

# The Messenger

January 2017

## SUNDAY, JANUARY 1

### COMMUNION AND COFFEE HOUR

We will celebrate Holy Communion during our worship service on January 1 followed by our coffee hour in the Fellowship Hall. Bring a delicious delectable to share and have a relaxing morning with us.

## WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11

### TWILIGHTERS

The Twilighters will meet on January 11 at 12:00 pm for their monthly meeting. "Admission" is one pot-luck dish to share. We welcome you to come and join us for lunch.



## 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.

## 2017 OFFERING ENVELOPES

Whether you receive a full box of envelopes, a partial, use the pew envelopes or electronic giving, Emmanuel UCC depends upon your support to be a vital influence to our members and our community. Please remember your church and its programs throughout the year. Your gifts are important to continuing the work of Christ through your church. **Consistency is the key.**

**Generous people plan**

to do what is generous,  
and they

**stand firm** in their  
**generosity.**

Isaiah 32:8

## DISTRIBUTION OF OFFERING ENVELOPES

For those members who wish to receive a box of envelopes, they are on the table in the narthex. Please take a box and sign on the sheet next to the number of your box so that Connie can ensure your offering is properly recorded. If you have decided not to take a box and will be giving on a monthly, semimonthly or biweekly schedule, Penny can provide you with labels for your envelopes to help you track your giving.

## Emmanuel United Church of Christ

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## From The Pastor's Desk

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ!

Starting with "Alone, Yet Not Really Alone" (6/19), concluding with "What's Next?" (12/25), and not forgetting the 26 sermons in-between, we have been on a journey together – a journey that has now reached its conclusion. It has been a fascinating time for me, and one for which I am very thankful. I am thankful that I have had the opportunity to share these 28 weeks with you, to learn about you and Emmanuel UCC, to witness your worshiping and working together, to play a small part in your time of searching for a new leader, and to be able to see that search near its end. For the wonderful gifts and the lasting memories that you have given to me, I thank you. I do pray that you will continue in your striving to be faithful followers of Jesus Christ, and that the New Year will bring exciting new developments in your life together. May you be the church in this place, living and sharing the Good News that brings hope and peace and love into a world that is in need of those priceless gifts.

May the very best of God's Blessings be yours for each new day!

Rev. Craig W. Stout



To all congregation members of Emmanuel UCC,

I am so happy to be considered the new Pastor of your beautiful church! I come to you 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, which I share with a Lutheran congregation.

For me, it all began at a small Catholic church in Kelayres PA, (outside of McAdoo), which my family attended. From a young boy, I wanted to be a priest. I knew God was calling me to the service of a church. I began playing the organ for masses at Immaculate Conception when I was 14 years old. I held this position for 9 years.

As a music student attending Misericordia University, I majored in music education and minored in organ and church music. Upon graduation, I accepted a position with the U.S. Army as pianist for the 389<sup>th</sup> Jazz Band. I also played mallet percussion with the concert and marching band.

When my three years of service came to an end, I decided to begin teaching, taking my first assignment with the Newark, NJ. School system. I also taught for the North Bergen School district located in Northern NJ.

As I longed to move back to Pennsylvania, I accepted a job with the PA Department of Corrections as a GED/Adult Basic education instructor, and as organist for Grace UCC which was formerly located on Laurel street in Hazleton (Grace is now immersed in Faith UCC). I spent 10 years in the prison system and was then offered a job with the Hazleton Area School District. I accepted this job as my children were young and I was able to be home with them all summer! Not as easy as it sounds!

With all of the changes in my life, the one thing that remained was my love for God and church and family. I have a wonderful wife Traci, and step-daughters Katie and Alli, my daughter Antonia, and a son Nicholas.

I was licensed as a UCC minister in 2001, and never looked back! My time serving the church in this capacity has been the most satisfying and spiritual experience of my life.

Recently, I completed graduate school attending Capella University and now hold a Master's Degree in Mental Health Counseling and am currently working part time in this field as I complete the required counseling hours for Capella and the state of Pennsylvania.

The only thing that ever slowed me down was a massive stroke I had in March of 2015. This devastated my family and I. Being paralyzed completely on my left side, unable to speak or eat, I faced a life that included a wheelchair and a feeding tube. What healed me was prayer. I am totally convinced of that. My mantra was and is "Be still and know that I am God" taken from Psalm 46 vs. 10. I have decided to not let the stress and pain of my affliction rule my life, but allow these simple

and clear cut words of God to guide me. And guide me well they have! I do walk with a cane, and sometimes have trouble breathing, but I am mobile with a mind that functions better than ever. This is all I wanted, and of course to keep preaching. So, thank you again for this great opportunity to serve Emmanuel UCC and I look forward to meeting every one of you and working with you for the good of God and our Savior Jesus Christ.

God Be With You,  
Pastor Lou Aita



## Thank You

Esther Heller would like to thank everyone for her card shower in celebration on her 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday. It is greatly appreciated.

Lex and Anna Mae Koons would like to Thank those who sent Birthday and Christmas Greetings.

Phoebe Ministeries sent us a Christmas Thank You card. Our gifts to Phoebe help them care for elderly members in their facilities who often have no financial support of their own.

Bernie Baluta sent a cards thanking us for the turkey "Baskets" and Trimmings, as well as the Christmas Gifts; toys, clothing and personal care kits. It is so much appreciated and brought joy to so many people in need.

The Youth and Staff of Bethany Children's Home sent us a Christmas card with beautiful artwork depicting a stainglass of Bethany.

We received a Christmas card from St. Joseph's Center wishing us happiness in the Christmas season and in the coming year.

I would like to thank everyone who supported our Christmas gifts to the McKinney Clinic to be passed out to the children whose families need to use the services of the clinic. The gifts you provided from the Giving Tree were also delivered and distributed to those whose needs are so much greater than ours. Thank you for supporting the Sunday School. Lisa Rinehimer

## Our Condolences

We offer our sincere condolences to the Myers Family on the passing of Sandra Myers, on December 3, 2016. We pray that God's love and strength will sustain you in your time of need and sorrow.

## CONGREGATIONAL CORNER

### TWILIGHTERS LUNCH

The Twilighters will meet on January 11 at 12:00 for lunch. Come join us for food and fellowship.

## Valentines for Vets

A box will be in the bell tower for your Valentines for Vets. These Valentines are appreciated very much by those who are housed at the Wilkes-Barre VA Medical Center. The last date to deposit your Valentines will be Sunday, February 5. Remember those who served.

## 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.

## SCRIPT GIFT CARDS PROFIT REPORT

March	43.50
May	76.34
June	141.35
July	53.90
October	55.00
November	89.45
December	126.50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 586.04</b>

Forms to order the gift cards from Script are on the table in the narthex. This is an easy way for you to donate to our church. Just mark how many cards you want and give the money to Jim. Script gives to the church a discount on purchasing the cards and the difference is donated to the General Fund. There are over a hundred stores from which to choose – fast food from Burger King to Wendy's; restaurants from Applebee's to Ruth's Chris Steak House; sporting goods like Dick's and Cabela's; department and clothing stores from Aerie to Wet Seal; kid's stores like Toys "R" Us and Babies "R" Us; auto shops; pharmacies; and so much MORE!! Grab a form and get some cards – you're going to shop at these stores anyway, so why not help your church while you do?

## CONSISTORY MEETING

The Consistory will meet on **Thursday, January 19**, at 6:30 pm

### UPCOMING DATES

Jan. 6 Epiphany

## PICTURE PERFECT

**Check the front entrance bulletin board for the following pictures:**

Janet Tillet, Leona Brown and Nick Fenstermacher are pictured enjoying a delicious meal at our annual Pork Dinner held on November 19.

Grayson Bunnell is among his preschool classmates enjoying some books at the newly refurbished Story Center in the Mt. Top Kids Learning center and also enjoying a Halloween story time program with the Kirby children's librarian.

Morgan Rinehimer along with other 4-H members were recognized for their achievements during 2015-2016 program year. The award recipients participated in county, district and state 4-H events as well as all 4-H leaders for their year of service.

Michelle Heller is pictured along with her teammates from the Crestwood Girls Soccer Team which reached a school milestone this season, as the first team in the history of Crestwood School District to bring home a District II WVC Division 1 Championship. Congratulations !

## VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

Jan. 1

Greeters: Carol Duffy and Gloria Schreyer

Jan. 8

Greeters: Mary Eroh and Lois Eigenbrod

Jan. 15

Greeters: Diana Decker and Barb DeLuca

Jan. 22

Greeters: Judy Cybulski and Ruth Polashenski

Jan. 29

Greeters: Gene and Janice Broyan

### OUR CLEANING VOLUNTEERS

Dave Myers  
Jim Rinehimer



3 Matteo Belanchick	11 Eli Hoyt	20 Keegan Farrell
4 Kari Hoch	13 Brad Bunnell	22 Dorothy Heller
5 Sherri Hoch	13 Chris Dietrich	22 Mary Horwath
6 Rowan Dietrich	14 Rhonda Madigan	25 Christopher Peters
7 Kevin Price	15 Amanda Kemmerer	26 Ethan Hoyt
9 Donna Aumick	16 James Cybulski	28 Mildred Myers
10 Tarah Slusser	19 Maegan Grosz	28 James Rinehimer



January 1, 1960.....Dave and Barb DeLuca  
 January 14, 2005.....Bob and Carol Duffy

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