

CONCORD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2832 Conway Wallrose Road

Baden, PA 15005

A Message from Your Pastor

December 2011

“Now we rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God—all because of what our Lord Jesus Christ has done...making us friends of God. –Romans 5:11

Much of history is the story of conflict. Over the past 5,560 years there have been close to 15,000 wars, and these are only the ones we know about. Today in the world there are thirty two large and small wars going on. We human beings don't seem to be very good at living in peace with one another. We're much better at disagreeing, fighting, and feuding. A hundred years ago, it was the general consensus of learned people if we could just get the world educated, all the wars would vanish. But after two world wars occurred among the most educated nations on the planet, that naïve optimism has vanished. Without a transformation of the heart, education simply allows us to think up more sophisticated ways to kill one another. There are many brilliant people in prison. An educated mind does not automatically produce a peaceful heart. What the world desperately needs is reconciliation.

Reconciliation is the restoration of peace. Peace with God, peace with others, and peace in your own heart. It is the powerful miracle cure for broken lives and relationships. Reconciliation defuses conflict and turns chaos into calmness. It quiets quarrels. It produces peace of mind instead of panic. But the spirit of reconciliation seems to be in short supply today.

To the shepherds of Bethlehem, the angels announced the arrival of the “Prince of Peace.” Jesus came not only to teach the way of peace, but to empower us to live lives of peace if we would only trust him. ***“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”***—Luke 2:14 But what we see around us today is anything but peace on earth. Rudeness, not kindness, is on the rise. There are all types of conflict—between races, nationalities, language and religious groups, political and ethnic parties, and between rich and poor, haves and have not's. As a pastor I am constantly having to deal with interpersonal conflicts in marriages, families, offices, neighbors, Little League, and, yes, between church members. The sad result of all this conflict is that the world is strewn with the debris of broken homes, damaged children, discarded friendships, and destroyed partnerships.

If I asked you where you would like to see peace this Christmas, you might answer: “With my parents, my kids, or my in-laws.” Maybe you'd like to see the end of political bickering on TV. Perhaps you are struggling with peace of mind and heart. Maybe you'd like to see a more peaceful neighborhood where people respect one another and wouldn't be so rude. Some of you would like to have peace in your marriage and if that doesn't soon happen, your marriage will be over. Maybe you long for world peace.

Is peace on earth really possible? Is it at all possible when current culture conditions us to be cynical and sarcastic, to use put-downs and name calling, to demean and demonize those who believe differently?

The starting point to peace in your life is to understand the causes of conflict. There are many, but here are two big ones. The first is our natural self-centeredness. By nature I want everything my way, and you want it your way. That causes my agenda to clash with yours. If neither of us is willing to compromise out of love, sparks fly. Even when you love someone it doesn't mean you're going to agree on everything. Our pride gets in the way of our desire for peace. Proverbs 13:10 says, "***Only by pride cometh contention.***"

A second common, but less understood, cause of conflict is expecting others to meet needs in our lives that only God can meet. We make demands of others instead of looking to God. So many people get married with unrealistic expectations and then divorce. No human being can fully meet all your needs. That's the job of God.

Instead of complaining and blaming others for your unmet needs, the Bible recommends asking God to help you. It says, "***What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God.***"—James 4:1-2 If we prayed as much as we complain and quarrel, we'd have a lot less to argue about and much more peace of mind.

I attended a seminar one time on stress management. One of the suggestions the instructor gave for stress relief was "Unload your stress by telling it to an unconditional listener." Then he quickly added, "The best way to do this is to talk to your pet." Can you imagine pouring your heart out to your hamster? Pets are great, but they can't help you resolve the conflicts in your life that are at the root of your stress.

The apostle Paul had a much better suggestion: "***Don not worry about anything, but pray and ask God for everything you need, always giving thanks. And God's peace, which is so great we cannot understand it, will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.***"—Philippians 4:6-7

There will never be peace in the world until there is peace within nations. And there will never be peace within nations until there is peace within communities. And there won't be peace in communities until there is peace in families. And there won't be peace in families until there is peace in our individual lives. Peace won't happen until the Prince of Peace reigns in our hearts. The good news is that Jesus came at Christmas to bring peace — peace with God, peace with others and peace with self. But peace won't happen unless we surrender—totally and unconditionally to God. Why should we surrender to God? Well, one fact is certain: there is no way to win a war against God. As Job's friend said, "***Stop quarreling with God. If you agree with him, you will have peace at last, and things will go well for you.***"—Job 22:21

May the peace of Christ be with you this blessed Christmas.

Rev. Jean Smith, Interim Pastor



MESSAGE FROM REV. JEAN SMITH

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Church Life

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People

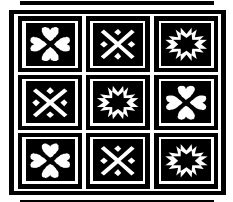
*Thanks from Webelos Troop #414
December Birthdays/Anniversaries
Worship Volunteers*

December Calendar

THE CHURCH IN MISSION

During last week's Mission Moment, Tom Umstott presented information about Gideons International. If you would like to send a donation to support their work around the world, their mailing address is Gideons International, P. O. Box 386, Beaver, 15009.

Our sewing group provided 12 blankets to Habitat for Humanity. We have now donated a total of 2,523 blankets to various organizations.



Our group will only be meeting on December 7th and December 14th from 12:30 - 2:30. If you need a grab bag gift, please check out the items that we have for sale.

Also, we have made 31 more pillowcases for the troops. We have sent a total of 784.

We would like to thank all of you for your continued support and wish all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Twenty children's names have been identified by C.A.S.T. All gifts should be wrapped and returned by **Sunday, December 18th** to the designated basket located in the vestibule.



Contact Warrena Merryman 724.462.8438 if you have any questions. Thanks for helping to make this year's Christmas brighter for those less fortunate

We will be cooking and serving at the Ladle on **Monday, December 12th**.

The dessert we will be serving is mixed cookies. If you wish to donate some cookies, drop them off at the church between 10:00am and 3:30pm on the 12th



Servers are needed at the Ladle in Ambridge. A sign-up sheet is available at the church.

The **2012** dates that we will be cooking and serving for the Ladle are: April 9, 2012; July 9, 2012; Aug 27, 2012; and December 10, 2012

THE CHURCH IN PRAYER

Prayer List

Prayer Chain

Alice/Jim Ward 724.266.6776 ↓
Pat Guthrie 724.869.2705 ↓
Robin/Dan Hall 724.869.0801 ↓
Bea Roby 724.869.9577 ↓
Eleanor Eisenbrown 724.774.1568 ↓
Shelda/Chuck Rudich 724.266.5403 ↓
Marie/Bob Dewar 724.869.5278 <i>(leave message on Church machine 724.869.9135</i>

The Prayer Chain consists of those who are available for special prayer in time of emergency need. If there is a special need which needs immediate prayer, please call anyone on the prayer chain to activate the chain.



The people listed below are those with various ongoing needs for whom we are praying on a regular basis, including each week during worship. If you would like to include someone's name on this list, please provide the pertinent information to Rhoda Grossman.

DAVE AMES – (member of Concord)
Heart-related issues

WINNIE BOWMAN – underwent back surgery

ANN BUFALINI – (Cindy Hartsell's friend)
Battling lupus and cancer

KATHY CONTENTA – (Evelyn Warren's niece)
Suffers from MS and needs carpal tunnel surgery

DEBBIE CROSBY – (Kathy Jones' sister)
Needs heart transplant

JOHN DEWAR – (Bob Dewar's brother)
Suffered stroke

MARIE DEWAR – (member of Concord) Job concerns

DORIS EASTERDAY - (member of Concord)

DALE GASS – (Greta Penn's father)

TAMMY GREEN – (Rhoda Grossman's co-worker in Arkansas) Battling breast cancer

EARL GREENWALD (member of Concord)
Recovering from knee replacement surgery

JOYCE GRIFFIN – (Jim/Karen Wylie's daughter)
Continued prayers for good health

LINDA GROSSMAN – (Rhoda Grossman's sister)
Prayers for health and well being in Portland, OR

CINDY HARTSELL – (member of Concord)

CHUCK HAWK – (Judy Hawk's husband)
Tractor trailer accident in Ohio

BOB JOHNSON – (member of Concord)
Pneumonia, then colds, flue and weak health

MARIE JONES – (member of Concord)

PAUL JONES – (member of Concord)

RALPH JONES – (Janet Gilson's father)

BETTY KARDASZ – (Virginia Kardasz's mother-in-law)
Health problems

Monthly Prayer Schedule

Session continues to urge you to join us in prayer on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. If you feel out of your comfort zone by praying aloud, you are still



welcome to join us and pray in silence. Take a half hour out of your busy life for Christ...isn't your eternal life worth it?

This list needs to be kept up-to-date, so if you have put someone's name on this list and it becomes no longer necessary for them to remain on the list, please notify Rhoda directly.

KENNEDY FAMILY – (Gilson family friends)

NATHAN DANIEL KUSTRA – (grandson of Fred Simonds' friend) Born with spinal bifida

AGNESS LAUDENSLAGER – (John Laudenslager's mother)
Fell and broke hip

JOYCE LINT – (Shelda Rudich's mother)
Battling pneumonia and leg pain associated from a stroke

HUXLEY LIPSCOMB – (member of Concord)

JESSICA MARCHIONDA - (Linda Martin's daughter)
Battling cancer

DEBBIE MCGILL – (member of Concord)
Diagnosed with Parkinson's

JEFF NEELY – (member of Concord)
Suffered massive heart attack; recuperating after successful bypass surgery

TODD NEELY – (member of Concord)
Serving in the Marines

JEANINE OWENS – (Dave Jones co-worker's wife)

ANN PARKS – (Concord member)
Recovering from hip surgery

KAROL PONEVAC - (Pearl Dunlap's friend)
Suffered a stroke

GLORIA PRIESTLEY – (member of Concord)

LINDA PROFOZICH – (Greta/Mike Penn's close friend)
Recovering from breast cancer surgery along with potential thyroid problems.

BEA ROBY – (Concord member)

SARAH RUDICH – (Daughter of Chuck/Shelda Rudich)
Spiritual well-being and Hannah's health

AMY SCHNEIDER – (Dick Schneider's daughter)
Battling MS and depression

JAYNE SCHNEIDER – (member of Concord)
Recovering from back surgery

CAROL SIMONDS - (member of Concord)
Health concerns

TOM SMITH – (Sue Laudenslager's bother)
Suffers from a muscle deterioration condition

TIARA ANN - Battling cancer

CINDY WILLIS – (Karen Wylie's friend)
Underwent recent breast cancer surgery

SHELLE WINTERHALTER – (Chele DiCioccio's friend)
Undetermined health issues

JAMES YOUNG – (Doris Easterday's co-worker)
Battling lung cancer again

CHURCH LIFE

Ladies Night Out

Our next Ladies meeting will be our annual Christmas party on **Sunday, December 4th at 2:00 p.m.** in the church fellowship hall. Please bring a covered dish of your choice. Chicken will be provided. Ladies decided instead of exchanging gifts this year, they will select a Christmas Angel from C.A.S. T. and purchase gift for child.

All ladies are welcome to join us as always.

PER CAPITA

Per Capita is an amount paid to Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly for each active member on the active membership roll of the church. Here is how it breaks down: Presbytery per capita is \$20.17. Synod per capita is \$2.20. GA per capita is \$6.63. If you choose to pay the entire \$29.00 then the synod and the GA will receive their portion for you.

If you choose to pay only the \$20.27 for the Beaver Butler Presbytery, neither the Presbytery nor Concord Church will make up the difference to Synod and GA for you. In the past the Presbytery has made up for the \$\$ not given when churches have withheld their giving. They will no longer do that. If you do not pay the minimum \$20.17 per capita for BB Presbytery, it will be paid out of the church's general fund. We will support our local Presbytery.

Therefore, the session urges you to include the \$20.17 in the per capita giving envelope for each individual in your household who is an active member and place it in the offering plate. If you should pay the full amount of \$29, then GA and the Synod will get their portion, otherwise they will not. This decision by the Presbytery and the session of Concord Church has been adopted in response to the passing of Amendment 10-A which removed the ordination standards from the Book of Order requiring fidelity in marriage between a man and a women, and chastity in singleness for all church officers (ministers, elders and deacons).

**CHRISTMAS CAROLING AT
VILLA ST. JOSEPH AND DINNER**



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18TH

ALL THOSE CAROLING ARE TO MEET AT THE
CHURCH AT 4 P.M. OR AT VILLA ST. JOSEPH
'S AT 4:15PM

DINNER WILL BE AT 6 P.M.

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO CAROL TO COME TO
THE DINNER.

EVERYONE IS INVITED!

MEAT AND DRINKS WILL BE PROVIDED.

BRING A SIDE DISH OR DESSERT TO SHARE.

SPONSORED BY THE CONGREGATIONAL CARE
COMMITTEE

Please note the January 2012 newsletter
deadline is

Tuesday, December 27th

at 3:00 p.m.

Because of the Christmas holiday, January
issues will be available

for pick-up on

Sunday, January 1st, 2012.

ABOUT PEOPLE

Dear Members;

*On behalf of Troop #414 Screaming Eagles Webelos Patrol
(eight member strong), we thank you for generously
donating food to the We Care Food Pantry located in
Baden.*

*All the canned goods you gave will greatly benefit those in
need during this holiday season.*

God Bless You!

ANNIVERSARIES

12 Diane/Ed Eisenbrown

BIRTHDAYS

2 Linda Kubiak
7 Ron Krisch
8 Chele DiCioccio
10 Patti Panek
11 Warren Mawhinney
11 Dave Woten
12 Chris Kardasz
13 Brandon Fritzley
14 Olivia Tonti
17 Bobby Jones
18 Edward Kubiak
18 Ben Dewar
19 Gloria Priestley
21 Sue Stillwagon
21 Morgan Stillwagon
21 Sadie Stillwagon
23 Earl Schriver
25 Sarah Rudich
28 Diane Eisenbrown
29 Dale Gliptis
30 Marie Jones
30 Debbie McGill
30 Evelyn Warren
31 Troy Hartman

D E C E M B E R W O R S H I P V O L U N T E E R S

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP

- 4 - Riddle**
- 11 - Rudich**
- 18 - Laughner**
- 25 - Hall**

GREETERS

- 4 - Jim & Alice Ward**
- 11 - Evelyn Warren**
- 18 - Tom & Patti Panek**
- 24 - Nellie & Andy Schweikert**
- 25 - Jackie Penn**

LITURGISTS

- 4 - Bea Roby**
- 11 - Andy Schweikert**
- 18 - Dick Schneider**
- 24 - TBA**
- 25 - Fred Simonds**

NURSERY ATTENDANTS

- 4 - John & Sue Laudenslager**
- 11 - Mike & Greta Penn**
- 18 - LeahHartman/
Nellie Schweikert**
- 25 - Bob & Janet Gilson**



DECEMBER 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
4 8:30 Praise Team 9:00 Worship/New Members 10:00 Coffee Fellowship 10:30 Sunday School 11:30 Mission/Outreach Comm. 2:00 Ladies Aid Christmas Party	5	6	7 12:30 Sewing Group 5:30 Cub Scouts 7:00 Prayer 7:30 Sr. Choir	8	9	10
11 8:30 Praise Team 9:00 Worship/Baptism 10:00 Coffee Fellowship 10:30 Sunday School 11:30 Administration	12 LADLE	13 6:30 Jr. Choir	14 12:30 Sewing Group 7:00 Prayer 7:30 Sr. Choir	15	16	17
18 8:30 Praise Team 9:00 Worship 10:00 Coffee Fellowship 10:30 Sunday School 4:00 Caroling at Villa St. Joseph 6:00 Dinner at Church	19 6:30 Cub Scouts 7:00 Session	20 6:30 Jr. Choir	21 5:30 Cub Scouts 7:00 Prayer 7:30 Sr. Choir	22	23	24 7:30 Christmas Eve Service
25 10:00 Worship	26	27 ***NEWSLETTER** DEADLINE 3:00 p.m.	28 7:30 Sr. Choir	29	30	31
<div style="border: 2px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> JANUARY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE TUESDAY, DECEMBER 27TH </div>						