

# THE BEACON

Published monthly in the interest of  
St. Paul United Church of Christ  
New Bremen, Ohio

“Empowered Christians Serving God’s People”

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Rev. Rebecca Erb Strang, Pastor

December, 2014

*Nations shall come to your  
light, and kings to the  
brightness of your dawn.*

Isaiah 60:3, NRSV



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# Serving St. Paul Church

## Staff

Rev. Becky Erb Strang ..... Pastor  
Katie Jackson ..... Director of Youth Ministries  
Kristi Voisard ..... Director of Christian Education  
Barb Holdren ..... Office Manager/Bookkeeper  
Anna Hoelscher ..... Lay Minister of Visitation  
Dick Hudson ..... Organist  
Jim Strang ..... Director of Music  
Connie O'Neill ..... Saturday Night Choir Director  
Janet Eilerman ..... Financial Secretary  
Dennis & Linda Hainline ..... Ed. Building Custodian  
Greg Hainline ..... Sanctuary Custodian  
Ralph Plattner ..... Groundskeeper  
John Mohrman ..... Building Maintenance Technician  
Kathy Topp ..... Beacon/Web Page Editor

## 2014 Church Council (meets 2nd Tue)

*(Transacts routine business of the church)*

John Voress ..... President  
Mike Holdren ..... Vice President  
Kathy Topp ..... 1st yr. Recording Secretary  
Randy Clark ..... 2nd yr. Treasurer  
Tim May ..... Sr. Elder  
Brenda Haynes ..... Jr. Elder  
John Mohrman ..... 3rd yr. Trustee  
Allen Bushman ..... 2nd yr. Trustee  
TBA ..... 1st yr. Trustee  
Mark Dicke ..... 2nd yr. Deacon  
Myra Hanenkraft ..... 2nd yr. Deacon  
Ragan Miller ..... 2nd yr. Deacon  
Bill Tostrick ..... 2nd yr. Deacon  
George Voress ..... 2nd yr. Head. Deacon  
Carol Wilson ..... 2nd yr. Deacon  
Lisa Davidson ..... 1st yr. Deacon  
Jeff Dicke ..... 1st yr. Deacon  
Nelson Erb ..... 1st yr. Deacon  
Phil Hemmelgarn ..... 1st yr. Deacon  
Dee Schroer ..... 1st yr. Deacon  
Gene Topp ..... 1st yr. Deacon

## Board of Christian Education (meets 3rd Tue)

*(Partnering with Families, the St. Paul UCC Board of Christian Education strives to guide our children through weekly educational opportunities and ongoing mission outreach)*

Kristi Voisard ..... Director of Christian Education  
Shelly Smart ..... Sunday school Supt.  
Brook Schmitmeyer ..... Asst. Sunday school Supt.  
Lisa Weigandt ..... Representative  
Terri Mullins ..... Representative  
Linda Tinsley ..... Representative

## Pastoral Relations Committee

Tom Thieman ..... Chairman  
Jan Fiser ..... Member  
Amy Barhorst ..... Member

## Membership Committee

*(Promotes/encourages membership and participation in St. Paul activities; church publicity; confirmation reunion)*

Tom Braun ..... Rev. Becky Erb Strang  
Dennis Dicke ..... Sandy Thieman  
Rebekkah Fry ..... John Voress  
John Gilberg, Chr. ..... Dick Watcke  
Bev Poppe

## Stewardship Board

*(Secures pledges; promotes stewardship programs)*

Ann Kuhn ..... 3rd yr.  
Sally Wissman ..... 3rd yr.  
Kim Quellhorst ..... 2nd yr.  
Deb Hirschfeld ..... 1st yr.  
Gary Wiedeman ..... 1st yr., Chr.

## Mission Team

*(Raises awareness/promotes mission programs)*

Art & Cathy Barnes ..... Bev Poppe  
Sharon Fiely ..... Amy Scheer  
John & Joyce Gilberg ..... Dee Schroer  
Marta Hoelscher ..... Jenn Snider  
Larry & Ann Kuhn ..... Kristi Voisard  
Dot Ouwerkerk ..... Gary Wehmeyer, Chr.

## Worship Committee (meets bi-monthly)

Tim May ..... Sr. Elder, Chairman  
Rev. Becky Erb Strang ..... Pastor  
Dick Hudson ..... Organist  
Jim Strang ..... Director of Music  
George Voress ..... Head Deacon

## Budget Committee (meets in August)

*(Prepares church budget for following year)*

John Voress ..... Church Council President  
Mike Holdren ..... Church Council Vice President  
Kathy Topp ..... Church Council Secretary  
Randy Clark ..... Church Council Treasurer  
Tim May ..... Church Council Sr. Elder  
John Mohrman ..... Church Council Sr. Trustee  
Gary Wiedeman ..... Chairman, Stewardship Board

## Board of Controls (meets Mar-Jun-Oct)

*(Administers St. Paul Memorial Fund)*

John Voress ..... Church Council President  
Mike Holdren ..... Church Council Vice President  
John Mohrman ..... Church Council Sr. Trustee  
Terry Wissman ..... 3rd yr.  
Don Scheer ..... 2nd yr.  
Burt Fiser ..... 2nd yr.

## Financial Advisory Committee

*(Consults with bookkeeper regarding church investments)*

Don Scheer ..... Member  
Bob Wierwille ..... Member  
John Wierwille ..... Member



**FROM OUR PASTOR**

At Advent, we recall the familiar carol:

*Love came down at Christmas,  
Love all lovely, Love divine;  
Love was born at Christmas;  
Star and angels gave the sign.*

During Advent and Christmas seasons, Love has, indeed, come to us as a tiny child, wrapped in bands of cloth, born to an unmarried young woman, in a faraway land.

As we journey together to Bethlehem, I invite you to join us for our seasonal celebrations throughout the month of December—in worship, in Christmas caroling, and in holiday gatherings.

At St. Paul UCC, there are many opportunities for you to embrace the coming of the Christ Child. You are invited to Saturday evening carol sings from 4:45 to 5:00 p.m. prior to the Saturday Evening Worship. Christmas caroling will take place on Sunday, December 7, at 2:00 p.m.--allowing families and individuals to participate in this ministry event to our neighbors. Following caroling, all are invited to the parsonage for refreshments. On Christmas Eve, the 5:00 p.m. service will be geared for "The Young and Young at Heart." Children of all ages will be able to participate in a Christmas pageant as we celebrate the birth of Christ. Also, on Christmas Eve, there will be candlelight services at both 8:00 and 11:00 p.m.

Here is a brief rundown of the month:

>Saturday and Sunday, November 29 and 30. First weekend of Advent. Our youth will lead worship on Sunday.

>Sunday, December 7. Second Sunday of Advent. Worship with communion. Congregational annual meeting at the end of worship. Caroling for all ages from 2:00 to 4:00 followed by fellowship time at the parsonage.

>Sunday, December 14. Third Sunday of Advent. Spirit Safari youth will lead worship in the sanctuary. That evening at 7:00 p.m., you are welcome back to St. Paul's sanctuary for a Christmas concert.

>Sunday, December 21. Fourth Sunday of Advent. The Chancel Choir and Bell Choir will lead worship. Christmas Family Fun Night in the Assembly Room from 6:00-8:00p.m.

>Christmas Eve 5:00 p.m. Worship for the Young and Young at Heart. We will sing carols and watch the events of Christmas Eve unfold before our eyes.

Candlelight worship at 8:00 and 11:00 p.m. with carols, anthems, preaching, and the celebration of the Light of Christ.

>Sunday, December 27-28. First Weekend after Christmas.

>Sunday, January 4. Epiphany Sunday and communion. That same afternoon, the Erb Strang family will host an Epiphany Open House at the parsonage from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.—complete with refreshments and Epiphany cake.

The final verse of the carol is a reminder of the gift Christ is to us:

*Love shall be our token;  
Love be yours and Love be mine;  
Love to God and neighbor,  
Love for plea and gift and sign.*

Blessings,  
Becky

**COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING**

The New Bremen/New Knoxville Rotary and the Village of New Bremen are hosting the annual Christmas Tree Lighting downtown New Bremen on Monday, December 1, at 6:30 p.m. Along with lighting the Christmas tree, the New Bremen High School Choir will sing, Santa will visit, and there will be refreshments for all.

**O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL...CAROLERS!**

Members and friends of the St. Paul Family are invited to go Christmas caroling on Sunday, December 7, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. We will gather in the chapel at 2:00 to divide ourselves into "caroling runs"—then take our songs to area folk.

Following caroling, all are welcome to Pastor Becky and Jim's home at the parsonage for hot cocoa and cider, cookies and fellowship.

**CAN'T GET ENOUGH OF CHRISTMAS CAROLING?**

If you love to sing Christmas carols, you are invited to arrive around fifteen minutes prior to the 5:00 p.m. Saturday worship service in the chapel throughout Advent. As our gathering music, we will sing carols as we lift up our praises to God.

**WORSHIP AND CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PRESENTATION**

On Sunday, December 14, the Spirit Safari Club will lead the worship service in the sanctuary. A cookie buffet will follow.

**CHRISTMAS FAMILY FUN NIGHT: DECEMBER 21**

Children, parents and grandparents are invited to St. Paul on Sunday, December 21, at 6:00 p.m. for dinner, games, and activities focusing on Christmas. Families are asked to call the church office to let us know you can participate AND bring a side dish or dessert to share. We will end by 8:00 p.m. Any questions? Contact Pastor Becky

**CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP: FOR THE YOUNG AND YOUNG AT HEART**

If an earlier Christmas Eve service works best for your family, you are invited to the **5:00 p.m. worship for the Young and Young at Heart** held in the sanctuary. Children will be able to be angels, shepherds, or magi as the story of the birth of Christ Jesus unfolds before our eyes. Carols will be sung and we may have a surprise visit by Baby Jesus!

**SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT,  
ALL IS CALM, ALL IS BRIGHT...**

Music, silence, mystery, and candle light highlight the celebration of the birth of Christ Jesus as we worship at **8:00 and 11:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve**. All are invited to share in the wonder of this most holy night.

**EPIPHANY OPEN HOUSE:  
JANUARY 4 AT THE PARSONAGE**

Everyone is invited to an Open House at the parsonage on Sunday, January 4 from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. This event will be hosted by the Jim and Becky Strang. Please bring an appetizer to share. Plan to enjoy good food, good conversation, laughter and maybe even a football game.

**NEW BREMEN COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CONCERT**

St. Paul United Church of Christ is hosting New Bremen's Christmas Concert on Sunday, December 14, at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. Musical groups from St. Paul and the community will perform Christmas favorites. A freewill offering will be taken to support Agape Ministries.

**CAROL SING WEEKEND: DECEMBER 27-28**

As is our custom, we will sing favorite carols on the last weekend of December. You can "vote" for your favorite carols during worship services throughout the month of December. Former SALT Leader, Megan Hanenkratt, will lead worship services that weekend.

**HOME COMMUNION ASSISTANCE**

Pastor Becky will be delivering Home Communion to our many homebound members in December. If you would like to accompany her, please contact the church office to be put on the schedule. Any questions? Contact Pastor Becky.

Blessings,  
Becky

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## Mission

**DECEMBER MISSION PROJECT – CHRISTMAS FUND  
(For Veterans of the Cross and Emergency Assistance)**

As the Christmas season comes upon us, the Mission Team asks that we, as a congregation, take time to think about and show our support to our clergy and lay leaders. These selfless individuals often give more of their personal time, talents, and finances than we realize.

The Christmas Fund helps to provide active and retired clergy and lay employees who are in need with quality health care, adequate retirement income and emergency assistance in times of financial crises.

Help us show our love, support and care for those who give so much of themselves to serve the church of Jesus Christ. Please prayerfully consider supporting our church employees with a monetary love offering and thank-you through the Christmas Fund.

The Mission Team

**PROJECT OF YEAR UPDATE  
LUTHERAN CLINIC -- EL SALVADOR**

Many years ago, our church chose to have a mission emphasis each year. On alternating years, the mission would be to support our local St. Paul Church, and then

the next year would be for the extended church. This year our mission emphasis is supporting the extended church.

So throughout this year of 2014, we have been raising money to support the salaries of the staff at the clinic in El Salvador. These folks are doctors, a lab technician, a pharmacist, and a dental assistant and most of their time is volunteered at the clinic. The patients get the same service if they can pay or can't pay the two-dollar fee per visit. This is why our church's mission chosen for this year is to support the staff at the clinic so they can receive a small salary every month for the next two years.

This past year, the Mission Team has held an ice cream social, a fish fry, a chicken dinner, and on two different occasions, a soup and sandwich luncheon after Sunday services. These fund raising events, plus the many donations throughout the year have, to this date, almost reached the \$12,000 goal. \$11,723.04 has been raised to date. We still have the month of December to receive donations and hope to go over this \$12,000 goal, thus giving the staff a modest raise.

The mission team, on behalf of the staff of the clinic and Bishop Medardo Gomez of the El Salvadoran Lutheran Church, are very appreciative of all of your generosity.

Thanks be to God!

The Mission Team

## Spirit Safari



**SPIRIT SAFARI  
CHRISTMAS PROGRAM**

The Spirit Safari Christmas Program will be on **Sunday, December 14**, at 10:15 a.m. in the sanctuary. The children will be telling the Christmas story, singing some of their favorite Christmas songs while filling our hearts with Christmas love and cheer! Cookies, punch, and coffee will be served immediately following in the sanctuary.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM SPIRIT SAFARI!**

The children and teaching staff of Spirit Safari put together a whimsical Christmas tree to be displayed at the Lockkeepers Inn Holiday Open House. You may visit the Tree Open House on Sunday, December 7, and Sunday, December 14, from 1:30 – 4:00. What a great way to show our community the love St. Paul UCC has for our children and our God.

**A FRESH, NEW NURSERY!**

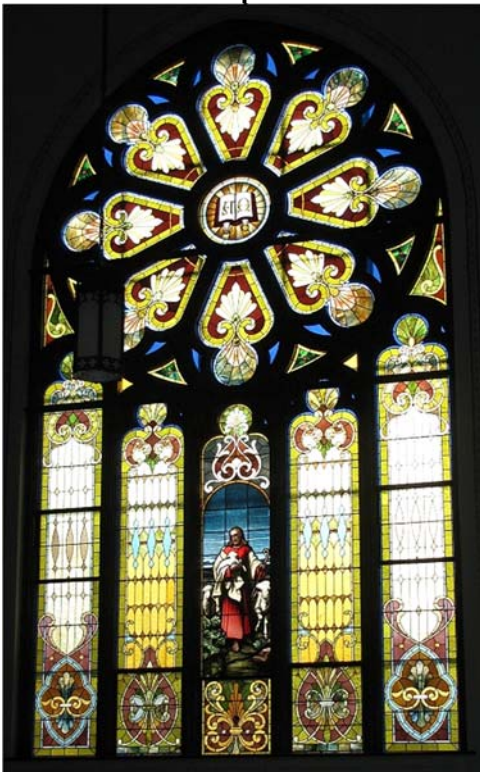
Stop in and check out the new and improved St. Paul UCC nursery. With the support of many, we have not only new carpet and new paint, but also a fresh new feel for all those special little ones. A big thank you to all involved! As with most cleaning projects, we have items that are up for the taking. All unneeded nursery items are in the gym. Please help yourself! All that is remaining will be donated to Agape on December 12.

## News & Events

**Jesus is Knocking Window**



**The Good Shepherd Window**



'Knocking' will be silent for a while.

If you've not heard Jesus knocking at the door in the St. Paul sanctuary, it's not because you haven't been listening or forgot your hearing aid. You won't hear — or see — that sound until at least March... maybe longer.

The large stained glass window on the north side of the sanctuary will be a learning challenge while it's removed for restoration, according to Richard Richert of Dayton Art Glass. He spent more than a year addressing challenges in restoring the Good Shepherd window, recently re-installed on the south side of the sanctuary.

Richert, in his 35th year of restoring stained glass windows, said there are "wood and masonry situations" to address St. Paul's latest undertaking to refurbish all of the sanctuary windows. Wrinkled paint and cracks on the north wall are evidence of the church building settling on the Second Street side. The wall will need to be fixed, Richert said, so the newly framed window will fit into its original opening — and not be subject to the stresses that have caused the window to deteriorate.

The current pine frame was covered in ages-old caulk and layers of paint one-eighth inch thick. The new frame will be fabricated in poplar, a sturdier wood, and anchored and sealed with modern materials "to make it better; bring it up to 21st Century standards," Richert said.

Another modern innovation is solar-powered ventilation between the stained glass and its storm window. This will be similar to the Good Shepherd window, in which fans automatically turn on at 90 degrees to control temperatures that can reach 180 degrees and cause damage. It was cold conditions, however, that delayed the first stages of restoring the north window.

Richert said he had scheduled November 17 to remove the round dove window atop the large image of Jesus knocking on the door. That was the second day of the area's first snows and wind chills near zero degrees — hazardous conditions for handling stained glass. Richert simply stated that "Mother Nature slowed us down." He said he could heat the tent outside the window and remove the stained glass and storm protection in 30-degree weather.

Good news, Richert said, is that this window "will have less of a learning curve because we learned so much taking out and restoring the (south) window." His crew used a heated soap-and-water solution and museum-quality chemicals to clean the south window without any abrasives. The crumbled lead was replaced with a restoration alloy of lead, tin and silver and these processes will be used on the north window.

Richert's original estimate was to begin re-installing the window in March 2015 ... but Mother Nature may play a role in the revised schedule

*[Contributed by Art Barnes]*

*[Editor's note: Restoration of the Good Shepherd window began in April 2013. The fully restored window was re-installed in October 2014 and was formally dedicated in loving memory of Dr. Al Reed on October 26, 2014.]*

## CRESCENT PLAYERS

Local community theater group, the Crescent Players, will present a variety of short-act performances in the auditorium on **Friday, December 12**, at 7:00 p.m. Admission will be a donation of canned goods for Agape.

## PAGE TURNERS

### December: Orphan Train by Christine Baker Kline

Between 1854 and 1929, so-called orphan trains ran regularly from the cities of the East Coast to the farmlands of the Midwest, carrying thousands of abandoned children whose fates would be determined by pure luck. Would they be adopted by a kind and loving family, or would they face a childhood of hard labor and servitude? As a young Irish immigrant, Vivian leads a quiet, peaceful life, allowing the memories of her upbringing to become a hazy blur. Enter Molly, a young girl who is part of the modern day foster care system. Molly is required to perform community service and finds herself an assistant to Vivian. Orphan Train is a powerful tale of upheaval and resilience, second chances and unexpected friendship.

Join the Page Turners, Monday, **December 15**, at 1:00 p.m. in the library to share in the review of this interesting book.

The book selection for January will be Left Neglected by Lisa Genova

Sandy Thieman

## SENIOR LUNCHEON

On Thursday, November 20, seniors enjoyed a Thanksgiving meal at noon at St. Paul. Attendees were served apple and grape salad, turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes and gravy, and creamed corn, along with cranberry cheesecake. Pastor Becky led the group in prayer, reminding all of us that gratitude is all about perspective.

Christmas dinner for the seniors will be at noon on **December 18**. Beef and roasted potatoes will be served.

Senior Luncheon Committee

## ST. PAUL UCC CANVAS AND COFFEE EVENT TO BE HELD IN JANUARY

St. Paul will be hosting a **Canvas and Coffee** event on **Saturday, January 24, 2015**. Come join us for a fun time of fellowship and painting! No experience is needed! Anyone in sixth grade or older is welcome to participate. The fee is \$35.00 per person (must be paid by January 17). This fee includes a variety of refreshments along with everything needed to create your beautiful work of art! *\*Alcohol is not permitted and will not be provided.*

If you are interested in attending or would like more details, please contact Jennifer Snider at 614-361-3899 or call the church office. (Registration will be done online through Dayton Wine & Canvas).

Jenn Snider

## GREEN TIPS

### WAYS TO GIVE THE MOST THIS CHRISTMAS

1. **Purchase gifts sold through fundraisers** – I recently found a great example of this when I visited the website for Auglaize Industries. If you order items from [www.doughballed.com](http://www.doughballed.com) and enter the coupon code AIINC (for Auglaize Industries), their program will receive 10% of the proceeds from the sale. Contact your favorite non-profit organizations to see what fundraising programs they currently have!

2. **Buy gifts marked "Fair Trade"** – Coffee, chocolate and wine! Oh, my! A wide variety of fair trade goods is available at local grocers, as well as Sam's Club and Target and many more. Visit [www.fairtradeusa.org](http://www.fairtradeusa.org) for more information.

3. **Give gifts that give back** – Order gift cards through our church's Scrips program that benefits our youth ministry. Contact the church office for more information. You can also visit [www.iGive.com/UnitedChurchofChrist](http://www.iGive.com/UnitedChurchofChrist). Every time you shop at any of the 1000+ online stores in the iGive network, a portion of the money you spend benefits United Church of Christ.

4. **Honor a loved one with an alternative gift or "gift with a purpose"** – The Heifer Project and Church World Service both have catalogs of items that can be purchased for those in need.

5. **Buy locally made items** – From bakers to knitters and artists, there's so much from which to choose. Many of these people donate a portion of their profits back to non-profit organizations too!

6. **Make a "green" gift** – Homemade, handmade, recycled, reused, and organic! Sure! These ARE all great earth friendly gifts. And who doesn't enjoy a special gift made by a loved one?

7. **Buy secondhand/gently used** items like jewelry, furniture, scarves, silver, tools, and antiques! You never know what unique items you might find!

Jenn Snider

## Meetings

### BUSY TWELVE

The Busy Twelve will meet on **Tuesday, December 2**, at 11:30 a.m. at Edith Wissman's for lunch and party.

Eileen Gamble

### MEN'S CLUB

The Men's Club will meet on **Saturday, December 6**, at 8:00 a.m. at Speedway Lanes.

John Voress

### WOMEN'S SERVICE GROUP

The annual Christmas Carry-In Lunch for the Women's Service Group will be Thursday, **December 11**, in the Assembly Room. The group will also pack gift baskets for homebound members of St. Paul. For further information, phone Cathy Barnes (937-206-5860) or Julie Paul (419-629-3512).

Cathy Barnes

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Three new members were received into the St. Paul membership family on Sunday, November 16, 2014. Please extend the hand of friendship when you see them.

Madeleine Erb joins us by letter of transfer. A ninth grader at New Bremen High School, Madeleine is active in the marching band and bowling team. Madeleine participates in senior high youth groups and assists with the confirmation program. And, in case you were wondering, Madeleine is pastor Becky's niece!

Patrick MacKenzie joins us by letter of transfer from Nativity Lutheran Church in St. Anthony, Minnesota. Patrick is married to Jill. Together Jill and Patrick love parenting their kindergarten daughter, Sophia. Patrick works at La Piazza as a chef. He is thrilled to have found a spiritual home at St. Paul.

Jill (Poppe) MacKenzie joins us by way of letter of transfer. Raised at St. Paul, this is a homecoming for Jill. Married to Patrick, Jill is a licensed social worker who trains future foster parents through SAFY: Specialized Alternatives for Families and Youth. Jill loves to read, walk the dog and play with their daughter Sophia.

## CHURCH RECORD BOOK

### Baptism:

Bryson Robert Eilerman, born February 1, 2014, to Mitch and Kristy (Allen) Eilerman, was baptized November 16, 2014.

## CHURCH DIRECTORY

### Change of address:

Duane & Alice Hegemier, 26 Canterbury Dr., New Bremen, OH 45869-9687

Lori Froning, 1380 Park Ave., Piqua, OH 45356-4242

Glen Whitten, 500 Conley Ave., Ada, OH 45810-1281

### Add new members:

Madeleine Erb, 418 S. Franklin St., New Bremen, OH 45869-1412

Patrick MacKenzie, 17 Haarbye, New Bremen, OH 45869-9409

Jill (Poppe) MacKenzie, 17 Haarbye, New Bremen, OH 45869-9409

### Remove:

Michael Klein – transfer

Steve Bushman – by request

## BIRTH CANDLE ON THE ALTAR

Gavin Kenneth Schwable was born to Jacob Schwable and Elinda Lawrence on November 12, 2014.

Colten Matthew Schott was born to Cody and Sierra Schott on November 13, 2014.

## SCHEDULING CHANGES FOR GREETERS

In the past, the Women's Service Group has been responsible for securing Sunday morning greeters. As many members are using cell phones and have no landline with home phone numbers published, the group thought that a sign up chart would help to reach these members and others.

Beginning December 1, a sign up chart for volunteers who are able to greet on Sunday mornings will be posted in the narthex of the sanctuary. Please check your 2015 calendar and find a date that you and possibly another family member or friend can greet other members. The first sign up chart will be for January and February 2015. Other charts will be set up for upcoming months. Any questions, please contact Bev Plattner at 419/629-3694. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Bev Plattner

## DECEMBER GREETERS

### Dec 7

East  
North  
South

Tim & Vicki May  
Dan & Kathy Nedderman  
Terry & Sally Wissman

### Dec 14

East  
North  
South

Burt & Jan Fiser  
Dan & Sally Dicke  
Kenneth Dicke

### Dec 21

East  
North  
South

Roland Dicke  
Neal & Karla Wiedeman  
The Rhinehart family

### Dec 28

East  
North  
South

Keith & Dana Bornhorst  
Brenda Haynes  
Jerry & Cindy Newman

## SATURDAY ACCOMPANISTS

Dec 6  
Dec 13  
Dec 20  
Dec 27

Sharon Chaney  
Sharon Chaney  
Ethel Mesloh & Edith Wissman  
Bev Plattner

## DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Dec 1  
Dec 2  
Dec 4  
Dec 9  
Dec 10  
Dec 11  
Dec 12  
Dec 16  
Dec 17  
Dec 17  
Dec 21  
Dec 27  
Dec 28

Don & Jan Dammeyer  
Jeff & Lisa Weigandt  
Scot & Keri Knueve  
Greg & Shelley Dicke  
William & Cynthia Young  
Tim & Cathy Nevels  
Ken & Regina Sudman  
Wesley & JuliAnne Wyatt  
Ronald & Debra Greber  
Jerry & Mary Lou Bambauer  
Greg & LeeAnne Hainline  
Howard & Sally Fark  
Charles & Eileen Gamble



Pastoral Care is very important. Please call the church office when you or a family member or friend enter a hospital or care facility so the pastor and church friends can be supportive.

### NURSING HOME RESIDENTS

#### ELMWOOD ASSISTED LIVING

**711 S. Walnut St., New Bremen, OH 45869**

Victor Maurer  
Lois Moeller  
Carolyn Pape (*send mail to Carolyn Pape c/o Cheryl Barlage, 41 W. Pearl, New Bremen, OH 45869*)  
Helen Wissman

#### HERITAGE MANOR

**24 N. Hamilton St., Minster, OH 45865**

Gloria Goodwin  
Thomas Goodwin  
Doris Howe  
Jill May  
Alice Waterman  
Jean Waterman

#### THE GARDENS-WAPAKONETA

**505 Walnut St., Wapakoneta, OH 45895**

Louise Kettler (Room 222)

#### ST. MARYS LIVING CENTER

**1209 Indiana Ave., St. Marys, OH 45885**

Eldine Blumhorst  
Marcella Thomas

#### OTTERBEIN-ST. MARYS

**11300 Circle Dr., St. Marys, OH 45885**

LaRue Dicke  
Dorothy Feltman (11313 Bobwhite Lane)  
Harry Ingram (11108 Circle Drive)  
Leota Kellermeyer  
Betty Kettler (Room 326)  
June Wiehe

#### BRIARWOOD MANOR

**100 Don Desch Dr., Coldwater, OH 45828**

William (Bill) Jackson

#### AUGLAIZE ACRES

**13093 Infirmary Rd., Wapakoneta, OH 45895**

Luella Poppe (*send mail c/o David Poppe, 06700 Lock Two Rd., New Bremen, OH 45869*)

#### SWISS VILLAGE

**1350 W. Main St., P. O. Box 284, Berne, IN 46711**

Mary Lou Campbell, Room 658

## Happy Birthday

These people have the special day of their birth this month. May God bless all of you birthday people on your special day.

### DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 David Goodwin, Thomas Sutton
- 2 Gary Goodwin, Michelle Smart, Elizabeth Wierwille, Christine Wilson
- 3 Miriam Donnerberg, Dorothy Feltman, Mallory Messick, Dorothy Schneider
- 4 Robert Clark, Jennifer Prewitt
- 5 Ronald Mueller, Jennifer Sudman
- 6 Diane Koenig
- 7 Phil Hemmelgarn, Lance Lear, Landon Leshner
- 8 Art Barnes, Clayton Franklin
- 9 Annie Beake, Christi Craft, Jesse Hammond, Leslie Hirschfeld
- 10 Walter Fischbach, Jay Gilberg
- 11 Gerritt Hovestreydt
- 12 Dona Mae Kuenning, Corry Nelson, John Quellhorst
- 13 Donna Culver, Maddy Paul
- 14 Janelle Callahan, Cathy Maurer, Justin Paul
- 15 Kenneth Fox, Robert Young
- 16 Dana Blanchard, Virginia Voress
- 17 Sydney Dicke, Jean Hoskins, Clint Voress
- 18 Nicole Humphries, Abigail Lammers, Randy Micheal, Jr., Paige Webb
- 19 Julia Mullins, Abby Thieman
- 20 Donald Scheer, Lindsey Wierwille
- 22 Joshua Hatfield, Megan Ritter, Joyce Topp
- 23 Jenna Hatfield, Linda Topp
- 25 Jennifer Grigsby, Jerry Huber, Jill Sudman
- 26 Kelsey Davidson
- 27 Nicholas Alig, Kathy Cook, Donald Howell, Jay Snider
- 28 Paige Miller, Elizabeth Paul, Jennifer Scheer, Emily Young
- 29 Sharon Barr, Wyatt Fontanini, Kelly Naylor
- 30 Alayna Thieman
- 31 Debra Lear, Roger Mueller, Michael Weaver



**St. Paul U.C.C. Council Meeting  
November 11, 2014**

The meeting was called to order by President John Voress with 20 attendees including: Allen Bushman, Randy Clark, Lisa Davidson, Mark Dicke, Nelson Erb, Myra Hanenkratt, Barb Holdren, Mike Holdren, Katie Jackson, Tim May, John Mohrman, Dee Schroer, Rev. Becky Strang, Gene Topp, Kathy Topp, Bill Tostrick, Kristi Voisard, George Voress, Carol Wilson. Rev. Becky Strang opened the meeting with a prayer.

**Secretary's Report:** The secretary's report for the October 14, 2014, council meeting was reviewed. Lisa Davidson made a motion to approve; Carol Wilson seconded; motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report:** The treasurer's report as of October 31, 2014, was reviewed. The ytd balance, income vs. expenses, showed a deficit of (\$16,319.76). John Mohrman made a motion to approve; Mark Dicke seconded; motion carried.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Membership:** Next meeting – January 2015.

**Mission:** Dee Schroer reported that:

- The total amount collected at the New Bremen CropWalk was \$2632.
- The November mission is Thankoffering, with proceeds being divided equally between Agape Ministries in St. Marys and Heifer International.
- The December mission is Camp Washington in Cincinnati. Christmas trees have been set up in the chapel and the sanctuary narthex with tags for various items to be purchased.
- The Project of the Year (salaries for medical clinic staff in El Salvador) has accumulated approximately \$10,000 to date.

**Worship:** No meeting; no report.

**OTHER REPORTS**

**Board of Christian Ed:** Kristi Voisard, Director of Christian Education, reported that:

- Spirit Safari attendance has been running between 40-62 students per week.
- Spirit Safari has 15 full-time and 3 substitute teachers.
- The Spirit Safari students will display a Christmas tree at the Christmas Tree Festival sponsored by the New Bremen Historic Association.
- The Spirit Safari Christmas program will be held Sunday, December 14, in the sanctuary.
- Nursery redecorating project -- New carpet has been ordered for the nursery. Painters are needed to paint the walls.

**Deacons:** George Voress reported that:

- Four new deacons have been confirmed for the 2015 council. Two more are needed.

**Elders:** Tim May – nothing to report.

**Trustees:** John Mohrman reported that:

- Dayton Art Glass is proceeding with the start of renovating the north stained glass window, Jesus is Knocking. Insulation will be installed over the plywood inserts to cut down on heat loss.

•John is working on creating a workspace for himself and Jim Strang in the east storage room behind the stage in the auditorium.

•Clock timers have been reset.

•A quote for a Youth Room air conditioning unit, similar to those in the chapel, has been received from New Knoxville Supply at a cost of \$5650. A pledge of \$2000 has been received toward this project.

**Rev. Strang's report:**

•Worship:

- >Nov 16 – Worship at St. Marys Living Center, 3:00 p.m.
- >Nov 25 – Community Thanksgiving Service at Holy Redeemer, 7:30 p.m.
- >Nov 29-30 – First weekend of Advent
- >Dec 7 – Congregational meeting; Christmas caroling at 2:00 p.m.
- >Dec 14 – Children lead worship in sanctuary; Christmas concert at 7:00 p.m.
- >Dec 21 – Chancel and bell choirs lead worship.
- >Dec 24 – Christmas Eve services, 5:00, 8:00 and 11:00 p.m.
- >Dec 27-28 – Megan Hanenkratt preaching.

•Confirmation – Each week we add more students. 21 students currently enrolled, many of whom have been active in our youth ministries, but their parents are not active. ALL of them consider St. Paul to be their church home. Assisting this year are Dee Schroer, Mike Holdren, Lisa Weigandt, Shelly Smart, Diane Gilberg and John Gilberg.

•Sunday Evening Book Club – meeting November 23, 6:00 p.m. at the parsonage, to discuss Lynne McTaggart's The Bond and talk about ways we can expand our community and nurture discipleship for St. Paul.

•Nov 15-16 –New members will be received during worship services.

•Rotary Career Day is Tuesday, November 18. A high school junior will shadow me during the morning to learn about ordained ministry as a career.

•Vacation times – November 30-December 3; December 27-January 2; February 19-24 (tentative dates for Ben's graduation from AIT).

•Pastoral care – Oct 14 thru Nov 11:

- >Phone calls: 4
- >Notes written: 6
- >Office visits: 2
- >Nursing home visits: 17
- >Hospital visits: 4
- >Home visits: 7
- >Nursing home worship: 1
- >Home communions: 18
- >Wedding vow renewal: 1

•Dick Hudson, organist, will take a respite in Florida for the months of January and February. Connie O'Neill has agreed to fill in for Dick.

**Katie Jackson's Report:**

•SPLASH: The students continue working through their lectionary-based curriculum called Spark. They also made ornaments for the Camp Washington Christmas trees and made the veterans' gifts.

●JH: We continue to work through JH Live curriculum. We are doing a series on family relationships.

●HS: We have been discussing articles from Relevant magazine each week, including one about things people do that make them miserable. We also talked about the young woman who stirred up controversy to use physician-assisted suicide to end her life. The conversation was great, and I liked hearing what the students thought about it. We worked on ornaments for the Spirit Safari kids.

●Licensing process: I am in the eighth week of the UCC Polity and History course. The class will conclude on December 20. I have a 2-day ministry assessment on December 15-16 in Columbus.

●Student events attended:  
 >District cross country meet.  
 >2 marching band competitions (including state competition).  
 >High school choral program.

●Upcoming events:  
 >Nov 30 – Youth Sunday  
 >Dec 7 – HS Christmas party at Katie’s house 6:30-9:00 p.m. (includes dinner).  
 >Dec 10 – JH Christmas party at church.

**OLD BUSINESS**

●Decide on 2015 Project of the Year (south parking lot?) Get quote by December council meeting.

●Office copier. A quote from Four U Office Supplies (Celina) was reviewed. After discussion, council’s consensus was to enter into a 5-year lease for a new copier from Four U at a cost of \$263/month. John Mohrman made a motion accordingly; Allen Bushman seconded; motion carried. The contract with Perry Corporation (Lima) for the current copier will be cancelled as of November 17.

●Roland Dicke and Norm Holcomb are working on repairing the north sanctuary auxiliary door.

●Council reviewed the 2015 Proposed General Fund Budget, with a 9.8% increase over the 2014 budget. After discussion, Tim May made a motion to approve the budget for presentation at the December 7 congregational meeting; Randy Clark seconded; motion carried.

**NEW BUSINESS**

●An assessment program quote for \$9500 has been received from Garmann/Miller & Associates (Minster, OH). More quotes will be requested. An assessment program will help identify priorities for any future structural and infrastructure maintenance projects at St. Paul.

●A donation request was received from the Giving Thanks Community Thanksgiving Dinner in St. Marys. After discussion, Allen Bushman made a motion to donate \$50; Randy Clark seconded; motion carried.

●A thank you note was read from the Village of New Bremen Police Department for our donation to the National Child Safety Program.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Next meeting: December 9, 2014, at 7:00 p.m. Devotions, Tim May. A staff dinner will precede the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned and closed with all saying the Lord’s Prayer.

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Kathy Topp, Secretary

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John Voress, President

**WISH LIST**

What is the Wish List? It’s a list (in no particular order) the church council has developed that will help direct attention to items that families or groups may want to consider purchasing for the church. This list is for reference only. Other ideas are welcome.

Item	Guesstimat ed cost
New flooring in auditorium	\$8000
New lighting for auditorium	?
Additional playground equipment	\$2500
New carpeting, Assembly Room & Chapel	?
New clock faces on steeple	?
Theater Room equipment updates	\$800
Nursery room redecorating – flooring & paint	\$2500
Giving Envelope mailing	\$800-\$1000

# **This 'n That**

## **THE SMALL WHITE ENVELOPE**

It's just a small, white envelope stuck among the branches of our Christmas tree. No name, no identification, no inscription. It has peeked through the branches of our tree for the past ten years or so.

It all began because my husband Mike hated Christmas--oh, not the true meaning of Christmas, but the commercial aspects of it--overspending, the frantic running around at the last minute to get a tie for Uncle Harry and the dusting powder for Grandma---the gifts given in desperation because you couldn't think of anything else.

Knowing he felt this way, I decided one year to bypass the usual shirts, sweaters, ties and so forth. I reached for something special just for Mike. The inspiration came in an unusual way.

Our son Kevin, who was 12 that year, was wrestling at the junior level at the school he attended; and shortly before Christmas, there was a non-league match against a team sponsored by an inner city church.

These youngsters, dressed in sneakers so ragged that shoestrings seemed to be the only thing holding them together, presented a sharp contrast to our boys in their spiffy blue and gold uniforms and sparkling new wrestling shoes. As the match began, I was alarmed to see that the other team was wrestling without headgear, a kind of light helmet designed to protect a wrestler's ears.

It was a luxury the ragtag team obviously could not afford. Well, we ended up walloping them. We took every weight class. And as each of their boys got up from the mat, he swaggered around in his tatters with false bravado, a kind of street pride that couldn't acknowledge defeat.

Mike, seated beside me, shook his head sadly, "I wish just one of them could have won," he said. "They have a lot of potential, but losing like this could take the heart right out of them."

Mike loved kids - all kids - and he knew them, having coached little league football, baseball and lacrosse. That's when the idea for his present came. That afternoon, I went to a local sporting goods store, bought an assortment of wrestling headgear and shoes, and sent them anonymously to the inner city church. On Christmas Eve, I placed the envelope on the tree, the note inside telling Mike what I had done and that this was his gift from me. His smile was the brightest thing about Christmas that year and in succeeding years. For each Christmas, I followed the tradition--one year sending a group of mentally handicapped youngsters to a hockey game, another year a check to a pair of elderly brothers whose home had burned to the ground the week before Christmas, and on and on.

The envelope became the highlight of our Christmas. It was always the last thing opened on Christmas morning and our children, ignoring their new toys, would

stand with wide-eyed anticipation as their dad lifted the envelope from the tree to reveal its contents.

As the children grew, the toys gave way to more practical presents, but the envelope never lost its allure. The story doesn't end there.

You see, we lost Mike last year due to dreaded cancer. When Christmas rolled around, I was still so wrapped in grief that I barely got the tree up. But Christmas Eve found me placing an envelope on the tree, and in the morning, it was joined by three more.

Each of our children, unbeknownst to the others, had placed an envelope on the tree for their dad. The tradition has grown and someday will expand even further with our grandchildren standing to take down the envelope.

Mike's spirit, like the Christmas spirit will always be with us. May we all remember Christ, who is the reason for the season, and the true Christmas spirit this year and always.



*by Nancy Gavin*

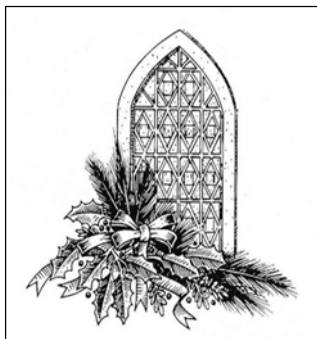
## **GOD KNOWS BEST**

Our Father knows what's best for us,  
So why should we complain--  
We always want the sunshine,  
But He knows there must be rain--  
We love the sound of laughter  
And the merriment of cheer,  
But our hearts would lose their tenderness  
If we never shed a tear...  
Our Father tests us often  
With suffering and with sorrow,  
He tests us, not to punish us,  
But to help us meet tomorrow...  
For growing trees are strengthened  
When they withstand the storm,  
And the sharp cut of the chisel  
Gives the marble grace and form...  
God never hurts us needlessly,  
And He never wastes our pain  
For every loss He sends to us  
Is followed by rich gain...  
And when we count the blessings  
That God has so freely sent,  
We will find no cause for murmuring  
And no time to lament...  
For our Father loves His children,  
And to Him all things are plain,  
So He never sends us pleasure  
When the soul's deep need is pain...  
So whenever we are troubled,  
And when everything goes wrong,  
It is just God working in us  
To make our spirit strong.

*by Helen Steiner Rice*

# December 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
		11:30 Busy Twelve 7:00 Saturday choir rehearsal	3:00 SPLASH 6:30 JH Youth & confirmation 7:00 Bell choir 8:00 Chancel choir		6:00 Wedding rehearsal	8:00 Men's Club 2:30 Gilberg-Langenkamp wedding 5:00 Worship w/Holy Communion
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
9:00 Spirit Safari 10:15 Worship w/Holy Communion; Congregational Meeting 2:00 Christmas Caroling 6:30 HS Christmas party		6:00 Staff Appreciation Dinner 7:00 Church Council	3:00 SPLASH 6:30 JH Youth & confirmation 7:00 Bell choir 8:00 Chancel choir	12:00 Women's Service Group		5:00 Worship
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
8:30 Spirit Safari 10:15 Children's Christmas program 7:00 Community Christmas concert	1:00 Page Turners	7:00 Saturday choir rehearsal	7:00 Bell choir 8:00 Chancel choir	12:00 Senior Luncheon		5:00 Worship  <b>Beacon articles due</b>
21	22	23	Christmas Eve 24	Christmas Day 25	26	27
9:00 Spirit Safari 10:15 Worship led by Chancel & Bell Choirs 6:00 Christmas Family Night		7:00 Saturday choir rehearsal	5:00 Young & Young at Heart Worship 8:00: Candlelight Worship 11:00 Candlelight Worship			5:00 Worship-carol sing
28	29	30	New Year's Eve 31			
9:00 Spirit Safari 10:15 Worship-carol sing						



**SPECIAL DATES:**

- Dec 1** – Community tree lighting – 6:30 p.m.
- Dec 7** – Congregational meeting following worship
- Dec 7** – Christmas caroling, 2:00–4:00 p.m.
- Dec 12** – Crescent Players performance, 7:00 p.m., auditorium
- Dec 14** – Children's Christmas program, sanctuary
- Dec 14** – Community Christmas concert, 7:00 p.m., sanctuary
- Dec 18** – Senior luncheon, 12:00 noon
- Dec 21** – Christmas Family Night, 6:00 p.m., Assembly Room
- Dec 24** – Christmas Eve services, 5:00, 8:00, and 11:00 p.m.
- Dec 27 & 28** – Carol Sing weekend. Megan Hanenkraft preaching.

December Calendar:  
3: Splash+JH Youth  
7: HS Christmas Party at Katie's house  
10: Splash+JH Youth  
All programs resume January 4th!  
(However Spirit Safari will happen each Sunday!!)



This month, Splash students made gifts to honor the veterans in our congregation, and the 6-7-8 Sunday school class carved a pumpkin (and learned!)

## Human Trafficking Educational Event

Wednesday, January 14th

6:30-dinner, 7pm-presentation begins

All students, families and members of both the congregation and community are invited to join us for dinner and the presentation.

Pastor Becky will present the realities of human trafficking in the US and abroad. Please consider joining us as we learn more about this crucial justice issue.

RSVP for dinner by January 11th to Katie Jackson or to the church office. All are welcome!!



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ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

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