

# 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!*

## What We've Been Up To....

New Members



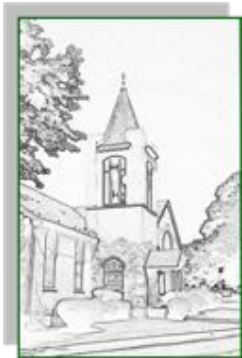
Healing Sunday



Celebration of All Saints Day  
and Reformation Sunday



Harvest Home



This year, for our early Christmas Eve worship service, the children and youth of our congregation will be performing an adaptation of the Christmas classic, Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. This story has always been one of my favorites, and I'm not the only one. Upon publication, the first edition of *A Christmas Carol* sold out in five days! (that's before one-click shopping on Amazon.com existed!) That's pretty impressive! The reception of the story was almost universally positive. The reviewer from *The Illustrated London News* described how the story's "impressive eloquence ... its unfeigned lightness of heart—its playful and sparkling humor ... its gentle spirit of humanity" all put the reader "in good humor with ourselves, with each other, with the season and

with the author".

The book has never been out of print, has been translated into many languages, and has been adapted for stage, film, television, opera, and other media. The story resonates with us so profoundly, I think, because it touches upon, and, in fact, has influenced so many of our own favorite Christmas pastimes- family gatherings, seasonal food and drink, the giving of presents, and a generally festive generosity of spirit. And, although the story is not technically considered Christian, the themes of Scrooge's transformation and redemption certainly resonate with our theological perspective.

One tidbit about the story that I did not know was that, according to Dickens scholar and Oxford University professor, Robert Douglas-Fairhurst, "Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol* because of how British social policy treated children at the time, and wished to use the novella as a means to put forward his arguments against it." The two figures of Want and Ignorance, sheltering in the robes of the Ghost of Christmas Present were inspired by the children Dickens had seen on his visit to a ragged school in the East End of London. And, of course, one of the main storylines is the tragic fate of the disabled boy, Tiny Tim, and how Scrooge intervenes to save him.

Christmas is a time for children and childhood. The youngsters in our lives are filled with overwhelming joy at this time of the year, and, their experience calls to mind our own memories of the magic and innocence of Christmastime. Of course, for children who are less fortunate, this is a painful time of the year, as their need and lack is felt most acutely. Here at Forks UCC, we try to do our part- the Holiday Hope Chests, the Giving Tree, food drives and the like. And we are getting involved with a new initiative associated with Lehigh Valley Health Network, *The LVHN Veteran's Health Program Children's Closet*. According to our Outreach leader, Gary Barraco, "This is a new endeavor at the Vet Center that will provide clothing and toys to children of veterans in crisis or deployed. There is a men's and women's closet stocked with clothing for job interviews for vets already. The children's closet is just getting started and needs a boost." This is a ministry that we can help with, not just at Christmastime, but all year round.

Perhaps you might consider helping with one of these ministries? If you already have, my heartfelt thanks. One fun way you can help support our children is by coming out to see our performance of *A Christmas Carol* on Christmas Eve at 4, or the Saturday before, also at 4. Christmas should be a time when all children can feel, as Scrooge declares, "I am as light as a feather. I am as happy as an angel. I am as merry as a schoolboy." Have a Merry Christmas, and, as Tiny Tim says, "God bless us, everyone."

Blessings,

Pastor Bob

## Rummage Sale Thanks

A big thank you to everyone involved in the rummage sale this year. It is a very big job to set up for the event, sort through the goods, man the actual sale, cook in the kitchen, and clean up everything afterward. It is more than a week's worth of preparations each year. This event helps so many by allowing some to clean out their homes, others to acquire goods at a substantial discount, and most importantly, some to take what they need for free. This year a sewing machine will be taken to Africa to teach others how to sew. If you haven't done so already, **please** consider volunteering your time for this event next year.

## News from the Church Office

### Poinsettias

**Poinsettia Plants** will beautify the sanctuary on Christmas Eve for the 4:00 pm and 8:00 pm services. Order blanks for the flowers are available in each vestibule. Order and money (\$7.50/plant) must be in no later than Wednesday, December 13<sup>th</sup>.

### Donations

All donations should be 'in the office' (allow time if mailing) no later than December 29<sup>th</sup> at noon to receive credit for 2017. Any donations received after the 29<sup>th</sup> will be credited to 2018. Thank you. Anyone wishing to know "where they are" with contributions, please do not hesitate to call the church office (Mon.-Thurs.).

## Evangelism and Outreach

### 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. December's food of the month is canned soups, while January's is pantry items such as spices, flour, sugar, etc.**

## Parish Life

The crafts that were created at the annual Advent workshop will be given to our homebound friends on December 3rd when we go caroling. Lunch will be served after worship that day before we leave for caroling. **Come spread some holiday cheer!**



December 2017/January 2018

## Music & Worship

### Choir Corner ~ Make a Joyful Noise to the Lord

Hello from the Choir Corner. Rehearsals for singers and ringers continue weekly for Advent and Christmas Eve. Please join us at 8PM on Christmas Eve, the holiest of nights, as we worship the newborn King with carols, scripture, and anthems by our handbell, Sanctuary, and men's choir.

### Christmas Services

Please join us at **4PM** on Christmas Eve for our Children's service. It will include the play and hymns. At **8PM**, we will have our traditional Christmas Eve candlelight service. Come early for parking!

*The sanctuary is still, a single candle's flame gives birth to another and another. The church is softly filled with light as each is lit. The rafters and stain-glass windows appear from the darkness. Each face illuminated. All is motionless as we sing Silent Night, Holy Night. Yes, please join us, won't you?*

## Christian Education

### Christmas Pageant

Sunday School continues at 10AM each Sunday throughout the program year. During the month of December we continue to work on our Christmas Eve play, A Christmas Carol for the 4:00 service. There will also be a performance on Saturday, December 23rd. Thank you to Pastor Bob for adapting this play for our children.

## Confirmands

Ashley Cressman, Evan Dugan, Gavin Gaul, Hannah Gutekunst, Shanon McCollian, William McNally, Tanner Riehl, Samantha 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, Dorothy Kortz, Marge Markley, Winnie Mengle, Patti O'Donnell, Jane Rader, Florence Saylor, Irene Tenges, Marge (Koch) Ziegenfuss

## 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](mailto: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.**



## Altar Flowers

If you would like to sponsor altar flowers, select your Sunday and affix your name and intention (“In honor of” or “In memory of” or “To the Glory of God”). The arrangements are \$30. Another way of showing your love is to opt out of having flowers, rather choosing to have a single candle on the altar and your flower money will be donated to a charity of your choice. This is a powerful way to honor the day but make a difference in our world. Please make checks payable to “Forks UCC” with the notation “Altar Flowers”. Simply drop your payment in the offering plate. Thank you.

### Altar Flower Sponsors for December

December 3 - Joan and Ron Mumaw  
December 10 - Cheryl Hahn  
December 17 - Carolyn Mitch  
December 24 - Mike and Cathi Tirrell  
December 31 - Shirley Thatcher



\*\*\*The 2018 flower chart will be posted on an easel in the Social Room in early December.

## Those Serving

### Ushers/Coin Collectors

December 3 - Jean Cooper	January 7 - Glenn Borger
December 10 - Sam Kemmerer	January 14 - Robert Zabe
December 17 - Steve Dewalt	January 21 - Jean Cooper
December 24 - Joan and Ron Mumaw	January 28 - Ron Mumaw
December 31 - VOLUNTEERS please	

### Greeters/Offering Collectors

December 3 - Sandy and Glenn Borger/Betty Stocker & Marguerite Obulaney  
December 10 - Alice Bartholomew & Sally Dewalt/Carol and Dave Young  
December 17 - Lori Avery & Brenda DeLong/Carole Steckel & Jean Cooper  
December 24 - VOLUNTEERS please  
December 24 - Gregg Cressman and family (early service)/Linda and Dick Armbrust and Bob and Dawn Trimble (late service)  
December 31 - VOLUNTEERS please

January 7 - Barbara Huff & Jean Cooper/Joan and Dave Phillips  
January 14 - Mel Kresge & Joan Jud/Bob and Brenda Egolf  
January 21 - Steve and Debbie Chesney/Rocky Starnier & Louise Bruch  
January 28 - Bob and Margaret Zabe/Vic and Anna Zeeman

## Celebrate with our Church Family

### Happy December Birthdays

01 Carole Steckel	13 Joanne Mitch
01 Beverly Hendricks	14 Diane Parker
02 Rachele Starner	15 Karen Bernecker
03 Jeff Stoudt	16 Margaret Ackerman
03 Kris Sales	16 Chris Jesson
04 Miranda Harden	17 Charles Prutzman Jr.
04 Connor Sikora	17 Tyler Avery
05 Brenda DeLong	19 Anna Jones
05 Amanda Knitter	20 Carol Hartway
05 Logan Hancik	20 Walter Francis Jr.
06 Karen DeJesso	22 Floyd Mohn
07 Arthur Brush	23 Char Lehman
07 Scott Hughes	25 Duane Edelheiser
07 Matt Dewalt	28 Zachary Herres
10 Sam Kemmerer	29 Colton Keat
10 Richard Bartholomew	30 Eric Hanlein
12 Bill Remaly	30 Doug Steckel
12 Sophia Gleason	30 Jamie Schaadt-Psarras
13 Marguerite Obulaney	30 Grant Stackhouse



### December Anniversaries

Sheri & Rodney Burda	12/05/2014
Joan & Ron Mumaw	12/06/1959
Kathy & Mike Boushell	12/27/1990
Lorna & Bill Dreisbach	12/22/1993

### Happy January Birthdays

01 Dale Lehman	16 Matthew Johnson
05 Dawn Trimble	17 Jermaine Schaadt
07 Joan Phillips	17 George Prutzman
08 Carol Young	18 Joe Herres
08 Ed Gable	19 Pam Davis
09 Chuck Hartway	21 Gary Fleming
09 Denise Polkowski	22 Josh Starner
10 Brian Berger	23 Earl Abel*
10 Patti O'Donnell	23 Earl Rohn
10 Adia Wagner	24 David Reinman
11 Joan Jud	24 Jenifer Schaadt
11 Verna Bolte	25 Sherry Prutzman
11 Beth Schatzel	26 Rebecca Mitch
13 Bobbi Ricci	27 Alexis Happel
13 Brent Wood	29 Jim Laudenslager
14 Paul Polkowski	31 Michel DeJesso
14 Bethany Francis	

### January Anniversaries

Sandy & Glenn Borger	1/02/1971
Elizabeth & Barry Durie	1/03/1970
Kim & Dale Starner	1/18/1975
Patti & Tim Weis	1/29/1983

Earl Abel celebrates his  
91st birthday on January  
23rd. Happy birthday  
Earl!

If your name does not appear in the birthday or anniversary section and you would like it listed, please contact the church office.  
Thank you!

December 2017						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
<b>3</b> 1st Sunday of Advent Communion Parish Life Caroling	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> 6:30-8PM Open Support Group 6PM Handbell Choir 7PM Sanctuary Choir	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 10AM-1PM Stand Up Bethlehem
<b>10</b> 2nd Sunday of Advent	<b>11</b> 7PM Stewardship and Finance	<b>12</b> 6PM Spiritual Council 6:30PM Consistory	<b>13</b> 6PM Handbell Choir 7PM Sanctuary Choir	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b> 3rd Sunday of Advent <i>Shouts of Joy</i>	<b>18</b> 6PM Adult Fellowship 6:30 Evangelism and Outreach	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 6:30-8PM Open Support Group 6PM Handbell Choir 7PM Sanctuary Choir	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> 4PM <u>A</u> Christmas Carol performance
<b>24</b> 4PM Children's Service: <u>A</u> Christmas Carol performance 8PM Traditional Service with all choirs	<b>25</b> Hark! The herald angels sing, glory to the newborn King... Merry Christmas to all!	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b> 1st Sunday after Christmas						

Sundays  
8AM - Meditative Worship  
10AM - Worship



## January 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 6:30-8PM Open Support Group	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 1st Sunday after Epiphany/ Baptism of Christ Communion	<b>8</b> 7PM Stewardship and Finance	<b>9</b> 6PM Spiritual Council 7PM Consistory	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> 2nd Sunday after Epiphany	<b>15</b> NO Adult Fellowship in Jan./Feb.	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 6:30-8PM Open Support Group	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> 3rd Sunday after Epiphany	<b>22</b> 7PM Christian Ed.	<b>23</b> 6:30PM Parish Life	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> 4th Sunday after Epiphany	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>			

Sundays  
8AM - Meditative Worship  
10AM - Worship







**FORKS UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
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**WEBSITE:**  
[www.forkschurch-ucc.org](http://www.forkschurch-ucc.org)

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:**  
 MON, TUES, WED, THURS  
 8:15 AM TO 3:30 PM

**Newsletter Editor:**  
 Alice Hornbake

**Staff Members**

Ministers .....Every Member of the Church  
 Pastor .....Bob Gutekunst  
 Music Director .....  
 Office Manager.....Cheryl Hahn  
 Groundskeeper.....Frank Mengel, Jr.  
 Housekeeper .....Loretta Seruga

**Your Consistory Members**

Consistory President .....Pam Davis  
 Vice President .....Betsy Warner  
 Consistory Secretary.....Carol Young  
 Spiritual Council .....Mel Kresge  
 Spiritual Council .....Brenda Stoudt  
 Spiritual Council .....Jim Milham  
 Christian Ed.....Amanda Knitter  
   Alice Hornbake  
 Evangelism and Outreach.....  
   Char Lehman  
   Rocky Starner  
 Music & Worship .....Jean Cooper  
   Lois Steward  
 Parish Life .....Sue McCollian  
   Margaret Zabe  
 Property.....Sandy Schaadt  
   Charles Kolb  
 Stewardship & Finance .....Amy Richard  
   Brenda DeLong  
 Personnel .....Jacob Allen  
   Bob Zabe  
   Ruth Gable

**About Forks UCC:**

We carry on the traditions of the faithful who founded this church in 1812. A landmark along Sullivan Trail, the congregations have been proclaiming the Lordship of Jesus Christ for over 200 years.

**Our Mission Statement**

*God calls and empowers us to minister to the physical and spiritual needs of all people, through our gifts of love, support, and compassion revealed in the gospel of Jesus Christ.*



December 2017/January 2018