds.

CONGREGATIONAL CORNER

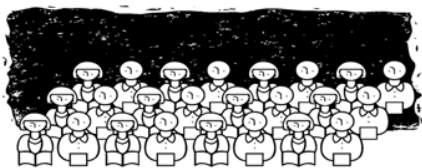
TWILIGHTERS LUNCH - The Twilighters will meet on December 7 at 12:00 for lunch.

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 11.

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.



ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held on Sunday, December 11, 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."



CHRISTMAS CAROLING

We will meet after the Annual Meeting on December 11 for caroling. After stopping for lunch at McDonald's, we'll raise our voices and spirits as we sing songs of the season to residents of our local nursing homes and to our homebound. Come with us and sing glory to the newborn king!

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.

The Giving Tree

The Giving Tree has been set up in the Narthex. Bernie Baluta, at the McKinney Clinic, asks that we provide 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, tape the ornament to the package and place it under the tree. You may also include a card from you and your family.

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Christmas is in the air - well, maybe not quite yet. But it is getting cooler and we are starting song practice for our Christmas Program, *Pop, Candy and the Christmastime Travelers*. Get your spirits warmed up with some great familiar carols and new tunes for this heartwarming story about a world-wide search for the Song of Christmas. Voices of all ages are wanted and welcome as we learn new arrangements and harmonies.

Parts have been distributed and practices scheduled as follows:

Speaking Parts

Dec. 1 6:30 to 7:30 pm

Dec. 8 6:30 to 7:30 pm

Dec. 15 6:30 to 7:30 pm

Dec. 17 12:30 to 1:30 pm

Dec. 18 9:00 am to 10:00 am (during Sunday School)

Non-Speaking Parts

Dec. 15 6:30 to 7:30 pm

Dec. 17 12:30 to 1:30 pm

Dec. 18 9:00 am to 10:00 am (during Sunday School)

Singing Parts (in addition to Sundays at 9:00 am)

Nov. 30 6:30 to 7:15 pm

Dec. 7 6:30 to 7:15 pm

Dec. 14 6:30 to 7:15 pm

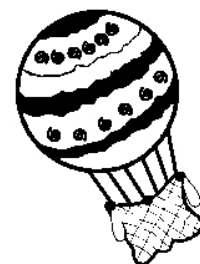
Dec. 17 12:30 to 1:30 pm

Dec. 17 9:00 am to 10:00 am (during Sunday School)

I understand some of you cannot attend all the practices and I know who you are, but I expect everyone to attend every practice that you can.

I am really happy that you all volunteered to make this program possible. You are a great bunch of kids and I really enjoy working with you (honest!). I am always so proud of the way you make our programs come to life and love your enthusiasm.

Thanks for your dedication,
Denise



WAPWALLOPEN CROSSROADS

MINISTERIUM LOCAL MISSION FUNDS

The Ministerium would like to tell everyone that it has funds available for local mission work. These funds could be used to help with heating costs, electricity costs, or rent or mortgage payments, once per year per needy family/person. Also available are Weis and Carone's gift cards to help with purchasing fresh veggies, milk/dairy products and meats. If you know someone in need, please contact either Pastor Penny (706-6476) or Pastor Rachael Dietz (379-3878) so we can help others in our communities.

CHRISTMAS OFFERING ENVELOPE

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 "Christmas Offering" is a benevolence offering and is not used to build up the General Fund. Your regular offering is *needed* to support the General Fund and the mission of your church.

Envelope for Pastor's Christmas Gift

There is a new envelope included with this year's offering envelopes. Instead of giving the usual monetary gift from the General Fund, all gifts collected through this envelope will be used as Pastor Penny's Christmas gift. Thank you for being generous and letting her know how much she is appreciated.

OPERATION SNOWFLAKE

If our Worship Services need to be cancelled due to bad weather, please tune in to radio stations WARM, Magic 93, 97BHT, 97.9X, or JR93.7.

SOUP AND HOAGIE SALE FUNDRAISERS

Remember to pick up your orders of scrumptious soup and hearty hoagies on December 3. The Cub Scouts hoagies and Emmanuel soup will be ready from 11 am to 12 noon.

CROP WALK RECAP

This year's walk was held on October 2 with about 15 walkers. A total of \$775 was raised through your generosity and support. The breakdown is:

Emmanuel	\$220
Mt. Zion	200
St. James	180
Faith UCC (Hazleton)	125
St. Mark's UCC	50

Thank you for donating to the CROP Walk which also benefits the Wapwallopen Food Bank since a portion of the donations will be returned for local use.

YOUTH GROUP

The next **Youth Group Meeting** will be on Sunday, December 4, at 5 pm at the church. We'll be discussing lots of stuff like:

1. **Cookie Fundraiser** - We will be baking cookies on December 10 at the church. Then we'll sell them after worship on December 11. See me so we can get an idea of how many cookies we'll be able to make.
2. **Third World Country Living** - this is our version of 30-Hour Famine. We want to plan this with all our new members, too, and get everyone's ideas.
3. **Youth For Hire** - We are still looking to help people around their homes/yards. This idea benefits our group and the people we work for so think of people who might want some extra muscle for fall chores.
4. **Next Outing** - We're planning when to go to the indoor water park we have tickets for.
5. **Mardi Gras Party** - We need ideas and help to plan for this fundraiser.
6. **Next Summer's Mission Trip** - When and where to next???

Come and join us so we can plan bigger and more exciting ways to show what *real teen Christians* are like! If you're **10 years old or older**, we'll be looking for you!! *We'd also like some more adults to get involved with us. Show us what real adult Christians are like!!*

Keep on believing

Marc

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

Crestwood High School:

Principal's Honors: Kimmy Bernetski, Kelly Madigan

High Honors: Rachelle Heller, Allison Bernetski, Alecia Myers

Honors: Autumn Atkinson, Glynis Dean, Devin Stein, Kyle Prelewicz, Eric Rinehimer, Justin Rinehimer, Courtney Kania

Sunday School News

THANKSGIVING DINNERS - Thank you for being so generous. We again were able to provide meals for ten families thanks to you.

CHRISTMAS PARTY - DECEMBER 17

Our Christmas Party will be held on December 17 from 10 am to 12 pm. 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 17**. 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

Emmanuel through the Year

This has been an especially challenging year for most people, but God's hand is still seen in the actions of the members of Emmanuel. For many years you have donated your time, talents and treasure to such undertakings as the Alberdeen Road Clean Up; hosting the men of Mother Theresa Haven (formerly V.I.S.I.O.N); assembling Thanksgiving dinners, making "care packages", buying Giving Tree gifts, and wrapping Christmas toys for the families of the McKinney Clinic; raising awareness and funds for CROP Walk; purchasing gifts to ensure a Merry Christmas to children at Bethany Children's Home; and fulfilling our budget promise of benevolence offerings to OCWM, Bethany Children's Home, Lancaster Theological Seminary and Phoebe Devitt Homes.

You have always supported the mission projects of our Vacation Bible School which this year collected

school supplies for children in the tornado zone of Alabama, plus the Pre-Kindergarten special mission project of restocking the food bank (our theme was Shake It Up Café). You supported Kimmy and Allison Bernetski (along with Marc Davis and Pastor Penny) on their mission trip to North Carolina where they repaired an older woman's home and made renovations to a mission clinic.

In response to the horrific devastation in Japan caused by the earthquake and tsunami, you gave your monetary gifts through a special offering. Again you responded when the spring tornadoes ripped through the southern states, but not only through our special offering. When challenged to fill five CWS clean-up buckets, you provided enough supplies for SEVEN.

But the greatest challenge you undertook was the one coordinated by our Scout Troops - Cub Scout Pack 433, Boy Scout Troop 434, and Girl Scout Troops 3340 and 33369. Operation Shickshinny collected so much that the entire basement of Emmanuel was filled with furniture, clothing, bedding, towels, cleaning supplies, appliances, dishes, glassware, flatware, games, toys, TV's, lamps, videos, books, strollers, stuffed animals, bikes, and all sorts of items. From the front office reception room, through the nursery, middle room and into the basement kitchen, there was only a path left wide enough to walk through. When this project started, we expected to have some donations, maybe enough for a couple of pick-up loads. Instead, more than enough was donated for a couple of tractor-trailers - yes, two trailers and one straight truck of donations were taken to Shickshinny on the morning of October 8.

All in all, this has been a demanding year, but also a very satisfying year. We can look back and thank God for the abilities and resources to radiate His love and strength throughout our communities and around the world. Let's keep up the good work!

AROUND OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

CHS MUSICAL - The Crestwood High School musical will be presented on Friday and Saturday, December 9 and 10, at 7:00 pm. This year's play is "Fiddler On the Roof". Join Tevye and his family as they celebrate life, cherish love and learn survival in Tsarist Russia. Here's *"To Life"*.

BETHANY CHRISTMAS LIST

Copies of the 2011 Christmas Wish List are on the table in the Narthex. Please note that the children at Bethany are between the ages of 13 and 18 years old. Specific gift items are included on the Christmas Wish List or if you prefer, the children love to receive gift cards to department stores, craft stores, area malls, etc. Please choose age-appropriate gifts with consideration for parental warnings, modest clothing and safety. The gifts should not be wrapped since Bethany's staff will do that. Just drop them in the box wrapped in Christmas paper in the Narthex.

picture perfect

**Check the front door bulletin board
for these mug shots!**

Some of the Scouts who helped with the Turkey Supper are pictured clearing off a table. Their help is really appreciated by the servers and clean-up crew. We have a great relationship with these young men and their leaders.

The Crestwood Field Hockey team made it to the State Championship Playoffs but were unfortunately eliminated in the first round. The team makes it to the playoffs almost every year. So let's hear it for Autumn Atkinson and the rest of the Lady Comets!!

The flooding in Bloomsburg was felt personally by one of our members, Sharon Moyer. Sharon's mother, Anne Williams who is a former member, lived in the Tenny Street Apartments which everyone thought was outside the flood zone. Like so many other areas, it was not. While digging through the muck, Sharon found the American Flag from her father's funeral, covered in mud and debris. She couldn't get it clean herself and so took it to Elegant Cleaners in Mountain Top. They cleaned it and charged nothing because it is their policy not to charge to clean American Flags. Sharon is pictured with the beautifully cleaned flag outside the cleaners.

NEWSLETTER INFO DEADLINE

The deadline for information for the January Messenger is Monday, December 19. Please get all information to me before this date. Thanks, Denise

CONSISTORY MEETING

E-MAIL ADDRESS FOR CONSISTORY

A "group" e-mail address has been set up so that you can contact members of the consistory by using just one address: consistory@emmanuel-ucc.org.

The Consistory will meet on **Thursday, December 15** at 6:30 pm.

UPCOMING DATES

Jan. 6 Epiphany
Feb. 22 Ash Wednesday

VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE DECEMBER 2011

Dec. 4

Greeters: Janice and Gene Broyan
Liturgist: Dave Horenski

Dec. 11

Greeters: Judy Cybulski and Diana Decker
Liturgist: Jill Bernetski

Dec. 18

Greeters: Carol & Robert Duffy, III & Don Myers
Liturgist: Frank Partington

Dec. 24 (Christmas Eve)

7:30 service:

Greeters: Dave and Rosemary Myers
Liturgist: Dave Myers

11:00 Service:

Greeters: Jim and Mary Rinehimer
Liturgist: Jim Rinehimer

Dec. 25 Christmas Day

Greeters: Connie Davis and Mary Martin
Liturgist: Meredith Martin

OUR CLEANING VOLUNTEERS

Dave & Rosemary Myers
Clifford & Gladys Readler

CLEANING VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Our church is in need of volunteers who aren't afraid to roll up their sleeves and get the dirt out. Unlike many churches, we do not have a paid janitor. We have taken care of the weekly cleaning of Emmanuel for many years through the dedication of volunteers. At this time, though, there are only enough volunteers to clean twice a month. (Two crews per month) That leaves two weeks that our church does not get cleaned. Dave Myers can tell you all about how you can serve God by keeping His house clean and shiny. Just a couple hours a month and Emmanuel will be sparkling. Please see Dave and help Emmanuel to look its best.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

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

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

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

DECEMBER 2011

I have made a "2011 Volunteer Schedule" sign-up sheet for those who would like to be Greeters, Liturgists and Acolytes. Please pick a date or two (or three). This way you can choose the dates when you are available, instead of having them assigned by me. Some of the dates are already filled in (Hooray!!). For the liturgists, I will provide a copy of the bulletin either by paper for you to pick up or via e-mail, so that you can review it before Sunday morning. Thanks. Denise

Dec. 4

Greeters: Janice and Gene Broyan
 Liturgist: Dave Horenski

Dec. 11

Greeters: Judy Cybulski and Diana Decker
 Liturgist: Jill Bernetski

Dec. 18

Greeters: Carol & Robert Duffy, III & Don Myers
 Liturgist: Frank Partington

Dec. 24 (Christmas Eve)

7:30 service:

Greeters: Dave and Rosemary Myers
 Liturgist: Dave Myers

11:00 Service:

Greeters: Jim and Mary Rinehimer
 Liturgist: Jim Rinehimer

Dec. 25 Christmas Day

Greeters: Connie Davis and Mary Martin
 Liturgist: Meredith Martin

OUR CLEANING VOLUNTEERS

Dave Myers
 Clifford & Gladys Readler