



Circuit Rider

St. Paul's United Methodist Church
714 Herbertsville Road
Brick, NJ 08724

December, 2007

From the Pastor's Desk

*Joy to the world the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room, and heaven and nature sing.*

*Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ,
While field and floods, rocks, hills and plains. Repeat the sounding joy.*

*No more let sins and sorrow grow; Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow, Far as the curse is found.*

*He rules the world with truth and grace, And make the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness, And wonders of His love.*

One of my favorite Christmas Hymns is "Joy to the World." The music is uplifting and joyful and the words are deeply meaningful. It sparks how we need to be ready and make room in our heart for Jesus to come. The reality is that every person has a hole only God can fill. We need to be open and listen to the truth of our sin and need for a savior. When we realized and applied those truths we rejoiced.

Then as we grew in Christ we allowed God to take control, be in control, reign in our day to day living. Decisions were no longer based on what we wanted but what God wanted of our time, talent, and treasures.

Now with God in control, the boss of our lives, we realized that we are no longer captive, controlled by sin. Jesus came to conquer sin.

And now we look forward to Christ's return, when He will rule the world with truth and grace. Truth without love is dogmatism, love without truth is sentimentality, but truth with love is true Christianity.

Jesus has come into our hearts, Rejoice!
Jesus is our Savior, Rejoice!
Sin is conquered, Rejoice!
Christ will rule, Rejoice!

Is Jesus your Savior? Is Jesus your Lord? Does sin have control of you or does God? Are you anticipating Christ's return?

This is the blessing of the birth of Jesus that light has come into the darkness. Where there was no hope, now we have hope. Jesus can be our Savior and Lord. Jesus can forgive us for our sin and give us power to conquer sin. These are the truths that truly set us free.

ADVENT

Advent is the beginning of the Church Year for most churches in the Western tradition. It begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day, which is the Sunday nearest November 30, and ends on Christmas Eve (Dec 24).

Historically, the primary sanctuary color of Advent is **Purple**. This is the color of penitence and fasting as well as the color of royalty to welcome the Advent of the King. The purple of Advent is also the color of suffering used during Lent and Holy Week. This points to an important connection between Jesus' birth and death. The nativity, the Incarnation, cannot be separated from the crucifixion.

The word **Advent** means "coming" or "arrival." The focus of the entire season is the celebration of the birth of Jesus the Christ in his First Advent, and the anticipation of the return of Christ the King in his Second Advent.

The beginning of Advent is a time for the hanging of the green, decoration of the church with evergreen wreaths, boughs, or trees that help to symbolize the new and everlasting life brought through Jesus the Christ.

The Advent wreath is a circular evergreen wreath (real or artificial) with five candles, four around the wreath and one in the center. The **circle of the wreath** reminds us of God Himself, His eternity and endless mercy, which has no beginning or end. The **green of the wreath** speaks of the hope that we have in God, the hope of newness, of renewal, of eternal life. **Candles** symbolize the light of God coming into the world through the birth of His son. The **four outer candles** represent the period of waiting during the four Sundays of Advent, which themselves symbolize the four centuries of waiting between the prophet Malachi and the birth of Christ.

The **colors of the candles** are usually three purple, corresponding to the sanctuary colors of Advent, and one pink candle. One of the purple candles is lit the first Sunday of Advent, a Scripture is read, a short devotional or reading is given, and a prayer offered. On subsequent Sundays, previous candles are relit with an additional one lit. The pink candle is usually lit on the third Sunday of Advent.

The **light of the candles** itself becomes an important symbol of the season. The light reminds us that Jesus is the light of the world that comes into the darkness of our lives to bring newness, life, and hope. It also reminds us that we are called to be a light to the world as we reflect the light of God's grace to others (Isa 42:6). The progression in the lighting of the candles symbolizes the various aspects of our waiting experience. As the candles are lighted over the four week period, it also symbolizes the darkness of fear and hopelessness receding and the shadows of sin falling away as more and more light is shed into the world. The flame of each new candle reminds the worshippers that something is happening, and that more is yet to come. Finally, the light that has come into the world is plainly visible as the Christ candle is lighted at Christmas, and worshippers rejoice over the fact that the promise of long ago has been realized.



Hello St. Paul's,

One way that the Bible describes God's people is 'the Body of Christ.' We are not all the same part with the same function, but each one of us individually makes up a part of that body with our own gifting from the Holy Spirit. And the Body of Christ is much larger than our own church; it's all of the believers in Christ throughout time and space! We have brothers and sisters in the Lord that we've never even met yet, not only in other parts of the world but even here in our own community.

One youth event that has sprung up in recent months is a thing called Community Worship Night. This event takes place on the first Saturday of every month and is geared towards evangelism and bringing local area youth groups together for a joint time of worship. This event gives students from different youth groups an opportunity to experience being a part of the Body of Christ in our area and not only in their own churches. The students from St. Paul's' youth group enjoy being a part of the event each month, and it gives those who have attended this summer's mission trip to Camden an opportunity to stay in touch with each other.

Hopefully, as time goes on, the event will also serve as something that the youth will feel they want to invite their unsaved friends to; an environment that is fun, worshipful, and where youth who do not yet know Christ will hear the gospel preached.

As I write this letter, confirmation is just beginning in the youth ministry at St. Paul's. The students so far have been encouraged to write and share their personal testimonies with one another, and we will be getting into discussion about what faith in Christ is all about and having assurance of our salvation in Him.

Please keep the youth ministry of St. Paul's and the Community Worship Night in your prayers – that the students will become strengthened in the Spirit, that Christ would dwell in their hearts through faith, and that they will be rooted and grounded in the love of God more and more as we approach the time of His return.

And... Have a Merry Christmas!

Matt K.



Hanging of the Greens

We will meet in the sanctuary on **Saturday December 1st at 10:00am** for the hanging of greens. We are planning a time of fellowship beforehand with breakfast goodies at 9:30am. If

you would like more information please contact Judy. If you and your family are interested in participating in this event, please fill out the tear-off below and place in the offering plate.

I am interested in participating in the Hanging of the Greens

Name(s)

Number attending _____



Pizza & Caroling

For All Church Family

Set aside *Tuesday, December 18th*, for an evening to bring special love to our nursing homes residents. We will meet at church at 6:00 PM for pizza. We will then go Christmas Caroling to several nursing homes and meet back at church for hot chocolate and donuts. All ages are invited and encouraged to join us for this special evening. It is a time to forget about the pressures of the holidays and bring the real meaning of Christmas to others. A sign-up chart is on the wall across from the offices. Please

sign up even if you don't want pizza. There will be a \$2.00/person or \$5.00/family charge for the refreshments.



**CHANCEL CHOIR CHRISTMAS CANTATA
&
CHRISTMAS CONCERT BAND**

St. Paul's Chancel Choir and Christmas Concert Band will present their Christmas cantata and concert on **December 15 and 16**, Saturday and Sunday nights, at 7:30 PM.

The **Chancel Choir** will present "Noel". This brand new musical by David Clydesdale, is an exciting compilation of a variety of some of the best Christmas music ever written. It is a musical collection of Christmas moments that starts with the excitement and fun of the Christmas season with our trees, shopping, and winter scenes and then takes us to the reason we celebrate the season---to the manger—to our Lord Jesus' birth. The music is exhilarating, fun, and beautiful and includes many well-known and new Christmas songs to be sung by choir, youth, and congregation as well as great pageantry involving members of St. Paul's Church family.

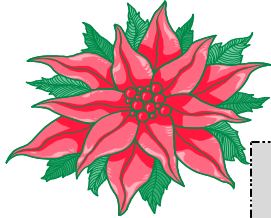
Our **Christmas Concert Band** will present some great Christmas music as well. We are planning on presenting different styles, from traditional Christmas songs to classical and even a "swing" Christmas number. Our Concert Band is made up of woodwinds, brass, and percussion players from St. Paul's and the communities around us, ages 7th grade through adult. It is a unique ensemble and we are excited to involve our church and community in this instrumental outreach.

Please mark these dates on your calendar today and invite family and friends to join us. It is sure to be a great part of your Christmas celebrations.

Barbara
Director of Music



POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS



UMM CHRISTMAS TREE SALES



United Methodist Men are now taking orders for Christmas Poinsettias. If you would like to purchase a Poinsettia, please fill out the form below and return with your payment. The form and money can be placed in the collection plate, sent or given directly to the Church office.

Christmas Eve Services
5:00 PM Family Service
7:30 PM Candlelight Service
11:00 PM Candlelight / Communion Service

United Methodist Men are selling trees
 Starting November 24th
 From 5pm to 9pm Monday thru Friday
 From 9am to 8pm Saturday
 Closed on Sunday

The cost of each plant is \$7.00,
Checks payable to St. Paul's U.M.M.

Snowbirds



Sign up chart to help sell trees will be up in the Narthex or outside Eleanor Norcross Fellowship Hall in November.

PLEASE RETURN BY DECEMBER 9, 2007

Thank You

ORDER FORM	
Name:	_____
Address:	_____
Phone:	_____
In Loving Memory Of:	_____
In Honor Of:	_____
POINSETTIA	QTY _____
TOTAL \$ ENC.	_____
I want to take my plant home	

If you will be leaving New Jersey for warmer climes over the winter please let the office know. We will hold your Circuit Rider for your return. The post office does not forward Circuit Riders and charges us \$0.37 to return them to the church. Please include an estimated return date so we can start sending the Circuit Rider to you when you return.

Name _____

Address _____

Thank you to all who opened their homes, volunteered to lead a group and made the commitment to participate in the "50 Days of God's Love" study. It has been a wonderful time of sharing and growing in the Lord which we pray will continue and lead to deeper understanding for all.

IN FAITH WE GROW STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

We will be starting a new 3 year stewardship campaign in the Fall culminating with a Sunday service in November where we will be asking everyone to make a new 3 year commitment. The campaign will run concurrent

with our study "50 Days of God's Love".

Thanks to all who have given to the Lord and St Paul's expansion these past few years. For the first 39 weeks in 2007, we have given \$85,886 which is about \$847 short of our mortgage commitment. In 2006, we gave \$87,097 in the first 39 weeks which paid our mortgage and gave us a \$364 surplus. Please be in prayer as the Lord leads each one in how to invest our treasures in the coming year.

Financial Update Regarding the 20 Year Mortgage:

Monthly mortgage payment.....\$9,637.00

"Treasure given for Sept (5 weeks)..... \$11,123"

Current Mortgage Debt.....\$1,242,896.00

20 year mortgage with an interest rate of 5.75%

Reading 2 Cor 9:7-8, Mark 6:32-44

Key Thought : God loves givers who give with the right attitude.

Reflection

Imagine the feelings of the disciples when Jesus took those five loaves of bread and two small fish and turned them into a feast for thousands. Think of the hilarious joy they felt while handing out food to the hungry, seeing God multiply it as long as they kept sharing. What a beautiful picture of what it's like for us when we give from the endless supply of resources He has entrusted to us.

Let us pray that when we are prompted by the Holy Spirit to give, we do not talk ourselves out of it or delay so long that the opportunity to give will pass and thereby rob us of an opportunity to share in the joy from above.

Envelopes

If you currently do not use envelopes and would like to start receiving them please call the office (732) 458-2080. We will be issuing new envelope numbers starting with the January, 2008 envelopes.

Commitment Cards

Thank you to all who turned in commitment cards during the Consecration Sunday service. If you have not turned in your commitment card yet, you may place it in the offering basket or turn it in to the office. There are blank cards available on the bookrack in the back of the Sanctuary.

professor of Biblical and Systematic Studies at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. To encourage more people from St. Paul's to attend the church is giving a \$25 up-front discount per person. This will be a great opportunity for you to get away, relax and recharge your spiritual batteries. For more information contact the office at 732-458-2080

Kids Alley Christmas Bags

It's once again that time of year when we join together to help out the children of Kids Alley. This year we will be filling gift bags with items that will keep them warm and make them smile. Each bag has a tag on it that includes the items that should be included, their age range and whether it's for a girl or boy. The bags are due in by December 9th and we'll be taking them down the following Saturday, December 15th.

Also, if you are the sponsor of a child please remember them with a gift and a note from you. The money sent for sponsorship is needed, but letting the kids know they are loved and cared for is what gives them hope. Any questions contact Leisa

Delanco Camp Meeting Winter Retreat

All members of St. Paul's UMC are invited to the Delanco Camp Meeting Winter Retreat taking place in Lancaster, PA at the Eden Resort Inn and Suites February 29th - March 2nd 2008. The theme for the weekend is "Growing in Holiness". The speaker for the weekend is Dr. Thomas H. McCall, assistant



CHRISTMAS MISSION BAGS FOR LEXINGTON HOUSE



"CALLING ALL ANGELS - It is that time again when

all of our St. Paul's Angels come to the aid of the residents at Lexington House.

Each Christmas, through all of your generous contributions, the Warming Hearts Mission is able to distribute 150 mission bags to the residents, filled with their very basic needs. The following is a list of items that are needed to fill the mission bags. We would appreciate it if you could include, in the enclosed plastic bag, only the regular size (no trial or large size) and similar items.

- Shampoo
- Deodorant (stick or roll-on)
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrush
- 1 bar Soap (no liquid)
- Lip Balm (i.e., Chapstick)

We are also looking for these additional items to distribute:

- 2008 Calendars,
- Socks (male & female; white & colors)
- Butter Cookies (tin containers only, please)
- Travel Size tissues
- Christmas Candy (Candy Canes, Kisses, Miniature Chocolates)
- Warm Hats & Gloves

Please place your contributions in the large container marked "*Lexington House*", near the inside church mailboxes, **by Sunday, December 2, 2007**. If you have any questions, please contact, Donna.

As always, "Thank You Angels, for your generosity in supporting the Lexington House Mission."

Senior Joy

Senior Joy will meet on Thursday, December 13th at 12:30. Bring a sandwich, dessert will be provided. We will be entertained by Al Rando (the blind pianist) and Josephine Leitz singing. Please join us For information call Ruth

December Dinner Night



When:
December,
8 2007

Where:
**Norcross
Hall**

Time:
6:00 pm

Entertainment
: TBA



Fresh Ham
Fish
Vegetables
Bread and Butter
Salad
Dessert

For the kids
Chicken Fingers, Hot
Dogs, Mac & Cheese

Baptism
Congratulations!

Congratulations to the parents of the following children who were baptized at St. Paul's this Fall:

Joy's November 2007 Monthly Memo Comfort Food Yei, South Sudan

It's pumpkin season in South Sudan. Yesterday Denise, Pastor Simon, the Sudanese Pastor Simon – quite confusing since we also have a Kenyan Pastor Simon on the team too, and I returned home from a trip to Lainya where we met with our contacts who will receive Bibles there. Each village we drove through found pumpkins lined up under the shade of the mango trees where the women were selling their meager fruits and vegetables.

Today I retrieved my solar cooker out of storage where I sent some of my 'things' when I left Lui a few months ago and I hope to be able to make some pumpkin bread and maybe even a pumpkin pie. Tis the season. . . and although I won't be eating turkey this Thursday it's nice to indulge in a few seasonal traditions when

possible. Pumpkins are comfort food at Thanksgiving.

Kind of the same way the Scripture is comfort food during rough times. That's why we're so excited to be able to get the Word of God into the hands of the Sudanese. A pastor from Malakal visited me this week. Malakal is an area where I will be headed in a little over a week to help my colleague Brent get started in mobilizing the churches to receive Bibles. Rev. Both said that ten years ago soldiers from north Sudan came through their villages and burned their churches down and threw their Bibles into the river. The Sudanese know what persecution is about.

It's my prayer this Thanksgiving holiday that the words found in the book of Hebrews will be comfort food to the people of Sudan. "Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess for he who promised is faithful." Hebrews 10:23

Here are some specific praises and requests:

Praises

* A good start for the Bari and Zande language mobilizations. We actually underestimated the Bari distribution and have had to go back and ask people to reduce the number of Bibles they will receive. So far, so good.

If you'd like to learn more about the people of these language groups go to: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bari_people

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Azande>

*Purchase of motorcycles to facilitate the Bible Distribution

Coordinators getting around for the mobilization of the Bible distribution

* Safety on the roads and good health of the team
* The Bibles have been shipped from the printers and are now on the high seas due to reach the port of Mombasa, Kenya in late December

Requests

* Good relationships and communication with government and church leaders as we venture into areas of Sudan where Samaritan's Purse has not worked before

*God-chosen men still to be hired in Kenya and Sudan by the end of the year

* Prepared hearts and minds of the over 250,000 people who will receive a Bible * Synthesis of the logistics of transporting, storing, and moving the Bibles to the training sites

I'm thankful for the hope we have in Jesus Christ. whether it is through trying circumstances, an unclear future, or outright persecution, our God is faithful. I'm also thankful for you, my support team, who have so generously supported me financially, in prayer, and through encouraging emails. That all may hear, or read, the message of hope!

Joy

Joy is serving in East Africa with World Gospel Mission and Samaritan's Purse, P.O. Box 76143, 00508 Yaya Towers, Nairobi, Kenya

Financial gifts can be sent to: World Gospel Mission

P.O. Box 948
Marion, IN 46952-0948

UGANDA – 2008

St. Paul's is planning a Work/Ministry trip to Uganda from August 8-23, 2008. We will be having an informational meeting on Monday, January 14, 2008 at 6:00pm. If you wish to journey with us to Africa please plan to attend this meeting.



JOY
to the
world!





St. Paul's United Methodist Church December 2007



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Weekly Events & Meetings - - - > 9:00 Sunday School 9:00 Trad. Worship Service 9:00 & 10:45 Childcare- Rm 1 10:10 Fellowship – Norcross Hall 10:45 Contmp. Worship Service 6:30PM Vortex 8:00 Alcoholics Anonymous	7:00PM Senior High Youth	7:00PM Junior High Youth 7:30 Safe Place 8:00 Men's Basketball	6:00AM Men's Breakfast 10:00 Staff Meeting 10:00 Ladies Share Grp-Penrods 4:30PM Cherub Choir 6:00 Handbell Choir 6:30 Workteam Lib. & Offices 6:30 Volleyball 7:00 Adult Bible Study	2:00PM Agape Homeschoolers - Nursery 6:00 Women's Bible Study 7:00 Boy Scout Trp 33 7:00 Carol Choir 7:00 Celebration Choir 7:00 Bible Study – Pastor's Notes 8:00 Chancel Choir	9:00AM Bulletin Team 7:00 PM Praise & Worship 8:00 OC Anon	7:00AM Men's Disciple
						1 9:30 Hanging of the Greens - Sanctuary 7pm Youth Community Worship Night - Norcross
2 First Sunday of Advent 12 Kid's Alley Luncheon	3 6:00PM Brownie Tr 1310 7:00 Trustees Mtg 7:00 Council on Ministries	4 7:00pm UMW Exec Bd Mtg	5 7:30pm Christmas Band	6	7. SPCS Jesus Birthday 	8 SPCS Daddy's Day Christmas Store – At St. Thomas 6:30pm Fellowship Dinner
9 Second Sunday of Advent	10 7:00pm Finance	11 12noon Rebecca Circle 7:30pm Deborah Circle	12 7:30pm Lydia Circle 7:30pm Christmas Band	13 12:30pm Senior Joy	14	15 8am Men's Breakfast 7:30pm Cantata
16 Third Sunday of Advent 7:30pm ChriCantata	17 6:00PM Brownie Tr 1310	18 6:00pm Pizza & Caroling 	19	20	21	22
23 Fourth Sunday of Advent	24 Christmas Eve Services 5pm, 7:30pm, 11pm	25 Christmas Day	26	27	28	29
30	31 New Year's Eve Office Closed					