

*St. Paul's  
United Church of Christ  
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Sellersville PA 18960*

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### **Staff**

- ◆ Rev. Patti Thomas, Pastor
- ◆ Nancy Ziegenfuss,  
Director of Education
- ◆ Christopher Ziegenfuss,  
Choir Director
- ◆ Peter Ziegenfuss,  
Handbell Choir Director
- ◆ Nathan Gulla, Organist
- ◆ James Stover,  
Assistant Organist
- ◆ Karen Weikel, Secretary,  
Newsletter Editor
- ◆ Dennis Hurchalla,  
Custodian

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*Weekly Worship ~  
8 and 10:15 am.  
Sunday School ~ 9 am.*

## ~ *The Voice of Consistory* ~

As we began this monthly column last year at this time, I wrote about Isaiah 43:19 “See I am doing a new thing ...” and Consistory’s study of the characteristics of the early church in Acts. We embarked on a quest to do things with a new spirit at the very least. To be truthful, we were not always successful. Sometimes we fell back into worry and negativity, forgetting the many blessings (miracles?) we had seen with our own eyes.

Were all things made new? Of course not, but new things did spring up: Youth Group/National Youth Event; Crossroads Young Adult Breakfast and Worship; an organist search culminating in an exciting young organist, Nathan Gulla, joining our worship team for 2013; tons of kids in an exciting Christian Education program; lots of new worship music in many forms. “Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?” It is easy to see progress with the eyes of faith. What do you see?



Now, not everything can grow, and some things recede for a time, lie fallow, waiting for a new vision to get them restarted. It is OK to let go of those things, if we hold tight to those central and important things – those things a church must do to be a church of Jesus Christ: joyfully worshipping the always creating God, spreading the Good News of the living Savior and offering the loving fellowship of the everlasting Spirit. Those must always be present, so let us choose wisely!

Our Crossroads song to begin 2013 was “It’s Good To Be Alive” and it is! So. CHOOSE LIFE – for yourself and for this church. What attracts others to those most important things more than church members and a church full of life and the joy of the Lord!

“This day... I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and you may love the Lord your God...” Deuteronomy 30:19,20a

~ Neil Clark, Consistory President

## ~ SUNDAYS In February ~

### ▪ Sunday, February 3, Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

- Worship 8 am / Service of Prayers & Worship  
in Parlor
- Sunday School, 9 am.
- Crossroads, 9 am.
- Worship, 10:15 am.
- Theme: Prophet on the Edge
- Scripture: Luke 4:21-30  
Jeremiah 1:4-10
- Liturgist: Sam Clark
- Coffee, Cookies & Conversation  
follows late worship.
- Confirmation, 5 pm.



### ▪ Sunday, February 10, Last Sunday after Epiphany

- Worship 8 am. / Service of Prayers & Worship  
in Parlor
- Sunday School, 9 am.
- Worship 10:15 am.
- Theme: Astounding Glory
- Scriptures: Exodus 34:29-35  
Luke 9:26-36
- Liturgist: Barbara Mainhart
- Coffee, Cookies & Conversation  
follows late church.



### ▪ Sunday, February 17, First Sunday in Lent / HOLY COMMUNION

- Worship 8 am / Service of Prayers & Worship  
in Parlor
- Sunday School, 9 am
- Worship 10:15 am.
- Theme: Wilderness Companions
- Scriptures: Deuteronomy 26:1-11  
Luke 4:1-13
- Liturgist: Debbie Koehler
- 'Joyful Noise' loose change offering.



Congregational Lunch  
immediately follows late worship, held in  
Fellowship Hall.

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### ▪ Sunday, February 24, Second Sunday In Lent

- Worship 8 am. / Service of Prayers & Worship  
in Parlor
- Sunday School, 9 am.
- Worship at 10:15 am.
- Theme: Strong and Tender
- Scriptures: Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18  
Luke 13:31-35
- Liturgist: Marty Milkowich
- Coffee, Cookies and Conversation  
follows late church.

### ASH WEDNESDAY Service

February 13, 2013 ~ 7 pm.

Come begin your Lenten journey!  
Imposition of ashes, anointing with  
oil, or blessing will be offered.





Weekly Lenten Worship Services will be held at St. Paul's, St. Andrew's UCC, St. Stephen's UCC, St. Peter's, Tohickon UCC, and Christ UCC Trumbauersville.

~ February 20<sup>th</sup> through March 20<sup>th</sup> ~

Each Wednesday at 6 pm., the host congregation will provide a Soup and Sandwich Meal prior to the service.

The rotation order and preachers have not yet been determined, however details will be available and published shortly.



## **You are invited to a LENTEN BIBLE STUDY**

**Place:** St. Paul's Parlor

**Dates:** Tuesday evenings, February 19 through March 19

**Time:** 7 pm.

**Text:** "Bad Boys of the New Testament"

Bad boys of the Bible? And in the New Testament? You bet! After all, there are a number of dubious characters in the New Testament we often want to examine more closely to understand them. And we are blessed to have sacred texts that give us a picture of real people who are not one-dimensional. Nor are they perfect people.

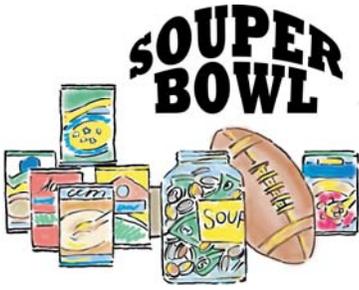
In this 5 week study, we will have an opportunity to explore, in depth, some of the characters we "love to hate" through commentary, reflection questions and lively discussion about what we might learn from those characters and their story:

February 19	The Elder Brother: "It's not fair! Where is MY party?"
February 26	The Parisees ~ Part One: the Synoptic Gospels: "Not as I do, but as I say!"
March 5	The Parisees ~ Part Two: The Gospel of John and Extra Biblical Sources: "Let's Play Family Feud"
March 12	Judas Iscariot: "I Did This for Us!"
March 19	Pontius Pilate: "Can't We all Just Get Along?"

Please sign up in the Narthex or speak with Pastor Patti if you are attending.

~ Pastor Patti

## Souper Bowl Sunday, February 3



Way back in 1990, seminarian intern Brad Smith offered this simple prayer:

*“Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat.”*

This prayer gave birth to an idea. Why not use Super Bowl Sunday ~ a time when people come together for football and fun and tons of food ~ to also unify the nation for a higher good by collecting dollars and cans of soup for the needy? The youth could collect donation at their schools and churches in soup pots, and then send every dollar DIRECTLY to a local charity of THEIR choice.

Since 1990, ordinary young people have generated an extraordinary \$81 million for soup kitchens, food banks and other charities in communities across the nation.

**This year ~ on Super Bowl Sunday (February 3<sup>rd</sup>) ~** our extraordinary youth will be standing in strategic locations around St. Paul’s ~ holding soup pots and asking for your contributions to support the ministry of Penridge FISH to the local community. In addition, YOUR contributions of canned soup will provide a nourishing meal to our neighbors throughout the community.

Please support OUR youth in THEIR effort to make a difference in our neighbors’ lives.

~ Pastor Patti



## *From the Choir Loft...*

Looking for something different to do to pass the time this winter?

The choir would be very happy to have you sing with us! Our rehearsal time for Lent hasn’t been determined yet, but if you’re interested, please let me know and I’ll be sure to let you know when we’ll be rehearsing if it’s different than our normal Wednesday evening at 7:00. We normally rehearse songs for four weeks before we sing them on a Sunday morning, so even if you don’t read music, there is plenty of time to become familiar with the songs.



We are very happy to have Nathan join us at the keyboard. It would be wonderful to have some new voices along with our new organist!

~ Chris Ziegenfuss, Choir Director

## Opportunities to serve. . .

### NURSERY VOLUNTEERS for the month of February...

February 3 ~ Tracey & Mike Molettiere  
February 10 ~ Mary Ziegenfuss & Karen Weikel  
February 17 ~ Chris Fosbenner & Brandon Barndt  
February 24 ~ Chris Fosbenner & Renay Landis



### COOKIES, COFFEE, CONVERSATION follows late church ~

Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup> ~ Open  
Feb. 17<sup>th</sup> ~ Congregational Lunch  
Feb. 10<sup>th</sup> ~ Joan Buckley  
Feb. 24<sup>th</sup> ~ Open



Please consider signing up for a Sunday...ask a friend or relative to join you in preparing a small assortment of goodies with drinks. Sign up on the clipboard located in Fretz Hall



**BULLETIN CHART** ~ There are many openings to include: February 24, March 17 and 24.  
Please check the chart and sign up! Cost is \$10.

**FLOWER CHART** ~ Open dates are February 24 and March 17. If you are unable to sign up, please call the office and your name will be listed for the date(s) you wish to sponsor. You will be contacted by Loyce Frankenfield close to the date you have chosen.

**PEACE CANDLE** ~ Thank you everyone, for those who are sponsoring the Peace Candle for a month during 2013 ~ Openings are: April and July. Please place your \$10, so marked for Peace Candle, in the offering plate and your statement will be credited.

*Welcome, Jacqueline Kemmerer*, as our Bulletin sponsor chairperson.  
Jacqueline will be calling you close to the date you sponsor the bulletin, as a reminder to you.

Many thanks to **Shirley Wolfe** who has previously chaired this position.

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### UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

~Mark your calendar for these upcoming events in March. . .

- **Lenten Services** ~ Wednesday evenings in March (schedule upcoming)
- **Saturday, March 16** ~ Roast Beef Dinner, 4 – 7 pm.
- **Sunday, March 24** ~ Palm Sunday AND Daffodil Sunday
- **Thursday, March 28** ~ Maundy Thursday service
- **Friday, March 29** ~ Good Friday
- **Saturday, March 30** ~ Easter Egg Hunt, 10 am.
- **Sunday, March 31** ~ Easter Sunday



## Family Fun Event ~ Sunday, February 24<sup>th</sup>

**When:** Sunday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, following worship.

**Where:** Eat pizza at church, then head to Earl Bowl in Earlington for an afternoon of bowling.

Please speak to Nancy Ziegenfuss if you are interested in joining the fun.

### Here's what's happening!

At the meeting, held on December 9<sup>th</sup> following worship, all nominees for Consistory, Cemetery Trustee, Endowment and Conference Delegates were approved. Also, the proposed budget for 2013 was approved.

The following people were elected as officers of the Consistory for 2012:

**Neil Clark: President**  
**Scott Huff: Secretary**

**Richard Moyer: Vice President**  
**Jim Chrastina: Treasurer**



▪ Consistory members are:

Mike Bibic  
Jim Chrastina  
Aaron Clark

Neil Clark  
John Delikat  
Dr. Pat Guth

Scott Huff  
Paul Koehler  
Greg Landis

Susan Landis  
Debbie Koehler  
Richard Moyer



## Honor and Preserve All of God's Creation . . . STILL WINTER

It's not too late to fight Old Man Winter!

Some simple repairs around the house can ensure you're not wasting precious heat.  
Live in an older home?

- ◆ Those old windows can let heated air escape.
  - ◆ You can use a heavy-duty clear plastic sheet on a frame or tape clear plastic on the inside of the window to reduce drafts.
  - ◆ Installing tight-fitting insulating window shades helps also.
  - ◆ During the day open curtains and shades to let in warming sunlight.
  - ◆ Of course, installing exterior or interior storm windows will reduce heat loss by 50%.
  - ◆ And it's never too late to insulate ~ attic, doors, and windows.
- So it may be cold outside but you'll be nice and warm indoors.

~ submitted by Nancy Lyons

February 22 - 23rd



Hunger facts:

1. A child dies from hunger-related causes every 13 seconds.
2. Most of the 20,000+ child deaths every day are 100% preventable.
3. Around the world, 925 million people are hungry.
4. The poor spend most of their money on food.
5. We can help save kids' lives.

Staggering figures, aren't they. And, sad to say, many of our neighbors, friends and even family members may be part of these statistics.

***This year, the youth of St. Paul's will join with the youth of Trinity UCC, Telford, and St. Andrew's UCC, Perkasio, to participate in the 30 Hour Famine, February 22-23.***

Beginning early Friday morning, after a hearty breakfast, these youth will not eat until we break our fast at noon on Saturday. During these 30 hours, our youth will experience what it is like to have no expectation of a meal ~ good, bad or otherwise ~ for over a day ... AND will learn and discuss ways that we can combat this epidemic, both locally and on a global level.

This year's 30 Hour Famine is based on Matthew's gospel story of Jesus miraculously feeding 5,000 people ~ simply because one small boy was willing to share his 5 rolls and 2 small fish so that others might have some thing to eat.

And, as you know, when each of us gives even just a tiny bit of what we have, we soon will have so much that we, too, can "miraculously" feed many.

On behalf of our youth, I invite you that ~ when asked ~ please give what you can to support their effort. With Jesus' blessing on our giving, I know we will be able to achieve much to feed hungry families here and around the globe.

~ Pastor Patti



## Can You Help?

While switching hymnals for the holiday season, it was noticed that some items in the pews need to be updated/cleaned up. If you would be willing to help with the following, we could use you!

Once a month, sharpen and replace missing pencils in pew racks. Also, remove prayer cards that have been written on and restock. Remove any trash or leftover bulletins that have been left in pew racks. After communion Sundays, go through pews with plastic bag and collect communion cups.



As you can see it is not a too work intensive job, but one that would be much appreciated by all who sit in the pews! If you think this is a job for you, please touch base with Neil Clark and he'll get you set up, ready to go!

## Our Church Family

**IN LOVING MEMORY** ~ We are saddened to announce the death of three long-time members of St. Paul's:

- ◆ **Pauline Derstine** passed away on December 7. Her funeral took place at St. Paul's on December 11<sup>th</sup> with many of her friends and family present. Polly is survived by her husband Jim, sons Jim and Douglas and their families.
- ◆ **'Bubs' Wenhold**, age 97, passed away on December 11<sup>th</sup> at Phoebe Richland with his funeral taking place at St. Paul's on December 18. We express our heartfelt sympathy to his daughter, Marty Steeley, her husband, Jim Steeley and friends.
- ◆ **Violet Moyer**, age 96, passed away on December 13<sup>th</sup> at Rockhill Mennonite Community. Her funeral took place at St. Paul's on December 19<sup>th</sup>. Our sympathy goes out to her sons, John and Richard Moyer and their families.



We give thanks to God for their faith and generous spirit. Let us surround Jim and family, Marty and family, and Rick and family with prayerful and love-filled comfort!

## Recap from Holiday Season

~ St. Paul's Needy Family Christmas Tree ~

A huge thank you to all who supported this effort for the two families we sponsored. Your generosity was overwhelming and made a very nice Christmas for all involved. Thanks to Lucille Moore who helped play "Santa" and finished the shopping for items remaining on this tree as well as the community tree. We also supplied the one family of four with a complete Christmas dinner. The funds for those remaining gifts and meal came from monetary donations and the Reach Out and Touch fund which is the Joyful Noise that is collected monthly.



- **Turkeys for FISH** ~ St. Paul's collected 13 turkeys for FISH Christmas dinners for the clients. Thanks to those who were able to help with this worthy collection.
- **Community Tree** ~ The Community Tree at the Sellersville Museum was a huge success this year! A multitude of gifts was taken to FISH for their clients' shopping days. Another great response for the gift cards for teens...the parents are so happy to be able to give a gift that their teen will be excited about receiving and using! A heartfelt thank you to all community members who support this worthy and much needed collection.



*"Thank you so much for the beautiful Thanksgiving baskets that you sent to Dad and me. We so enjoyed exploring them and reading about the harvest blessing. We are thankful for your kindness and your prayers."*

~Earl Graver, Sharyn Graver Kissell

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*"Thank you everyone, who brings food donations for Cookies, Coffee and Conversation. It is much appreciated."*

~ Ellen Clark, Lucille Moore

From: **Keystone Opportunity Center/ "Sleep Out for Homelessness"** . . .

*"Thank you for your \$50 sponsorship for the 2012 "Sleep out for Homelessness". This event surpassed all previous years thanks to the generous support of so many in our community. About 270 youth and community members participated in the 2012 event on November 10. More than \$17,000 was raised to support the housing programs at Keystone."*

~ Sue Zomberg, Interfaith Hospitality Director

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“Thank you so much for your gift of \$1,000 to “The Fold” Family Ministries. It is a joy to see the long-term effects of parents investing in the program not only for transformation in the lives of their teens but in their own lives and marriages”.

~ Emily Larkin, Dir. Development, The Fold

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“Thank you for your \$1,500 gift to Keystone Opportunity Center. This gift will help us make necessary repairs and prepare for winter weather at our transitional housing properties”

~ E. Richard A Aichele, III,  
Exec. Director.

\* \* \* \* \*

“Your recent gift to the Gideons Intl. in the amount of \$306 will put many copies of the Scriptures where God can make the promise of Isaiah 55:11 come true at the right place, at the right time, one searching heart at a time.”

~ Craig Warner, Exe. Dir.  
The Gideons International

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“Many thanks to Cindy Bibic for working through the details and having another sign erected to direct people to the church office. Thanks, Cindy!”



- ✓ **DAFFODIL SUNDAY will be observed on March 24.** A chart will be posted shortly for you to sign up to order your flowers. Cost is \$10 for a bunch of 10 flowers. Funds raised through Daffodil Days helps further the lifesaving mission of the American Cancer Society and help to support programs and services for cancer survivors and their families.

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- ✓ **PASTORAL CARE** ~ Please ask a family member to notify us immediately if you are hospitalized. Due to HIPPA laws, hospitals do not routinely call to notify us of your admission or discharge to your home or otherwise. We rely on you and your families to let us know in a timely manner if pastoral care is needed. Thank you for helping us help you.



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- ✓ **WEATHER CANCELLATION POLICY** ~ Emergency Cancellation Procedure in case of severe weather conditions on a Sunday morning, please listen to WNPV or WJCS (89.3 FM), or view channel 69 newslines on your TV. A message will also be placed on the church telephone answering machine and on the website, [www.stpaulsucc.net](http://www.stpaulsucc.net).

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- ✓ **LOANING CHAIRS** ~ please take only the non-padded chairs and please check the church office wall calendar for an event or upcoming event that chairs may be needed. The yellow sign out sheet is located in the church office near the white board.

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- ✓ **CROP WALK, 2012** ~ As reported by Nancy Lyons, there were a total of 181 walkers bringing in \$22,318.00. Pennridge FISH has received \$5,579.50. A breakdown of individual churches is forthcoming.



## A Note from Pastor Emeritus George Schmidt. . .

The storms that threatened the East Coast are now gone and I hope left out at sea for a while. The Schmidt house in Cape May suffered no damage, as is the case for our neighborhood. Those of you who have visited or driven past 735 Townbank Rd. know that the only water that is near our home is in the canal and it would have to be a storm that went up the Delaware Bay that would offer a threat.

The congregation I serve in Wildwood was not damaged as well. On internet we saw pictures taken near 1st Presbyterian showing the water almost up to the third step but no water entered on Pacific Avenue and only a small amount was blown under the door on Burke Ave. There was, of course, damage on the island and a congregation in West Wildwood suffered extensive damage as did many homes in that area and along the shore line.

Through the Lazarus Housean Ecumenical Ministry which we support with monthly contributions and personnel, people in need were given food packages and the number increased

from the normal 40s to the 70s. Cape May and Wildwood were fortunate. It cannot be same for those North of us and of course you who are inland also had communities that suffered some damage.

Our prayers are with all who suffered from the storm that might be the "storm of the century" but I doubt that because the change of weather patterns do reflect causes that rest on not being good stewards of God's



creation. Carolyn and I are still "actively retired." Carolyn is now employed by a Floral Shop not too far from our home. We get to travel now and then (especially when the two big storms came) and visit our family in their locations. We have a number of new friends (we're here 6 years) and take advantage of activities in the area.

I am proud to say that for two straight years I have played golf at least once every month and am now looking to go for a third. Our health is well and we thank you for keeping us up to date on the happenings there. Keep up your ministry which God has blest you with.

~ George and Carolyn

## Thoughts to Ponder

### All I Really Need to Know I learned in Kindergarten ~Robert Fulghum

All I really need to know about how to live and what to do and how to be I learned in Kindergarten. These are the things I learned:

- Share everything.
- Play fair.
- Don't hit people.
- Put things back where you found them.
- Clean up your own mess.
- Don't take things that aren't yours.
- Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody.
- Wash your hands before you eat.
- Flush.
- Warm cookies and milk are good for you.
- Live a balanced life-learn some, thank some, and draw and paint and sing and dance and work every day some.
- Take a nap every afternoon.
- When you go out into the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands and stick together.



Dear Friends in Christ ~

Sometimes it seems, at this time of the year, that we move much too quickly from the bright lights and joy of the Christmas season into the more somber season of Lent. And, despite the increasingly longer days, we are reluctant to move from the warm glow of candlelight into the increasing darkness of the Lenten season. Lent is definitely a more contemplative season, a time when we are called to contemplate our own faith journey as we accompany Jesus on His journey to death, resurrection and redemption.

One of my favorite Lenten spiritual practices is to 'walk' a Lenten Labyrinth, pictured here. Despite its complex twisting patterns, a labyrinth has no blind alleys, dead ends or short cuts. Instead, it is a gently curving path that leads us to the center and back out again. I invite you to join me on this daily journey.

As we enter the path, it is appropriate to pause in prayer, to quiet our minds and let go of all the busy-ness that fills our lives. We might then end that prayer by asking for God's grace to guide us as we open our hearts and minds and invite God into our hearts.

As we encounter each loop, drawing us onward, we might pause for a moment to reflect on the many twists and turns that taken. As we walk this intentionally peel off each worries that often invades same time, we might also *You!* for the many our lives.

In time, we will labyrinth. And, what a center ~ grounded and presence with us in that space at the center of the to open ourselves to listen voice, calling us to trust in our lives.



our own life's path has journey, we might layer of fear, doubt and our daily living. At the offer a heartfelt *Thank* blessings that have graced

reach the center of the gift it is to stay in that focused on God's moment. In this sacred labyrinth, we are invited to God's still-speaking God's gentle guidance for



As the Spirit moves us, we may then follow the curving path back to where we began this journey ~ refreshed, renewed and rejuvenated with the knowledge that, no matter how dark our days may be ... no matter how lost we may feel ... God's grace will be sufficient for our journey.

My friends, as we walk our daily walk with Jesus throughout this Lenten season, may our Lenten practices draw us closer to our Savior who gave His own life that we might have life abundant.

- *Pastor Patti*

*An Invitation from Rev. Wanda D. Craner*

*Minister of Spiritual Nurture, PSEC*

You are invited to join us for a series of Lenten studies and reflections sponsored by the Spiritual Life Mission Team of the PSEC at one of the locations listed below.

This year, the theme book is **Let Your Life Speak** by noted author, Parker Palmer.

**Maidencreek Church**, 261 Main St., Blandon 19510 - 4 Saturdays: Feb. 25, Mar. 10, 24, 31

from 9-10:30 AM

**St. Luke's UCC**, 200 W. Main St., Trappe 19426 - 5 Saturdays: Feb. 25, Mar. 3, 10, 17, 24

from 9:30-11 AM

**St. Paul's UCC**, 440 Bethlehem Pike, Ft. Washington 19034 - 5 Sundays: Feb. 26, Mar. 4,

11, 18, 25 from 4:14-5:45 PM

**St. Peter's of Wilshire UCC**, 2901 Curtis Rd., West Lawn 19609 - 5 Wednesdays: Feb. 29

Mar. 7, 14, 21, 28 from 6-7:15 PM

The cost of \$25 per person includes the program, the book: **Let Your Life Speak**, and

light refreshments. Some scholarship money is available to those in need. Please send

a written request to the attention of Rev. Wanda D. Craner, Minister of Spiritual Nurture, PSEC.

Every effort will be made to get the book to you prior to the first session-*please register*

*early* and invite a friend, neighbor, or family member to come with you.

To learn more, send an email to [craner@psec.org](mailto:craner@psec.org).

Blessings of peace,  
Rev. Wanda Craner, Minister of Spiritual Nurture  
Pennsylvania Southeast Conference

February 2013

Dear Friends in Christ ~

As many of you may have discerned, I will be taking my sabbatical leave this year. When I was called to serve as your Pastor on 10 December 2006, my Letter of Call stipulated a sabbatical leave of three months after six years of service. Before I discuss my tentative plans for my sabbatical, let me first explain what a sabbatical leave is all about.

The word “sabbatical” has its roots in the biblical concept of Sabbath; that is, the time of rest God commands us to keep holy. Sabbatical leave, in essence, is a time of rest, study and travel; a time of reflection and renewal so that I may return to you and my ministry refreshed and rejuvenated.

At this time, I am looking forward to visiting friends in Nevada and studying the beautiful art media of the western United States. I will also be exploring how a wide variety of art forms helps us connect, on a deeper level, with our God. I am also looking forward to visiting my family in other states, reading, and, of course, spending a lot of time playing with my new granddaughter, Lilianna.

During my absence, an interim pastor will provide worship and special services as well as pastoral visitation. I will also establish a Sabbatical Planning and Support Team, who will help me with my overall plans as well as be available to answer questions and assist in times of concern.

My sabbatical leave will begin after worship on Sunday, 9 June, 2013. And, I assure you that I will return to the office on Wednesday, 4 September 2013, and return to the pulpit on Rally Day, Sunday, 8 September 2013.

An important part of a sabbatical leave is to make a complete break from everything. Therefore, during my three-month sabbatical, I will not be in communication with anyone from the congregation. However, know that I will keep you all in my prayers during this time.

I realize that a Pastor taking sabbatical leave may be a new concept for many of you. I encourage you to speak with me and share your concerns. In addition, there will be a brochure published before my leave, giving full details about my sabbatical leave and, hopefully, answering all questions.

I ask you to hold me, my family, and our family of faith in prayer as we prepare together for this new path in our journey of faith, with God as our constant companion.

In Christ's peace,