

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2007

Issue No. 11 Published Monthly

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

100 White Street

BROOKVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

HOLIDAY EVENTS

We celebrate the beginning of the Advent Season by sharing in the **Sacrament of Holy Communion** on Sunday, December 2nd.

The **Advent study** on Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" will continue on Tuesday evenings, 7 p.m.

December 4th, 11th and 18th, in the education building.

Presbyterian Women will meet on Thursday, December 6th, 9:30 a.m. in the education building.

Breakfast will be served. Betty Grunstra will present the program which will have a Christmas theme. Joyce Johnson will be the hostess and have devotions. Come, bring a friend and share in the fellowship of this most joyous season.

REMEMBER - **ALL** women are welcome!

Our **annual Advent Dinner**, hosted by the Deacons, will be held Sunday, December 9th, immediately following worship in the education building. You are asked to bring a salad or dessert to share. Meat, potatoes, vegetable, rolls and beverages will be provided by the Deacons. If you have not signed a reservation slip, please phone the church office, as soon as possible, so that we know how many to plan for.

Christmas Eve is always a special time in our church. The annual **pageant** will be held at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. The pageant features youth and adults acting out the Christmas Story. It is primarily for children and their parents but all who enjoy the beautiful story are invited!!

The traditional **Candlelight Worship** will be held at 11:00 p.m.

Come and Let Us Adore Him!

Our sanctuary Christmas decorations will again include our memorial

“Poinsettia Tree.”

We invite members and friends to purchase memorial poinsettias for display in the tree.

The pots must be of a certain size to fit, therefore, your flower should be ordered through

the church office (849-2413) rather than directly. Please place your order no later than

December 12th. Cost per plant is \$8.00.

WHAT IS THE CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING?

Presbyterians have long celebrated the birth of Jesus Christ by giving generously to an Advent offering. The Christmas Joy Offering dates back to the 1930's when the former Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) began an offering to supplement inadequate retirement income and provide supplemental medical insurance for former ministers, missionaries, church workers and their families. It was first officially called the Joy Gift in 1949.

In the former United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (UPCUSA) a Christmas offering, called the White Gift, was first taken in 1960. Its funds were used for general mission and world relief. In subsequent years, the name changed with receipts providing support for health and welfare concerns related to children, global work with children, assistance for former servants of the church, racial ethnic education and nursing home care assistance.

In 1988 PCUS and UPCUSA offerings were joined and in 1989 the offering was renamed the Christmas Joy Offering. In 1991 the 203rd General Assembly changed the distribution of funds to 50% to the Board of Pensions and 50% to Presbyterian racial ethnic schools and colleges.

This year's theme is **“Good News of Great Joy”** The gift we celebrate at Christmas is forever new and astonishing: God's love is with us, accompanying us and working to transform us. As we open our hearts to that love, we find it will not be contained, but yearns to be shared with others.

Included in this Newsletter is a brochure. Please take a few minutes to read the bulletin inserts during Advent providing more specific information on how the offering is used. We will receive the offering on Sunday, December 23rd.

ADVENT STUDY

The Advent Study continues on Tuesday evenings at 7 p.m. in the education building. The Bible study is based on Charles Dicken's “A Christmas Carol.” Upcoming sessions will consider the character of Scrooge and his attitude of selfishness; Marley and the Ghost of Christmas past and the theme of regret; the Ghost of Christmas present and our need to repent; and the Ghost of Christmas future and celebrate the salvation of Scrooge. Around the world, two Christmas stories are most beloved - the story of the Birth of Christ and Charles Dicken's

Christmas Carol. You may still join us for “the rest of the series.”

Sunday Morning Adult Education

December 2 nd	“Called to Believe!” Men’s Class Women’s Class	Luke 1: 8-23 T.J. Parlette
December 9 th	“Called to Be a Vessel!” Men’s Class Women’s Class	Luke 1: 26-38 Jerry Paden Sue Moser
December 16 th	“Called to Proclaim!” Men’s Class Women’s Class	Luke 1: 67-80 Bill Kutz Judi Paden
December 23 rd	“Called to Rejoice!” Men’s Class Women’s Class	Luke 2: 1-14 Don Musgrave Joyce Johnson
December 30 th	“Called to Witness!” Men’s Class Women’s Class	Luke 2: 22-35 Paul Gray Judy Greeley

Nursery workers for December:

December 2 nd	Joni Kerr
December 9 th	Kathy Sobol
December 16 th	Judi & Jerry Paden
December 23 rd	
December 30 th	

Congratulations to Lori and Paul Gray on the birth of their son, Ethan Paul, October 24, 2007.

Ethan is the grandson of Pat and Don Gray.

WELCOME BACK Please take a few minutes to welcome John Cummings back to Brookville Presbyterian. John was away from the area for a number of years.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS for INMATES

As noted in last month’s Newsletter, we are ministering again this year to those in prison by collecting boxes of Little Debbie snack cakes and 7 (or 8) ounce Hershey’s candy bars. On November 25th, we received the Little Debbies and on December 2nd, we will receive the candy bars. If you prefer, you may bring in your donation all at once to the church office. Thank you for participating in this Advent Mission project.

PAPER PRODUCTS for the FOOD PANTRY

On December 9th, we would like to invite you to bring some paper products (paper towels, kleenex, toilet paper, napkins) with you to worship. Our Food Pantry is unable to find a supplier who will give them a good deal on these items and therefore has to pay higher prices for these items. To offset that cost, we are asking that you bring one or two items (more if you are able) of your choice to worship on December 9th. Our donations will then be collected by the Food Pantry to assist our local brothers and sisters.

Clouds nod as they pass
 Stars shine with brilliance
Within the cosmos there is heard
 A great chorus
Angels having special solos
 The fabric of life taking on new texture
Smiles come more easily
 Hands reach out less hesitantly to strangers
Lions and calves walk peacefully together
 Hungry are fed
Lame walk
 A special star shown with great brilliance
To lead the way
 And it came to pass
It was Christmas.

*A blessed Advent, a joyous Christmas
and a Happy New Year
from your Church staff.*

Raymond Hearn

Officer Training Scheduled

If you have just been elected an Elder or Deacon, please try to attend the following training sessions:

For Elders - Sunday, January 13th, 9:30 a.m. in the parlor

For Deacons - Wednesday, January 2nd, 6:30 p.m. in the parlor

New officers, Elders, Deacons and Trustees will be ordained and installed during worship on Sunday, January 13th.

FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Applying Bible Principles

A Christian business owner once observed, "I would rather do business with a non-Christian any day than with a Christian." His statement was a descriptive commentary on a sad state in the lives of some Christians who fail to pay their bills or to deal with

their debts as promised.

A debt simply represents a promise to pay. Nothing more. Nothing less. Whether the debt is to purchase a car, a house, braces for the kids' teeth, or to facilitate a purchase by using a credit card, the issue is the same. By creating a debt, we also create simultaneously an obligation and promise to pay.

Larry Burkett wrote this, "To define debt is not simple, but basically, it's an obligation to pay that can't be kept ... probably forty percent of all American families are in debt in a typical year. They're unable to make the monthly payments on the money they borrowed. Many actually borrow more money to make payments on the money they've already borrowed."

We who are Christians >of all people< should pay our debts, not only for our reputations and personal integrity, but also because what we do is a direct reflection on our Lord. Or as the Apostle Paul expressed it so clearly in 1 Thessalonians 4: 11-12, we are to behave properly towards people who are outside the family of God and outside His church.

Psalm 37: 21 says that to borrow (to create a debt) and then not repay it is wrong. But on a positive note, this same verse also says that the person who is righteous shows mercy by repaying debts and by giving to the needs of others.

By the way, do people know you're a Christian by how you pay your bills and by how you give to others?

As of November 21st, **pledges** have been received totaling **\$66,205**. If you have not returned your commitment card estimating your contributions for next year, please do so. If you need a commitment card, please contact Judy Greeley or Judi Paden in the church office.

IN SYMPATHY

Florence Newhouse
A member of our congregation from
May 24, 1953 to November 10, 2007