

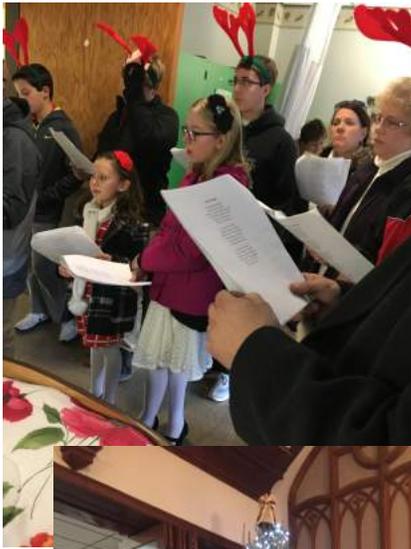
TIDINGS

The Monthly Newsletter of Forks United Church of Christ
No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey...

you are welcome here!

Christmas
Around the
World

What We've Been Up To...



caroling



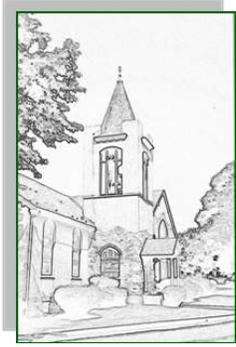
Christmas morning



new shoes

Christmas Star





I'm sitting down on a January morning trying to figure out what to write for this article. Among the many swirling around, there are two main thoughts in my head right now. I am writing this on the morning of the Inauguration of our new president, and I know that this event is causing either angst or excitement for you, depending on your viewpoint. This entire election season has illustrated the deep conflict, divisiveness and bitterness that exists in our country right now. Just this week, at a concert at which people were clapping, and singing, and enjoying themselves, I witnessed a nasty argument over politics in the parking lot afterward.

The other thought that I have running through my head is that, as most of you are reading this, we will be close on the calendar to the celebration of Valentine's Day; that celebration of love that prompts us all to go out and buy our partners flowers, chocolate, jewelry, or whatever else it is that suits your fancy. I was thinking that I should choose between these two themes: either write about all of the challenges that divide us and have come to the forefront of our collective consciousness on this Inauguration Day...or write about the love that keeps us together, and comes to the forefront of our collective consciousness on Valentine's Day.

Then I thought about the various Greek words for love, three of which are used in the New Testament. The word, *eros*, describes a romantic, intimate love between partners that we usually associate with Valentine's Day. But there is also *philia*, which is defined as "affectionate regard, friendship" and can be associated with the love for friends, family, and community, and there is *storge*, which is more specifically used for the love between parents and children. And then there is *agape*, which is defined as "the love between God and humanity and humanity and God." Christians use this word to describe the unconditional love that God feels for us, and that we are called to try and demonstrate toward others. This is the kind of love that the Gospel writer, John, used when he writes that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son" and that Jesus is talking about when he admonishes his followers to "love your enemies and pray for those who persecute who."

So maybe these two seemingly disparate themes running around in my head are more connected than I had at first thought. I wonder what those two guys in the parking lot would have thought if I would have encouraged them to love one another? (I'm guessing it would have ended badly). But, you know, maybe all of the conflict, and divisiveness, and bitterness in our country right now can be put to some good use, because it gives us plenty of opportunities to practice our faith and to live out our calling to follow Christ. And I don't know about you, but, most of the time, I have a really hard time loving people the way that Jesus loves, so maybe another gift in all of this is that one thing becomes crystal clear to me- I need a Savior.

Blessings,

Pastor Bob

Stewardship and Finance

Barrels of Oil Drive Update

We are seeking members of the Congregation to donate one or two barrels of oil at \$50 per barrel for the 2016-2017 heating season. Forks UCC entered into a contract with Fogel's Fuel and have a capped price of \$2.099 per gallon purchased. We still need 110 barrels to pay our heating bill, based on the average of our past winter usage. Envelopes are available in the vestibules.

Fundraising

A spaghetti dinner with meatballs, salad, bread, drinks, and desserts is scheduled for February 11th at the church. We are in need of baked goods for dessert. Tickets are \$9 in advance; \$10 at the door; children ages 6-12 are \$5, while 5 and under are free. **All proceeds benefit youth programs.**

Here are some important dates for 2017:

April 22, 2017 - Pulled Pork Dinner

June 21, 2017 - Strawberry Festival

August 2, 2017 - Ice Cream Festival

October 20-21, 2017 - Rummage Sale

Many Thanks

Ed and I would like to thank everyone for their prayers, cards and calls during my illness and surgery. We would like to especially thank Pastor Bob for his visits and calls. I have a long way to go with treatment but with our faith and prayers from everyone, I will be a survivor. We thank all of you for making us part of your family.

In Christian Love,
Ruth and Ed Gable

Dear Gary Barraco and our church family,

Thank you so much for the donation of snack mix bags for Santa's Elves, a committee branch of the Slate Belt Chamber of Commerce. Santa's Elves raise funds through a dime toss at the Blue Valley Farm Show each summer. We purchase hats, gloves, pj's, warm clothing items and gifts for children of the community who are in need. Those gifts are given to the children by Santa and the elves at a party in December. Each year we have about 100 children in attendance; they are fed lunch, are entertained, and of course, visit with Santa. The bags of goodies were truly appreciated, and will surely be enjoyed.

Thank you for your caring and generosity.

Cindi Wilson

Mission and Action

Food Bank

Thank you for continuing to remember the urgent needs which our food banks seek to address. Canned goods and other non-perishables are always in demand. Please bring **anything** you think would be appreciated. Consider donating spices. Spices allow cooks to add flavor to food without additional salt. Think about buying cumin, cinnamon, coriander, onion powder, garlic powder, cloves, oregano, basil, parsley, cayenne pepper, rosemary, thyme, bay leaves, or any other spices you commonly cook with.

Please keep your cans coming and place them in the pantry shelf. February's food of the month is breakfast items.

Soup Kitchen

We continue to help feed others at the Trinity Soup Kitchen. Upcoming dates for 2017 are 6/24, 9/9, and 10/14. See Sharon Merluzzi if you'd like to get involved.

Overnight Chaperones Needed

Christ Church UCC in Bethlehem needs volunteers to sleep over on Monday nights as they are a warming shelter for women. Please see Gary Barraco for information.

Many, Many Donations!

We accept almost any donation you offer and can use it in one of our various outreach programs. Sam & Jane Kemmerer donated a lightly used washing machine and it was delivered to a Slater Youth Network family. Carolyn Mitch is providing another and it will go to one of the shelters we support. Please check with Gary Barraco if you have something others might use.

Our Efforts

A brief overview of the lives we've recently impacted:

- ❖ 26 full Thanksgiving meals donated to schools in Easton, Nazareth, and Wind Gap
- ❖ individual meals donated to families in *Ready, Set, Go Preschool*, One Fight Foundation, and others
- ❖ \$500 donated to the One Fight Foundation and over 270 cans/boxes of food donated to Operation Veteran Hero Food Pantry from the first annual "Giving Thanks" Benefit Concert
- ❖ 29 holiday hope chests filled and delivered to the Volunteer Center of the Lehigh Valley
- ❖ abundance of gifts donated to 24 children through Northampton County Department of Children, Youth, and Families
- ❖ 30 \$25 gift cards donated to families through local school districts
- ❖ 98 people without a home (including 12 children) were given food, clothing, and blankets at the Bethlehem Stand Up for Homelessness on 12/10/16. Many were connected with agencies and some had housing the following week. **Next Stand Up on 2/11/17!!**
- ❖ 15 grocery bags of canned goods, other food and some clothing were donated to Slater Family Network
- ❖ new coats and cold weather gear were delivered to street neighbors via VALOR's traveling team on Christmas Eve

Is Church Canceled Today?

To find out this winter, or anytime, if Forks UCC services are canceled due to inclement weather, the Consistory has implemented procedures to notify the congregation.

The Forks UCC Congregation can find out if church is canceled the following ways:

- The cancellation notice will be sent out to members on the mass e-mail list
- The cancellation notice will be posted on the Church Webpage
- The cancellation notice will be posted on WFMZ.com & in extreme weather conditions on WFMZ TV
- Members who sign up will receive a phone call between 7:00 AM – 7:30 AM on the Sunday in question if services are cancelled. To sign up please let the Church office know or e-mail Jacob E. Allen at jacob.e.allen@gmail.com. Sign up using the yellow forms in each vestibule.

Please take advantage of these services to find out if church services are ever canceled.

Teen Prayer List

Abbie Buck, Tyler Avery, Larissa Bernecker, Sakura Bolte, Takumi Bolte, Masaki Bolte, Abbey Chesney, Brandon Cressman, Olivia DiPierdomenico, Sophia DiPierdomenico, Makayla Fleming, Christopher Flyte, Karlee Flyte, Ashleigh Gaul, Emily Gutekunst, Julia Gutekunst, Tommy Gutekunst, Derek Hammerstone, Diana Hammerstone, Emilee Hendricks, Abbi Hoke, Kyle Hoke, Michael Lopresti, Jayson Mitch, Rebecca Mitch, Tyler Mitch, Julia Ortiz, Georgia Pump, Hailey Quier, Ethan Riehl, Breanna Schneebeli, Cayden Shook, Alexandria Wood, Emma Wood

Confirmands

Abbie Buck, Evan Dugan, Derek Hammerstone, Kyle Hoke, Shanon McCollian, Tyler Mitch, Katelyn Raymond, Tanner Riehl, Cayden Shook, Tagan Steward, Landon Uhler

Visitation List

Please see the Church Directory or contact the Church office or a member of the visitation team for addresses. Earl & Dolly Abel, Fred Bolling, Mary Correll, Corinne Eberts, Tony Jiorle, Charles Kessler, Dorothy Kortz, Marge Markley, Winnie Mengle, Patti O'Donnell, Jane Rader, Florence Saylor, Irene Tenges, Fran Uhler, Marge (Koch) Ziegenfuss

Going Green

As of this month, our newsletter will be emailed. Please email or call Alice Hornbake (wmhornbake@yahoo.com or 610-703-3095) **if you would like to continue** having a hard copy sent to your home. Thank you!

Newsletter Submissions

If anyone wishes to submit any articles for the NEWSLETTER, please have all items emailed by the **20th of each month** to: wmhornbake@yahoo.com

Altar Flowers

Every Sunday the church has fresh flowers on the Altar. The flower arrangement costs \$30 weekly and provides an opportunity for you to sponsor them “in honor of” someone’s anniversary, birthday, etc. and also to present them “in memory of” those who have passed. The signup sheet is hanging in the NEW location in the front Vestibule. Please take a look at the calendar signup sheet and fill in any Sunday(s) that you want to sponsor. Write a check payable to Forks UCC with the memo “Altar Flowers” and simply drop it in the offering plate on Sunday. Thank you.

Altar Flower Sponsors for February

February 5 - Pastor Bob and Ronda Gutekunst
February 12 - Ruth Hartzell
February 19 - OPEN
February 26 - Mike & Cathi Tirrell



Those Serving

Ushers/Coin Collectors

February 5 - Jean Cooper
February 12 - Joan Mumaw
February 19 - Ron Mumaw
February 26 - Jean Cooper

Greeters/Offering Collectors

February 5 - Rocky Starner and Lori Avery/Mike & Kathy Boushell
February 12 - Carol & Dave Young/Sandy & Glenn Borger
February 19 - Bill & Lorna Dreisbach/Sandy Perrine and Brenda Delong
February 26 - Barbara Huff and Carole Steckel/Margaret & Bob Zabe

Coffee Fellowship

We share fellowship during coffee hour after worship each week. Please feel free to share a baked good by leaving it on the table in the Social Hall before worship, any week that you choose. Thank you!

Celebrate with our Church Family

Happy February Birthdays

01 Cathy Clark	15 Allison Silfies
01 Cathy Tirrell	16 Dale Wilson
03 Vilma Milham	16 Kim Edelheiser
05 Cayden Shook	16 David Warner
05 Samantha Shook	19 Pauline Frace
05 Gabrielle Francis	21 Gloria Burkos
06 Charlie Kessler*	21 Shelby McCollian
08 Bob Zabe	22 Will Hornbake
08 Diane Dewalt	23 Kim Starner
08 Alan Hartzell	23 Chris Mumaw
09 Nick Hendricks	23 Andrew Margelot
10 Shannon McCollian	24 Dolly Abel*
11 Tyler Mitch	25 Patti Starner
13 Jennifer Wood	26 Ron Mumaw
15 Roger Keat	26 Violet Ortiz
15 Ruth Gable	26 Abigail Audenried
15 Lily Ringhoff	26 Devon Clifton
15 Jakob Herres	28 Judy Kinsey



*Charlie celebrates his 97th birthday this month. Happy Birthday Charlie!

*Best wishes to Dolly Abel who celebrates her 90th birthday!

UCC Roots November 2016



She Changed Lives and Language

Ellen G. Gustin was a serious, prim and proper Victorian woman. But she was much more.

Part of the small but radical Christian denomination, in 1877 Gustin preached a series of revivals at the Broad Street Christian Church in Westerly, Rhode Island. She caused such a commotion that her preaching got national attention in the denominational newspaper, the *Herald of Gospel Liberty*. Soon thereafter the congregation called her to be their pastor.

Gustin was the third woman to receive full ordination in the Christian denomination. It seems that her authorization, in September 1869 by the Rhode Island and Massachusetts Christian Conference, sparked the first known case of a denomination changing language to make its documents gender inclusive. Immediately after approving Gustin, the Conference took a second vote "to alter the constitution so that the feminine gender be coupled with masculine wherever it occurs."

Ellen G. Gustin served over twenty-three years as a pastor to three churches. For decades she was the only ordained woman in New England. She was passionate about Foreign Missions. In 1886-7 the American Christian Convention launched a Woman's Board for Foreign Missions and sent a female missionary to Japan. Gustin was Corresponding Secretary and later its President.

In her 1902 report to the national Convention, almost two decades before women gained the right to vote, Gustin linked mission enthusiasm with her passion for women's rights. She spoke of women scientists, authors and those in "halls of legislation, the professions of law, medicine, and theology [where women] have had their honored representatives." She insisted that there was "no more encouraging sign of greatness of a people, community, state, or nation socially or politically, than the elevation of its women."

The United Church of Christ celebrates and supports women in church and society. Let us remember the life and witness of Ellen G. Gustin.

Contributor: Richard H. Taylor



February 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 6PM Handbell Choir 7:15PM Sanctuary Choir	2	3	4
5 5th Sunday after Epiphany Communion <i>Souper Sunday</i>	6	7 6:30PM Music & Worship	8 6PM Handbell Choir 7:15PM Sanctuary Choir	9	10	11 9-2PM Stand Up Bethlehem 10:30-1PM Trinity Soup Kitchen (choir) 4:30-7PM Spaghetti Dinner to benefit Youth Programs
12 6th Sunday after Epiphany	13 7PM Stewardship/ Finance	14 6PM Spiritual Council 7PM Consistory Meeting	15 6PM Handbell Choir 7:15PM Sanctuary Choir	16	17	18
19 7th Sunday after Epiphany	20	21 6:30PM Mission and Action	22 6PM Handbell Choir 7:15PM Sanctuary Choir	23	24	25 5:45-10AM Zion's UCC Jubilee Breakfast
26 8th Sunday after Epiphany (Transfiguration)	27 7PM Christian Ed.	28 6:30PM Parish Life	Notes:			

Sundays
8AM - Meditative Worship
10AM - Worship/Children's Sunday School

