

# The Messenger

December 2016

## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4

### ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION



The Annual Meeting will be held on December 4, 2016, immediately following our worship service. Please see inside this issue for more details.

### COMMUNION AND COFFEE HOUR

The sacrament of Holy Communion will be celebrated 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.

### CHRISTMAS CAROLING

Come and sing the songs of the season while delighting our homebound and nursing home members. We will begin our rounds by serenading our members and then go to local nursing homes. Please see Cindy for more information.

## 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 SERVICE

On Christmas Eve, we will begin our celebration of Christ's birth with special music at 7 pm. Our Candlelight Service will begin at 7:30 pm and will include the Sacrament of Holy Communion. We hope that everyone will come to worship our new-born King. Come, let us adore Him.

### 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.

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## From the Pastor

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ!

The year 2016 is rushing past! Summer is long gone – the first snow has been “weathered” – the Thanksgiving feast has been enjoyed! And now, it’s on to Christmas! The stores have been decorated for months (it seems). We are now bombarded with ads on a daily basis – through all forms of media – newspaper, radio, television. They tell us what we must have – the latest, the best, the greatest in technological gadgets. And, in the midst of it all, we are called to witness the beginning of the Advent Season. The signs are around us – the wreaths on the windows, the tree and Advent wreath in the Sanctuary, the new carillon playing familiar seasonal tunes. There will be caroling, requests for cards for the troops, ongoing needs for the Food Bank, and other special events. All of it culminates with the Christmas Eve Service and a Christmas Day Service.

So, to help us prepare, I offer my projections for what the message will be for each upcoming worship experience.

- Advent 1 (11/27) “No Time for a Snooze” – This message focused on Advent as a spiritual undertaking, a way for us to deepen our relationship with God, and certainly “no time for a snooze.” If we rush through this special season, we may miss an opportunity to focus more intentionally on the gift of Jesus Christ and what that means for our lives today. The texts focused on Christ’s 2<sup>nd</sup> coming – and called us to be alert, watchful, and vigilant in our lives as his followers.
- Advent 2 (12/4) “Snakes, Axes, and Fire – This Is Good News?” – This message will present a conversation between “Rev” and John the Baptist – in an attempt to understand John’s harsh words (Matthew 3: 1-12) directed toward the religious leaders. Are we also included as targets? Or do his words contain Good News, even though hidden within his seemingly insulting words? Find out on 12/4.
- Advent 3 (12/11) “New Life in Unexpected Places” – Amazed at the words in the text from Isaiah (35:1-10), I will dig into these images and see whether new life is being offered to us in our unexpected places. Will this Advent Season be the one that excites and enthralls and brings about amazing changes in our lives and the life at Emmanuel? Time will tell how this one turns out.
- Advent 4 (12/18) The Christmas Program will take the place of the Sermon. So, plan to come and receive a seasonal message in a different form, with music and readings, offered by the younger folk.
- Christmas Eve (12/24) “Step Back and Wonder” – With the well-known text from Luke (2:1-20) as the cornerstone, this message will draw us into the experience of the shepherds – common folk invited to witness the event of a lifetime – and how we are invited, as well, into experiencing this event in the common places of our lives.
- Christmas Day (12/25) “What’s Next?” – Using the same text as Christmas Eve, this message will probe how our lives are changed, if at all, by the celebration of Christ’s birth. Does the “event of a lifetime” produce anything lasting in our daily lives? Whatever happened to those shepherds? What will happen to us after Christmas is past?

I wish you, and your families, the very best of God’s Blessings  
for the Advent Season and for the celebration of Christmas!

Rev. Stout

PS: Please remember - I can be reached by phone at 409-658-7136 (cell) or e-mail at [cstout53@earthlink.net](mailto:cstout53@earthlink.net) - please contact me if a need/emergency arises. I will also be available at the Church on Sunday morning or Tuesday usually from 9am-1pm. I can be available by appointment at other times/days that may be more convenient for you.



We have Gift Card Fundraiser through Great Lakes Scrip Center and includes tons of cards – from Advance Auto Parts to Wet Seal (young women’s clothing). By

purchasing the gift card through Great Lake Scrip, our church earns a percentage of the sale price. With this newsletter is a copy of the list and more copies are on the bulletin tables. Just write in the quantity of the cards you want and give the

list and the amount due to Jim Rinehimer. He will order them and distribute them as they arrive. If you have any question, please see Jim. If more lists are needed, please tell Penny.

## Twilighters

The Twilighters will meet on Wednesday, December 14, at 12:00 pm for lunch and fellowship. If you would like more information, see Lois Eigenbrod or Mary Eroh.

## CONGREGATIONAL CORNER

### Mile-marker Birthday

**ESTHER HELLER** will celebrate her 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday on **December 2, 2016**. Let's all wish her a happy birthday by giving her a card shower! Look! It's raining birthday cards!



## ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held on Sunday, December 4, after our Worship Service. The proposed 2017 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 Worship on December 4 for caroling. 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!

## Christmas Cards For Vets

There is a box in the bell tower for Christmas Cards for our local veterans who are residents at the VA Hospital. The last day to put cards in the box is December 18. Thank you for remembering those men and women who served our country.

## Pork Dinner Update

**THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO  
SUPPORTED OUR DINNER!!**

INCOME		
Dinner Income	Surplus Sold	170.00
	148Adult @ \$10	1,480.00
	Advance 198 Adult @ \$10	<u>1,980.00</u>
	Donations	<u>5.50</u>
TOTAL INCOME		3635.50
EXPENSES		
Steve Moyer	Milk and Bread	-50.91
Allen Dennis	Pork, broth, potatoes, celery, carrots	-699.42
Donation	Cabbage & Apples were donated	<u>0.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES		-750.33
DINNER PROFIT		<b>2,885.17</b>

## CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Our program will be presented on Sunday, December 18, during our worship service. Christmas in Song and Scripture, We all know the story of how our Savior was born in a lowly manger in a small town. It seems like every year the scripture passages reporting the events surrounding Jesus' birth are repeated. But do we really listen to them? Our Sunday School is hoping that through our reading of the scripture and the beauty of our songs, you will experience again the wonder of Christmas. As passages recount the events telling of the birth of Jesus, our choirs will present songs adding to our appreciation and understanding of the marvelous gift of God's salvation.

I am asking all children, youth and adult choir members to come to the following practices for the Christmas Program:

Sun., 12/4	9:00 to 9:30 am	Christmas Choir
Sun., 12/11	9:00 to 9:30 am	Christmas Choir
Sat, 12/17	12:30 to 1:30 pm <b>Dress Rehearsal</b>	<b>ALL CAST &amp; CHOIRS</b>
Sun, 12/18	9:00 am (during Sunday School)	<b>ALL CAST &amp; CHOIRS</b>

Everyone involved in the program is urged to come to practices. We need just an hour here and there and this will be a great program.

Thanks to all who volunteer to make our program possible. You are a great bunch of kids and adults and I am always so proud of the way you make our programs come to life.

Denise



Anyone wishing to present music prior to the Christmas Eve 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.

## 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 couple pieces 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 are also collecting **care packages** for distribution to the people served by the McKinney Clinic. Bernie, the director of the clinic, continues to need 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

## UPCOMING DATES

Jan. 8 Epiphany

## The Giving Tree



The Giving Tree has been set up in the Narthex. 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 OFFERING ENVELOPE

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

Phoebe Devitt Home

Bethany Children’s Home

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 still needed to support the General Fund and the local mission of your church.**

## Bethany Christmas List

Copies of the 2017 Christmas Wish List are on the table in the Narthex. Please note that the children at Bethany are teenagers. 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.

If someone could deliver the presents to Bethany, it would be greatly appreciated. I have a schedule of times and dates for deliveries in the office.

## FLOWERS SIGN-UPS

### 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 18.

### ALTAR FLOWER CHART

The 2017 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.



## NEWSLETTER INFO DEADLINE

The deadline for information for the January Messenger is Monday, December 26. Please get all information to me before this date. Thanks, Penny

## Thank you's:

The following letters are posted on the bulletin board in the bell tower:

A thank you letter from Phoebe Ministries for our 2016 Benevolence donation of \$500. Your generosity provides programs and activities for their residents.

A thank you letter from CWS for our CROP Hunger Walk Donation of \$594.00. With your help, vulnerable children are reaching their 5<sup>th</sup> milestone birthday – healthy and well-nourished.

A thank you letter from Bethany Children's Home for our donation of \$500 to Our Wider Church Mission. Our gift helps provide for special programs such as Birthday Parties, Christmas Gifts, Arts, Music, etc.

A thank you letter from PNEC for our donations in the amount of \$2285.83 to support Bethany Children's Home.

## **Come Hear our Candidate Preach on January 8th!**

Dear Friends,

The Search Committee has been working hard these past many months to find a pastor that would be the right fit for our congregation. We reviewed many ministerial profiles looking for the candidate that God put in our path, and through prayer and unanimous consent, we found him in Pastor Louis Aita. On Monday, November 21<sup>st</sup>, the Search Committee presented Pastor Lou to the Consistory and he received unanimous approval.

Pastor Lou grew up in the McAdoo area and comes to us with 15 years of Pastoral experience, having served as organist and assistant minister at Faith UCC in Hazleton, and most recently with the Nuremberg Charge as the head minister for three churches, Emmanuel UCC in Nuremberg, Trinity UCC in Rock Glen, and St. Peter's Union Church in Beaver Valley. Pastor Lou's life story is nothing less than amazing, and we will share it with you in the weeks to come.

The next step in the process is to get your approval. On Sunday, January 8<sup>th</sup> you will have the opportunity to worship with Pastor Lou as he leads our service. This a change from the date announced during service this past Sunday. Immediately following worship, a congregational meeting will be held where all members in good standing of Emmanuel UCC will vote on our candidate, who we hope will be our new pastor. We urge you to attend service on January 8<sup>th</sup> and share in this important decision.

Yours in Christ,  
The EUCC Search Committee and  
The Consistory of Emmanuel UCC

## **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The next **Consistory** meeting will be on Thursday, December 15, at 6:30 pm.

## **VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE DECEMBER**

### December 4

Greeters: Carol Duffy and Diana Decker  
Liturgist: Jim Rinehimer

### December 11

Greeters: Mary Eroh and Judy Cybulski  
Liturgist: Chris Dietrich

### December 18

Greeters: Barb DeLuca and Nelson Horwath  
Liturgist: Ruth Polashenski

### December 24

Greeters: Volunteers Needed  
Liturgist: Jim Stewart

### December 25

Greeters: Volunteers Needed  
Liturgist: Volunteers Needed

## **OUR CLEANING VOLUNTEERS**

Dave Myers  
Jim Rinehimer





1 Ronald Kania  
2 Esther Heller  
2 Bonnie Shafer  
3 David A. Myers  
3 Aaron Kleger  
10 Michael Belanchik

10 Lorrie Slusser  
11 Susanne Kaminski  
15 Kelsey Rinehimer  
18 Sabian Bunnell  
20 Darlene Stein  
21 Mary Rinehimer

24 Lonnie Rinehimer, Sr.  
25 Anthony DiMaria  
26 Russell Koons  
26 Linda Byrnes  
28 Lonnie Rinehimer, Jr.  
31 Sandy Kleger



Dec. 13, 1968 Lonnie and Mary Rinehimer

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