

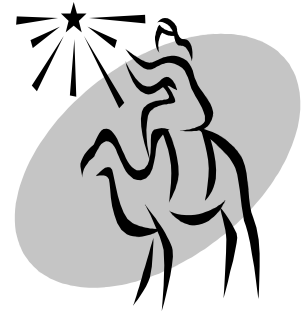


December 2008

BERWYN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
INVITING NURTURING AND ENCOURAGING SERVICE

The Lighted Cross

Christmas at Berwyn



Sunday, Dec. 7: Hanging of the Greens

- We will decorate the church from 3 to 5 p.m. Supper will be served at 6 p.m. There will be caroling from 6 to 7 p.m. All who play musical instruments are invited to bring them for caroling. Come to decorate, eat, and make music.

Sunday, Dec. 14, Choir Cantata and Brunch

- At the 10:30 service, the BUMC Choir will present a special cantata, "Glad Tidings of Great Joy" by Robert Hebble. Music Director Judith A. Lang will direct this work for choir, organ, harp, and a soprano solo and the dramatic role of Simeon. The harpist, who was with us on Good Friday last year, is Mindy McCuthen, principal harpist with the Pennsylvania Ballet. The soprano soloist is our own JoEllyn Berky Beck, who is featured in a beautiful arrangement of "O Holy Night." Robert Smink will play the part of Simeon.
- After this musical feast, we will have another feast — Christmas Brunch, prepared by Rick Stoker. The menu will feature both breakfast and lunch items: Eggs Benedict, baked strawberry French toast, sausage links, turkey divan, roast pork loins, cheesy potatoes, salads, and an array of desserts. Reservations are required; sign up on Sundays, Nov. 30 and Dec. 7, or call the church office at 610-644-5555. The prices are: adults \$10, children (ages 5 to 10) \$5, and children under 5 free. Don't miss out on this meal and time of fellowship.

Christmas Eve, Wednesday, Dec. 24

Three services celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ:

- 5:30 p.m., Children's service.
- 7:30 p.m., Scripture lessons, carols and candlelight.
- 11:00 p.m., Carols, communion and candlelight.

In economic turbulence, keeping the faith

The end of the runway at Ronald Reagan Airport in Washington is a favorite spot. Also a boat-launch area on the banks of the Potomac, the municipal park’s border is only 300 yards from the end of the main runway. When the wind is from the south, commercial jets approach the tarmac at an altitude that seems to be only a few feet above where one stands. When the massive body of a plane passes overhead, wind disturbance immediately envelops everything nearby. That turbulence is a sign that the usual stasis has been displaced by something large.

Turbulence in the economic market has enveloped everyone. What seemed calm has now been displaced by buffeting winds of uncertainty and violent shifts in value. Everyone is worried. There is constant talk about 401(k)’s, investment performance, corporate bailouts, unemployment.

“Building up the faith of the faithful” is a major function of the church. The body of Christ is a community of people who are in the process of figuring out how to weather storms. Faith is a gift that widens the view to a greater context than, for example, the economic outlook. Faith does *not* permit glossing over the real, devastating impact of economic downturn. Faith *does* include an invitation to engage in efforts to make good economic decisions and reach out to those hurt by recession. The wider context brings to mind the source of security and “the assurance of things hoped for” (Hebrews 11:1) , or as Peterson puts it: “This trust in God ... is our handle on what we can’t see.” It gives us a way to know that economic hard times are not the last word.

As you may have noticed, there is turbulence close to home at Berwyn. At the end of October, revenues are nearly \$40,000 behind expenses, which is significantly worse than in recent years. Though understandable, it is of serious concern. The end-of-year gifts to ongoing ministry are typically strong, and you are asked to give attention, this year especially, to support of that ministry.

The committee has, however, given its full attention to the coming year, studying the expense budget for funding ministry in year 2009 as well as pledges received showing anticipated revenue to pay those expenses. The plan is to continue faithful work as we are called. Join us in considering these things prayerfully as a matter of faith, so that we can weather turbulence together.

Steve Cherry

October 2008	Actual	Budget	favorable (unfavorable)	% of budget
Contribution Income	\$286,818	\$327,600	(\$40,782)	88%
Contrib - Mortgage fund	\$10,078	\$6,834	\$3,244	147%
Other Income	\$37,393	\$35,452	\$1,941	105%
Expense	\$373,161	\$377,432	\$4,271	99%
gain(loss)	(\$38,872)	(\$7,546)	(\$31,326)	

FROM THE PASTOR

Advent reminds us of God's gift

THE ADVENT and Christmas Season are upon us. Some of us may have started to make a list of the people we hope to bless with a gift, and are in the process of discerning what gift we would like to get them. Others may be even farther ahead of the game by having purchased all the gifts we hope to give at Christmas time. Some of us may be reassessing the type of "gifts" to be given this year due to the general state of the economy. I have heard some folk say that they are "back to the basics" – seeking to give gifts from the heart and home rather than commercialized, retail gifts.

As the people of God, we have come to realize that we are following the Lord our God in this act of gift giving. Advent and Christmas remind us of the great and matchless gift God gave to humankind. God gave the gift of a Son to the world of sin and darkness. Advent prepares us to receive that gift of God with gratitude. Christmas enables us to rejoice with the world and the angelic host in receiving that gift of love given to us and others.

I wonder if we remember that at our confirmation or reception into the membership of the church we pledged to be gifts to God and the church. Are we "back to the basics" with our church attendance? Another word for *gift* is *present*, so when we are present at worship and events, we are honoring the pledge we made that we would honor God with our presence. We are giving ourselves as gifts to God in the act of praise and thanksgiving.

Advent and Christmas provide us with an opportunity to come and worship a Babe in the manger who is the Savior of the world. It is always a joy and a delight to see so many present at the services we have at 5:30, 7:30 and 11 p.m. on Christmas Eve.

My fervent prayer and hope are that we continue to be "presents" to God for the rest of the year. An emphasis that I would like to make during 2009 and into the future is that we consider and be proactive in becoming a high-commitment church.

It would be a joy and delight to see the services during the rest of the year as full as they are on Christmas Eve. We have the membership to do this. It would be even greater if we were proud enough of our church to continually invite friends and relatives to attend with us, allowing them the opportunity of being "presents" to the Lord also.

My family and I wish you and yours a Holy and Blessed Christmas!



Pastor Phil

Our prayer shawl celebrates a life of loving

Inetta Mullins, of Clintwood, Virginia, in the heart of the Appalachian Mountains, was the recipient of the 60th prayer shawl knitted by the Berwyn United Methodist Church Prayer Shawl Ministry.

Members of the church knit prayer shawls, which are then dedicated and given to individuals to signify a sense of the love of God. Mrs. Mullins' home was repaired by a team of six youth and adults from the Berwyn Church as part of the Appalachia Service Project outreach ministry in July 2008. Her home on Bear Pen Creek in southwest Virginia had sustained severe water damage over the years.

Mrs. Mullins is the loving mother of six, grandmother of seven, and great-grandmother of seven. During the week that her house was being repaired, she entertained the work team with stories of her long life in Appalachia, her family, her church, her friends and her hobbies — cooking and quilting. As a treat for the team, she made her Southern specialty dessert, fried apple pie. The workers were Mike Benton, Ryan Benton, Alex O'Donnell, Karis Poncé, Marge Smink and Cason Walker.

With the gift of the shawl, our church celebrated Inetta Mullins and her life of loving and giving. Recently she responded with this note:

I got this beautiful shawl the other day. I think of your church every time I wear. Everything here is ok. I had a new great-grandbaby on Oct 17. That made me seven. She is sure beautiful.
I will be praying for you all and I sure miss having you around.
Remember me in your prayers. I still having trouble with my heat pump. I sure God will work it out for me. I sure can tell a big difference in my home.
Thank you so much. God bless you. I love you all. Your Friend, Inetta Mullins

Who's the church's resident artist? Sue Denisevicz

Each time I pull into a parking space close to Schieck Hall, I admire the wonderful window paintings. Have you ever wondered who is responsible for the decorations? It's Sue Denisevicz.

Besides creating the decorated windows, Sue is responsible for the artistic displays that we see at the altar of the church and in the narthex. As I write this, in the narthex there is the cross surrounded by a plentiful harvest display. At the altar, there is the fall harvest offering. By the time you get this issue of The Lighted Cross, these will have changed and her new church decorations will become a vital part of our Advent and Christmas worship celebrations.

Sue enjoys her art. In fact, the first thing she told me when I talked to her was that she wished she had studied art in college instead of education.

Sue has been chairperson of our Worship Committee for the past three years. For the past 10 years, she has been in charge of our acolyte program. What does she do in her spare time? She works as the secretary in the guidance department at TE Middle School.

How lucky Berwyn United Methodist Church was when the Denisevicz family — Sue, Ed, Steven (a junior at Temple University), and Molly (a junior at Conestoga who plays a beautiful flute) — chose to become part of our church family!

Ann West

MISSIONS MEMO

We can help bring Christmas joy to others

In late November and early December, it is easy to be overwhelmed with the pressures of Christmas: shopping, cleaning and decorating the house, and writing the Christmas cards. I hope that all of you will take time to give something to someone less fortunate than yourself. It doesn't have to be an expensive item; it could be something that you made, or just something to eat.

BUMC supports several Christmas missions. Last month, I wrote about the work we are doing with Mount Zion United Methodist Church, which has a Christmas dinner for the homeless served by shelters such as Trevor's House, the Salvation Army, the Mary Jane Enrichment Center, and the People's Emergency Center in West Philadelphia. We hope that the Sunday School children will enjoy helping to choose a small item, a book, toy, craft item, etc., to give to a child. These items should be new and unwrapped, and they should not cost more than \$15 each. Warm tops, hats and mittens are also helpful. We also need things for babies, mothers and men. Items for men and women should be one-size-fits-all, such as socks, gloves and hats, hair barrettes for women, towel sets, or toiletry items. We would like to deliver the items to the church no later than the end of the first week in December.



We are also supporting the work of the Methodist Home for Children, which serves about 2,500 children in the Philadelphia area. There is a list available in the narthex. Please place your new and unwrapped items under the Christmas tree in the narthex. Those items will be delivered on Sunday, Dec. 7.

BUMC also provides Christmas meals for members of our own congregation. There are signup sheets in the narthex and in the church office.

We are excited by your response to the Youth Group's Dance for Eliza Chumpitaz's great-niece. They have raised \$5,500 to help with the cost of her health care (see a report below).

Thank you so very much for your generous giving for this and other mission projects at Berwyn United Methodist Church.

Betsy Newman

They danced because they cared

Not only did 35 teenagers dance 12 hours overnight on Friday-Saturday, Nov. 14-15, but many adults also contributed by chaperoning, preparing food, and contributing money. The result of everyone's hard work was great success — \$5,500 raised to aid in the treatment of a Peruvian child who has cancer.

The money, along with cards made by the participants and other youth, will be sent to Peru to aid Maria Claudia, the great-niece of Eliza Chumpitaz. These gifts will provide them with the hope and treatment she needs. Thank you, everyone, for all your support!

Ann West

WHAT'S NEW AT THE LIBRARY?

For Adults

Mary Did You Know? by Mark Lowry (232.21 Low) Book and CD

This small book of beautiful illustrations and commentary to the words and music of “Mary Did You Know?” is a delight for the spirit. The CD “Mary Did You Know?” performed by Mark Lowry and the Gaither Vocal Band is in the back pocket of the book.

*Mary did you know that your baby boy will one day walk on water?
Mary did you know that your baby boy will save our sons and daughters?
Did you know that your baby boy has come to make you new?
This child that you delivered will soon deliver you....*

For Children

Ordinary Baby: Extraordinary Gift by Gloria Gaither (J 232.92 Gai) Book and CD — Primary

A heartwarming story, *Ordinary Baby* tells not only why Jesus came to earth but also why he came as a baby. Children will enjoy reading the simple text along with the CD, which also includes Gloria Gaither’s song “Ordinary Baby.” Her song shares the timeless truth of Jesus’ birth and life.

Miracle of the Poinsettia by Brian Cavanaugh (J 398.2 Cav) in English/Spanish — Primary

Father Brian Cavanaugh retells the traditional Mexican folktale of the origin of the poinsettia. It is a beautiful story about giving the gift of one’s self, which shows how love can overcome fear and doubt to create a miracle.

The Story of Christmas retold by Linda Jennings (J 232.92 Jen) — Primary

Beautifully illustrated, this book begins with the ordinary Nazareth village girl, Mary, receiving the message from the angel of God that she would bear the child, Jesus, the Son of God. It follows her through her betrothal to Joseph, the journey to Bethlehem, the birth of Jesus in the stable, the star leading the shepherds to the stable, the arrival of the wise men and their refusal to tell King Herod the location of the baby, the flight of Mary, Joseph and Jesus to Egypt, and the family’s return to Nazareth upon the death of Herod.

When Jesus Was Born by Maryann J. Dotts (J 232.921 Dot) — Pre-School

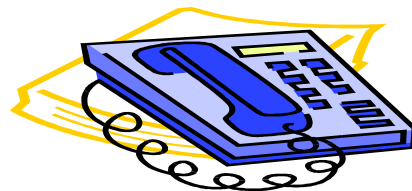
When Jesus Was Born is the story of the night that a very special baby was born to Mary. It is a “talk-together” book written so parents may read it to their very young children and add their own details of the Savior’s birth. With every reading the wonder of that mysterious, marvelous night comes alive. This book has been in the BUMC Children’s Library for almost 30 years. Maryann J. Dotts Barth is a dear friend of Marjorie Smink and past president of the Church and Synagogue Library Association.

Marjorie Smink

The Lighted Cross

Next deadline: Dec. 15

The Lighted Cross is published monthly (except in July and August) to spread the good news about the activities of Berwyn United Methodist Church. Chairs and members of committees are invited to submit articles to inform the congregation about events and the work of the church. Individuals are invited to submit cards of thanks and brief items of interest about congregation members. Your submissions may have to be edited for length. The next issue will be published Jan. 1. Please submit your items by Dec. 15 to gene.foreman@verizon.net. There also is a mailbox in the church office.



Church Phone:

610-644-5555

Office E-mail:

officebumc@comcast.net

Church Website:

LENDING A HAND

Dec. 7

Greeters: Eloise and Fred Levitt
Liturgist: Pattie Littlewood
Acolyte: Emily Miccariello
Ushers: John Ku, Bob Borst, Will Bushnell, Carl Bushnell
Story Time: Gina Phelps
Coffee Committee: Stephanie Borelly, Sally Robie, Carol Williams
Flower Delivery: Cynthia Bushnell

Dec. 14

Liturgist: Peggy Robinson
Acolyte: Andres Montaner
Ushers: Jack Campbell, Jon Stockler, Alice Nicholas, Brett Shallcross
Story Time: Brenda Hoffman
Coffee Committee: Jan Polasky, Cynthia Bushnell, Sondra Wilen
Flower Delivery: Margie O'Donnell

Dec. 21

Liturgist: John Edinger
Acolyte: Zachary Phelps
Ushers: Don Young, John McDowell, Peh Ku, Pete Tillett
Story Time: Amy Dodds
Coffee Committee: Pattie Littlewood, Eloise Levitt, Margi Mackenzie
Flower Delivery: Judy Fisk

Dec. 28

Liturgist: Betsy Lang
Acolyte: Laura Stockler
Ushers: Bob Fisk, Nagle Bridwell, Judy Dunn, Margie O'Donnell
Story Time: Wendy Wolov
Coffee Committee: Claudia Gonzalez, Jamile Toro, Barbara Stockler
Flower Delivery: Jane McDowell

Holiday music time at Nursery School

Where else can you walk down a hall and hear Thanksgiving music and Christmas music during the same music period? Preschool, of course.

When you are teaching the children about Thanksgiving and getting ready for the Christmas Show simultaneously, time becomes of great importance. By the time the children return from their holiday break, there is a very short time for rehearsal for the grand extravaganza known as BUMNS Christmas Show. It is always a standing-room-only affair.

We hold a formal dress rehearsal, and that is when the parents may use video cameras. On the actual day of the show, only still cameras are permitted.

There have been many tours for prospective students this year, and with in-house and public registration complete, there are just a few openings for 2009-2010 classes. We do not advertise in the paper, as we have discovered that word of mouth is our best publicity.

The registration period is always an exciting time. The parents of the youngest children are fascinated with the concept of preschool education. Most of the parents have done extensive research, and some even bring along a spreadsheet listing the attributes of the schools they have visited. Others walk through the rooms, listen to the presentation, and then declare that the feeling is just right. Those are the parents who feel with their hearts, and they are the ones who find this special time in their children's lives most satisfying.

Ann Bole

Fall Festival's final total

The final total for the 2008 Fall Festival is \$8,783.48. This is over what was expected for the event. We still have some items to put on an Internet site. The proceeds for these items when they are sold will be part of the 2009 total.

Many thanks, *Judy Fisk*

WHAT'S GOING ON AT B.U.M.C.

Fair Trade Shopping Night. The Church and Society Task Force will sponsor a Fair Trade Shopping night at Ten Thousand Villages in the Main Street at Exton shopping center. We hope you will join us on Monday, Dec. 1, from 5 to 9 p.m. The shop will help us with buying *fairly traded* crafts for Christmas gifts. Let your friends and family know – 15% of the proceeds from this event will go toward Bread for the World, a Christian advocacy group working on hunger.

United Methodist Women (Lydia Circle). We will meet for a Christmas celebration at Judy Fisk's home at 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 5. Each person is asked to bring either an appetizer or a dessert. We will collect toiletries for the Domestic Violence Center of Chester County, a tradition of our Christmas celebration. All women of the church are welcome! Please let Judy Fisk know you will join us: Nonniefsk5@aol.com or 610-644-2269.

Men's Group. We will meet at 8 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 13, in Schieck Hall for breakfast and a program, "The Best-Loved Hymns of Christmas – Exploring the Words and Music." This is a reprise of last December's program, with Al Froy discussing the words and Music Director Judith A. Lang discussing the music. This year's hymns are different from last year's. "We will study and sing as many Christmas hymns as we can in one hour," Al said.

ETC Class. We will continue our discussion of health care issues, led by Steve Cherry. Bring a gift (nothing new!) wrapped enticingly on Dec. 21, and we will do our recycle gift swap. There will be no Sunday School on Dec. 28. We will resume Jan. 4.

Gift of Chairs. In a memorial tribute to her parents, Becky Sutton, one of the choir's altos, gave 30 beautiful chairs for use in the Music Room. No longer do the choir members have to sit on old, cold metal chairs to rehearse. A very special thank-you goes to her from all of us for this generous, greatly appreciated gift.

2009 Church Directory. Do you have any changes to your address, phone number or e-mail? If so, please submit changes by e-mail to officebumc@comcast.net or call the church office at 610-644-5555.

Children's Activities on Dec. 7. During the Hanging of the Greens starting at 3 p.m., children are welcome to come and hang out with Children's Coordinator Jessica Simmons. We will be decorating the Main Hallway, as well as doing some crafts and having a ton of fun. This is a great way to get into the Christmas Spirit, and remember what Christmas is all about.

Club Berwyn's Late Night. On Friday, Dec. 12, children in grades 4-6 are invited to come to the church at 6:30 p.m. for this event. Kids should come in their pajamas, bring a pillow, whatever they want. We will watch movies, play games and, of course, eat. The event ends at 11. The more the merrier, so please bring your friends. RSVP to Jess by Dec. 9.

Oberammergau 2010. The Adult Council is exploring interest in attending the Passion Play in 2010. This performance occurs once every 10 years. Alpha Christian Tours is planning a *Music of the Heart and Soul* journey that includes Berlin, Wittenburg, Dresden, Prague, Vienna, Salzburg, Innsbrook, Oberammergau and Munich. Details can be found on www.Alphatours.com; also, the church office has brochures. Two dates are being offered: May 21-June 3 or July 16-29. Please contact Nancy Atchison if interested.

Help Needed for Lenten Luncheons. The church's Lenten Luncheons have been a successful community outreach program in past years. Cooks are needed to help prepare a simple meal. We need two or three persons for each of the following dates: March 4, 11, 18, 25, and April 1, 8. Menus will be provided, or you can create your own. Contact Nancy Atchison if you are willing to help.

Movies That Make You Think. There is no movie in December, but the series will resume at 6:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 10, with *The Exonerated*, starring Susan Sarandon, Danny Glover, Brian Dennehy, Aidan Quinn and Delroy Lindo in a drama about people who were convicted of crimes they didn't commit.

Sunday Morning study group

A study group will form in December to read and discuss Max Lucado's book *3:16, The Numbers of Hope*. Max Lucado is a best-selling Christian author and minister of writing and preaching at Oak Hills Church in San Antonio, Texas.

3:16 is a reference to the sixteenth verse of the third chapter of John: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life."

In a review by blogger Tim Challies: "The millions who are sure to read this book will come face-to-face with one of Scripture's most powerful statements and through it will come face-to-face with the Savior. Though it does not present the whole story, *3:16* will certainly have a lot of value as a means of stirring hearts and beginning spiritual conversations. ... The words of John 3:16 have brought many souls to the Savior; I trust and hope this book will serve to help bring many more."

The study group will meet on Sunday mornings at 9:15 in the Visitor's Office to the right of the Pastor's Office. Anyone is welcome. Contact Elaine Parvin, Jim Tiede or Mike Benton for more information.

MAX LUCADO
FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON

3:16

THE
NUMBERS
OF HOPE

A well-deserved salute to the Friday Volunteers

I would like to recognize and thank a group of people who also "lend a hand" in service to BUMC: the Friday Volunteers. Every week, someone is there to carry out a series of small but important tasks to prepare the Sanctuary for the Sunday worship services. I greatly appreciate their willingness to help out whenever I call.

So, many thanks to the current "team": Peh-Sun and Hui-Chen Ku (who have faithfully volunteered the first Friday of every month for many years), Claudia Sharpless, Doris and Maynard Krug, Rosalie Hart, Ruth Rumiano, Peggy and John Robinson, May Dickenson, and my husband, Bob – as well as to the many others who have done this in past years.

Barbara Borst

Volunteers needed for these important duties

Help With the Bulletin. Could you spare an hour and a half on Thursdays to help print and fold the bulletin for the Sunday services? Contact Veronica Mosley at 610-644-5555.

Be an Acolyte. Youth in the fourth through eighth grades are encouraged to become acolytes. The acolytes help in the 10:30 service on Sundays by bringing in the light and helping the pastor with the offering. A new group is forming in January. Contact Sue Denisevich.

Save the Date. On Jan. 23 at First United Methodist Church of Germantown, we will have the opportunity to have dinner and hear from one of the exonerated. Ray Krone, of the Innocence Project, will be the guest speaker. He spent 10.5 years in prison and now speaks about the death penalty. This event is sponsored by the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference Church & Society Work Team and the Methodist Federation for Social Action.