

# REBERSBURG CHARGE NEWSLETTER

ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN AND ST. PETER'S UCC, REBERSBURG AND CHRIST UCC, MADISONBURG

## WHAT SHOULD WE CALL OURSELVES? CHARGE NAMING CONTEST!!!

by Pastor Julie Holm

The churches of the UCC's Rebersburg Charge, and St. Peter's Lutheran in the ELCA have gone through seasons of being together and of being apart. Right now we are going through a season of being together.

With three years together coming up we want to celebrate by selecting a name for the entity that we are when we are the three churches. Most of our events and our programs are done jointly, and it would be useful to be able to refer to ourselves

as a three-church unit. Since "Rebersburg Charge" is a designation of the Penn Central Conference of the UCC we would like to find another name.

The council has decided to hold a contest to identify a new name. You can suggest any name, that is to refer to the whole parish – St. Peter's UCC, St. Peter's

Lutheran AND Christ UCC. We hope the new name will describe the character of our joint venture – the three churches working together.

We'll be accepting submissions for names – and anyone can submit as many

ideas as they like – through the month of June. Then during the early weeks of July the Council will ponder and decide.

During our outdoor service at Wasson's

woods we will unveil the new name, which will help people identify us and work with us during this season together. And YES there is a wonderful prize that will go to the person who suggests the winning name! Get your thinking caps on!

Blessings and Shalom, Julie

## REBERSBURG YARD/FOOD SALE

The Ladies Aid will be hosting the food stand at Rebersburg's Town-wide Yard Sales on Friday, July 29th. The stand is located in front of St. Peter's Lutheran Church and we will be open only on Friday. We will have three types of soup, hot dogs, barbeque and various baked goods. We have held these sales for several years. Each year we choose a specific project that these funds will be used toward. In past years we have used them for capital improvements, fund raisers, community projects. We always appreciate the support we receive. We also appreciate the many hands who help and who bake for this event. Please stop by and visit us.

By Gail Richardson

## BRUSH VALLEY COUNCIL OF CHURCHES NEWS

### Emergency Fund

By Susan Rudy

The Brush Valley Council of Churches (BVCC) includes all the Lutheran, Methodist and UCC churches in Brush Valley. They have established an Emergency Fund to provide people in need with financial assistance. The fund activity to date for 2016 is:

Starting Balance	\$660.51
Offering/donations from World Day of Prayer	\$122.00
Funds Dispersed to assist <u>Neighbors</u>	(250.00)
Current Fund Balance	<b>\$532.51</b>

### Picnic Service

BVCC is sponsoring the annual church service/picnic to be held on Sunday, June 5<sup>th</sup> at The Miles Township Carnival Grounds. The service will begin at 10:30 followed by a potluck picnic. Attendees are asked to bring a dish to share and place settings for your group. The offering will go toward the emergency fund.

## A WORD FROM THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT

By Doug Macneal

The two great buildings, taller than any house, crouch side by side in the middle of Rebersburg, where they have stood for 141 years. Another stands not far away, in the center of Madisonburg. We glance at them as we walk past – silent, serious looking, quite grand really - usually without paying them much notice because they are so familiar. The towns would not be complete without them, would not be Rebersburg, or Madisonburg. When we do notice them towering over us, it is with a deep and gentle affection; our eyes greet them as if they were people, as if they were greeting us back with a smile.

They will be missed some day, when old age catches up with them. They're so big that their absence itself will be gigantic. It will make an empty hole letting the cemetery stare up at the Main Streets. And when their absence speaks to us, it will be with a thousand memories, of faces young and getting older, old and no longer changing. Memories that remind us of each other at our best because that is what memories do, and what churches do to memories. They will leave us in no doubt that our three churches, two St. Peters on the corner, and Christ in the middle of the town, are not buildings, great and friendly as they are, but the people inside

them, alive and wagging like the fingers inside two backward-folded hands.

It seems there are fewer people every year wagging inside our church buildings. The thought worries us and gets pushed aside. But we are the church. We can't help making memories. Besides being where memories happen, we make them, shape them, plan for them. We do it all the time, greeting each other, kidding each other, helping each other, minding each other's dignity, loving each other.

Our church buildings remind us that the memories we make live longer than we do. We must be thoughtful how we make them.

*Note from the Pastor – We hope to have a series of half-day retreats to ponder these questions, where we have been, where we are, and where we might be going, starting soon. Keep an eye on the bulletin!*

## AND IN CHURCH. . . . .

### Wasson's Woods

On Sunday July 17 at 10:00, **Christ UCC** will host our annual outdoor service at Wasson's Woods, followed by a picnic. Our theme this year is "God in the World" and you are invited to share with the pastor the things in the secular world that lead you to God, whether song or poem or art, or activity, or anything that touches you with God's grace and love. Email or call the pastor, or drop a note in the bulletin to share your inspiration, and come to

the grove to learn about God in the life of others. Not to mention to enjoy the wonderful chicken cooked by Mary and Randy Rider!

### Blessing our Animals

We will be repeating our Blessing of the Animals, in October, the month we celebrate the feast of St. Francis of Assisi. Francis is the patron of animals, and was famously known to preach to the birds and the beasts of the field. The Rebersburg Charge will celebrate with a simple

blessing of the animals service on **Sunday, October 16 at 2:00 PM**. The blessing will occur in the grassy area next to the parking lot behind **Christ UCC** in Madisonburg. All animals, both domestic pets and farm animals, are welcome. If you are a farmer with herds, or have animals which are difficult to bring to the church, you can bring any item as a stand-in. In case of rain, we will move into the Sunday School room with domestic pets only. Let those who love animals join us for this service!

## GOD'S WORK, OUR HANDS

The whole charge is involved with a number of benevolences and mission projects this year! Among them:

### Ladies' Aid Blankets

St. Peter's Lutheran Church has a small group of ladies who have served the church in many ways over the years. Our journey began in 2014 when we decided to begin a new service project to see where it would lead. In December of 2014 we made 8 fleece blankets and gave them to Centre House, a home in State College who takes in the homeless. We had good feedback and great praise from the congregations of our charge so we decided we

would get the word out and see how we fared in raising money for our next batch of blankets. Last February we made another 13 blankets and gave them to the Centre County Woman's Resource Center. In September we made another 14 blankets and sent them to Hearts for the Homeless. This year we have been given enough money to double our efforts. We will be working on the blankets over the summer and into early fall so they will be ready for the cold season. Anyone is welcome to help with this project, and if you are interested in helping, please feel free to contact Gail Richardson at 814-574-7196. It is a great time of fellowship.

By Gail Richardson

### Out of the Cold

Two volunteers and two meals prepared by members of our church helped ease the burdens of about a dozen homeless individuals in Centre County this year. **Out of the Cold** is a program run by churches in Centre County to provide overnight shelter to the homeless in churches. Two members of our churches volunteered to be overnight volunteers, and members of the churches prepared meals while OOTC was at St. John's Boalsburg.

## Ongoing projects

### *CWS Emergency Buckets*

God's work is indeed done by our hands. And this year this includes a goal to fill 12 Church Word Service Emergency Buckets. These buckets are full of the things that are needed when disaster strikes in the US, including floods, fire, earthquake, and tornados as well as hurricanes. The contents of the buckets are used by volunteers in stricken areas. You can find

items to purchase in all of the churches on colored slips of paper, and donations to fill the buckets are also accepted.

### *Food Pantry*

Every Sunday we worship in St. Peter's UCC in Rebersburg is a day when we gather items for the Food Bank in Aaronsburg. Please consider bringing a canned good with you to church on Sunday and donating it!

### *Toiletries for Thrive DC*

The homeless men and women who take showers at Thrive DC's Washington, DC facility, love having the small soaps, shampoos, and lotions that we might never use from our vacation or business travel hotel stays. If you need to travel, next time consider picking up those amenities, and donating them! There are baskets in each church for this purpose. Next delivery will be in mid-April.

## GETTING MESSY!

The Rebersburg charge is searching for new ways to be church, that is to be a community of spiritual people. Our traditions highlight for us the truth that we don't have a lock on how God can be worshipped and adored, or how God interacts with all sorts of people. But we know from our experience that coming together in community is an important part of being followers of Jesus Christ.

So we have been exploring new ways to be church. In the last year we have heard about the Messy Church program, a creative, intergenerational



community of people who hear the bible story, respond to it creatively, and find time to worship. Messy Church seems to work better into the understanding and the timeframe of young families.

Messy Church sessions occur ONCE A MONTH, for two hours and involve a communal meal, creative and play sessions and time to celebrate

community and God, and the divine in our lives.

Messy Church is NOT a new program, but in many ways a new church start, for young and old and all in between, who are pressed by the stresses of contemporary life and would like an evening of fun and celebration!

Messy Church will be held the fourth Wednesday of each month (except November when the fourth Wednesday is the day before Thanksgiving) from 6 to 8 PM. Food for those watching gluten, vegetarians, and other dietary restrictions included. Just let us know. Join us for food, creative fun and celebration!

## 2016/17 Messy Church Sessions – 6 to 8 PM , gathering at St. Peter's Lutheran

**September 28, 2016**

**Abraham and Sarah**

**October 26, 2016**

**Joseph**

**November 30, 2016**

**Messy Advent**

**December 28, 2016**

**Messy Christmas**

**January 25**

**Moses**

**February 22**

**Joshua**

**March 22, 2017**

**"I am the true vine"**

**April 26, 2017**

**"I am the light for the world"**

**May 24, 2017**

**"I am the Good Shepherd"**

## Exercise Classes!

St. Peter's Lutheran Church hosted exercise classes in the Sunday School room from September through April. The 45 minute classes met twice a week, on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. We did a

little of everything - aerobic and toning exercises, Pilates, boxing and even a little yoga. There is no cost to participants, but donations to help defray the costs of heating and electricity were accepted.

Classes have been suspended for the summer, but will resume in September. For information, contact Pam Bair at 349-5825.

By Pam Bair

## Maintenance Notes:

**Christ UCC:** Pipes Froze this winter below the bathrooms at Christ UCC, leaving us with no water for several months. Additional heaters have been installed and the plumbing has been revised.

**St. Peter's Lutheran & UCC:** Paving Puddling in the Parking Lot has been resolved!

## Roster of assistants at worship June - August for St. Peter's Lutheran.

### June 12

Greeter: Vera Bair  
Lector: Connie Price  
Ushers: Pam Bair  
Connie Price

### July 3

Greeter: Gail Richardson  
Lector: Pam Bair  
Ushers: Vera Bair,  
Gerald Bair

### July 10

Greeter – Connie Price  
Lector – Rick Bair  
Ushers - Harold Bowersox  
Evan Homan

### August 7

Greeter – Pam Bair  
Lector - Gail Richardson  
Ushers - Denny Brungart  
Connie Price

### August 21

Greeter - Connie Price  
Lector - Shirley Rishel  
Ushers - Denny Brungart  
Gail Richardson

## Vacation Bible School – Camp Spirit!

From June 20 through 24 the grassy area between St. Peter's Lutheran and St. Peter's UCC (The St. Peter's Campus) will be filled with tents and a fire circle, and become the location of Camp Spirit! VBS. Kids aged 4 to 12 will join us for hikes and songs, bible stories, crafts, snacks and a daily campfire circle! All on the theme of God's spirit in our life! We will be studying God's teaching Spirit – the Sermon on the Mount; God's Freeing Spirit – The Exodus, God's Spirit of Justice and Peace – The Peaceable Kingdom, and God's Blessing Spirit – the Baptism of Christ and the Baptism of the Ethiopian Eunuch.

YOU can help us!

- If you want to volunteer to help with VBS – contact Pastor Julie immediately, as the State of Pennsylvania requires that we see original background checks for all volunteers. These MUST be in order by June 11 in order for you to volunteer!
- We have a list of items in our churches that we are looking for. We especially need full size newspapers to make situpons out of. We are also looking for loan of some items for our camp.
- You can make a donation to buy some of the items that we're going to need.
- You can volunteer to help set up on Saturday morning, June 18.
- You can invite the kids in your family and your neighbors to join us! See the enclosed Poster! Registration forms available online.

For more information email [julie@rebersburgchargeucc.org](mailto:julie@rebersburgchargeucc.org) or call 349-5515.

## God and fear and elections

Both our Hebrew and Christian scriptures remind us again and again that God is with us, and that God has enjoined us not to fear. For a recent sermon I went through my concordance and determined how many times I could find "Do not Fear" and "Be not Afraid" in the bible. I found 168. Others have claimed that the sentiment is in the bible far more than that. Indeed there is only one thing we are supposed to "fear" and that is God's own self. And the word used for that fear, in Hebrew, is closer to "experience awe and respect" than the kind of anxiety we associate with fear.

And yet we are in the midst of an election season where everyone seems to be marketing their candidate based on fear of the other. We're told that if the other person wins, life as we know it will end, and we will no longer be the blessed American people we are. But God has told us that God walks with us through everything. And that it will be OK.

Be sure to vote – voting is one important way that Christians care about each other. Vote with your own spiritual values in mind, including the teachings of Jesus Christ. Do that carefully and prayerfully! But do not let the fears and the loud rhetoric influence you. Use your heart and your mind, not your fear, to help you decide what to do in the voting box.

And if the other guy wins, don't assume the worst, and panic or give up. God will still be with us, and God will still walk with us. Do not fear. As the book of Proverbs says, *The fear of others lays a snare, but one who trusts in the LORD is secure.* Amen.

*Pastor Julie*

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<http://www.rebersburgchargeucc.org>

St. Peter's Lutheran and St. Peter's UCC, Rebersburg and Christ UCC, Madisonburg

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