



The Circuit



The Newsletter of St. Paul's United Church of Christ

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235 South Main Street, Woodstock, Virginia 22664

The Rev. Peter Mitchell, Interim Pastor

November 2011

Dear Members and Friends of Saint Paul's,

I am eager to tell you about the fresh start for our Adult Sunday School Class. Beginning Sunday, November 6 at 9:45am, we will begin a new study of God's Word.

A new study of the Bible begs the question why. Why would you give up an hour Sunday morning to study the Bible? My answer is simple. Come because the Bible is God's Word spoken (2 Timothy 3:15-17). Spoken to whom? Spoken to you. After all, you are the creation of God's Word. Indeed, the Creator spoke you into existence and then recreated you in Christ Jesus (Genesis 1:26; Ephesians 2:10). What's more, you were made for the glory of the Word of God (Colossians 1:16-20). That is to say, Jesus, who is the Word made flesh (John 1:14), will be glorified and forever exalted by you who belong to him (Revelation 21).

These truths call for a certain response: Developing a life-long devotion to God's Word. Practically speaking, a life-long devotion to God's Word means learning to care more about what the Bible says than any other source of information. It means getting into the Bible daily, expecting the Spirit of God to speak to you from its pages.

David, Israel's Shepherd-King, spoke of his expectation in terms of preference and delight. In Psalm 1:1-3 he says, "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates." Like you and me, David heard a thousand other voices vying for his heart; messages longing to frame reality for his mind. More than once David entertained these voices, turning a deaf ear to God's Word and suffering dreadfully for it. But the hallmark of this sinner's life was grace-enabled repentance. David always returned to the Lord. He bent the knee of his heart and yielded to God's Word. Even more, he cherished God's Word above all else, making it the center of his life.

What is the center of your life? If you have heard the faithful preaching and teaching of God's Word and trusted the crucified and risen Jesus Christ to save you, then God's heart has become your center. If, however, you're anything like King David or me, you need many opportunities to return to God's Word. Return again with me. Make a fresh start of it at the Adult Sunday School Class, beginning Sunday, November 6 at 9:45am.

Yours in Christ Jesus,
Peter Mitchell
Interim Pastor

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OUR CHURCH HISTORY

(From the booklet produced
May 1942 for the 200th Anniversary.)

As has been stated the first regular pastor was the Rev. Bernhard F. Willey. Rev. Willey was a native of Switzerland and was sent to this country in 1783 along with three other ministers, at the request of the Reformed Church in this country, to the Synod in Holland. He became the pastor of The German Reformed Church of Woodstock in 1787. In the beginning he not only took care of his pastoral duties but taught a German and English parochial school as well. His task was by no means an easy one, for our nation was still suffering the aftermath of the Revolutionary War. Certainly the foundation he laid was well built. Rev. Willey died while in the active ministry, in May, 1810 and his body now lies in the old grave yard on the hill, near the southeast corner of where the old church once stood. While no stone marks the grave and while the exact spot is unknown, the memories of his glorious work shall remain a monument for all eternity.

The first records, at hand, date from 1823 and contain some interesting reading, particularly the records of membership in this church. The book opens with this inscription "Ein verzeugniss alien Angelegenheiten ver Hoch Deuetsch Reformierten Gemeinee in Woodstock wo alle Namen der Aelsten und Vorstheher wie auf die Wahl, die Kirchen Ordnund und was verhandelt werd am Rechnungstag soil eingeschrieben werden." Translated this reads, "A record of all matters of the High German Reformed Church of Woodstock wherein all names of Elders and Deacons, according to the election; the Constitution of the church, and what is done, on the day of accounting, should be entered therein." Further "As no regular election had taken place for many years for Elders and Deacons, before this book has been brought into use; these persons are still Elders and Deacons:

Elders: David Jordan, John Huber

Deacons: Michael Effinger, Jacob H. Miller

Since the number of Elders and Deacons is not complete an election was held on the 11 April 1824 for one Trustee, two Elders and three Deacons, in an open meeting in the church and the following were elected,

Trustee: Jacob Rinker

Elders: Jacob Rinker, Andreas Bushong

Deacons: Jonathan Fravel, John Wilken, Jacob Hottel

and on the 18 April 1824 they were publicly installed in the church as coworkers in the Vineyard of Jesus Christ."

The above entry was made by the Rev. Jacob Meyer who became the minister of St. Paul's in 1822 continuing his labors here until 1825 when he moved to Pennsylvania.

After the removal of the Rev. Jacob Meyer, the charge extended a call to the Rev. Dietrick Graves who accepted the call and immediately took up his residence here. The first entry, under his pastorate, is the record of Baptism of John Zehring on October 6, 1825. His pastorate was very short extending little over one year. Although he ministered to the people for only a short period of time, his influence was felt, for he became known as "Father Graves" to many and he was well spoken of.

Rev. Jacob Follmer Dieffenbacher was the next minister to serve the Woodstock Charge which at that time consisted of the following congregations, Woodstock, Pine, Salem, Zion and Friedens. Rev. Dieffenbacher was a saintly man; constantly striving to lead men and women to Christ. He was a forceful preacher and a faithful pastor. During his pastorate here, the entire charge was reported as "in good and healthy condition."



Rev. Jacob Meyer

~ More next month ~



ST. PAUL'S NEWS

HIGHLIGHTS FROM CONSISTORY MEETING

The Consistory met on October 6, 2011 with 6 members and Rev. Peter Mitchell present. Concerns were shared in the death of Chris Munson and Viola Moomaw. The minutes and the treasurer's reports were accepted. The church received thank you notes from Hoffman Homes for the labels and box tops and Neighbors in Need for our offering. Hoffman Homes for Youth requested funds to help repair old water lines. A vote was passed to send \$200.00 to Hoffman Homes for repairs. Ministry reports were given. Announcements: Harvest Home service will be at Mt. Calvary, October 9th. The kitchen remodeling plans are under way with the most pressing needs being a new exhaust fan/hood over the kitchen stove, replacement of the triple sink and the addition of a dishwasher. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, November 3rd at 7:00 p.m.

Peggy Hollar, secretary



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The Christian Education ministry would like to invite the adults of the congregation to join us on Sunday, November 6 at 9:45 a.m. in the parlor for the adult Sunday school class! Rev. Peter Mitchell will be leading us in bible study and helping us to learn how to apply it to our lives. We have an amazing opportunity in this church now to make this class into something wonderful. We have never had the opportunity to have our minister lead this class until now...and it's time to seize that opportunity. So many of us have not had the chance to have real, meaningful bible study in our adult lives. We get too busy. We come to Sunday school, drop our kids off and disappear to Wal-Mart for an hour, or we just choose to hit that snooze alarm. We're cheating ourselves! Please prayerfully consider this time as yours - your time to grow in God's Word - time to refresh yourself. Wal-Mart may be competitive, but they can't beat this! We'll have coffee and maybe something yummy too. Please join us November 6.

Our mission project of collecting food for the food pantry each week is faltering! We did such an awesome job last year, but we just can't seem to get it off the ground this time. Hey kids... don't forget that can of soup on Sunday morning!

Alberta Smith



SENIOR YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

The senior youth group met on Sunday, September 25th to welcome new members and plan for the year. The 2011 - 2012 officers are as follows: President Rose Holland, Vice-President Jonathan Koontz, Treasurer Desiree Williams, Secretary Micah Holland, Reporters Grant Smith and Bobby Loveland, Photographers Layla Baker, Ashley Funkhouser and Anna Smith. The youth all supported the St. Paul's UCC community outreach display at the Family Festival for Christ on October 15th. They played games and put religious tattoos on willing participants and handed out the great St. Paul's cups that Joe Lehnen bought at the end of the summer. On Friday night of that weekend, some of us braved the cold wind to watch the "Youth Unleashed" concert at the festival as well. We all enjoyed ourselves and are proud of our youth for getting out there in the community to stand up for our church.

The senior member dinner will be held on November 12 at 5:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Invitations have been mailed out. Please let the church office know if you are attending no later than Thursday November 3. We look forward to serving this meal every year!



*Blessings,
Craig and Alberta Smith*

PRAISE AND PRAYERS!

The Evangelism ministry gathered to discuss ways to raise up our church community in times of need. The ministry has decided to enhance a practice that is already in place with some members of our congregation, a prayer chain. Effective immediately the evangelism ministry will be taking praise and prayer requests and spreading them out among other church members. All needs are welcome. For example, you can call and ask for healing prayers for your spouse as he just had a surgery this week. Also we would like to spread good news such as asking fellow patrons to send praising thoughts for your daughter that is getting married next week. One guideline that will be in place is that requests must be made by the person seeking prayers or their immediate family. This is a mandatory practice to respect a persons' desire for confidentiality. The hope is that this act will bring members of St. Paul's closer. You do not need to release any details that you do not want to in your message. A simple statement such as "please pray for John Smith", is fine. Requests will be sent via an email distribution list. If you do not have email, there is an option to be put on a call list. If you would like to be included on this list, please make sure Becky Lytton has your email address. In order to submit your praise and prayer request you can call and give them to Dot Lambert who will in turn send them out to our congregation. The Evangelism ministry looks forward to your assistance in lifting up this new practice.

We also look forward to more people joining the ministry. We're a small, self-directed group at this point, but we can make great things happen with more help. We are all called to this ministry as believers in Christ so, why not come to a meeting and check it out? Our next meeting is Monday, December 5 at 7:00 p.m. If you are interested in finding out more about this ministry, please contact Susan Brill, Joan Miller, Allison Gregg, Anne Holland or Craig Smith.

Evangelism Ministry





CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA ORDER FORM
ST. PAUL'S UCC

The church office will be accepting orders for Christmas poinsettias to be used during the Christmas Season. They are \$ **9.50** each. Please make your check payable to **VALLEY FLOWER SHOP**, or place cash in an envelope along with your order form. **ORDERS NEED TO BE TURNED IN BY SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27th.**

Poinsettias to be placed: (check color)

_____Red _____White _____Pink

In memory of _____

Given by _____

In honor of _____

Given by _____

Paid by: Check \$ _____ Cash \$ _____

I will pick the poinsettia up after Christmas _____

I would like the church to dispose of it _____

Birthdays for St. Paul's

November 6 – Chad Sheetz
8 – Jerry Litten
10 – Ricky Lambert
11 – Beverly Harrison, Matthew Lambert,
Katie Overman, Betsy Overman
12 – Rev. Peter Mitchell, Caleb Sibert,
Ramsey Miller
13 – Becky Falls, David Brill
16 – Joycie Wright, Marissa Orndorff,
Susan Myers, Isabel Linaweaver
17 – Stacie Lambert
18 – Jenna Robinson, Tyler Dellinger,
Shirley Linaweaver
20 – Robert Kennan, Carolyn Garman
22 – Isabelle Funkhouser, Glenn Wetzel
23 – Emily Funkhouser
27 – Jane Miller
28 – Brian Swann, Eloise Wagner

December 1 – Brandon Dysart
10 – Tracy Grandy, Richard Sollenberger
12 – Suzanne Loveland
13 – Corey Litten
14 – Anna-Justine Mitchell,
Bruce Mitchell
16 – Omar Fravel, Spencer McIntosh
17 – Doc Lambert, Sarah Bankert,
Alberta Smith
18 – Bob Rhodes, Jonathan Sollenberger
19 – Betty Page
20 – Francie Kennedy
21 – Frank Painter, Carole Rucker,
Trudy Rauch
22 – Dennis Dysart, Bill Sibert,
Noel McIntosh
30 – Amy Mitchell, Kelly McElroy
31 – Michelle Sheetz

Anniversaries for St. Paul's

November 1 – Maren and Barbara Johnson
December 6 – Ricky and Roberta Dysart
15 – Bubba and Abbe Kennedy
20 – Rev. Peter and Amy Mitchell
22 – Buck and Kim Shrum
30 – Frank and Bonnie Painter

Acolytes

November 6 – Desiree Williams
13 – Bobby Loveland
20 – Rose Holland
27 – The Williams Family

December 4 – The Baker Family
11 – The Koontz Family
18 – The Smith Family
24 – The Harrison Family
25 – Anna Smith

Scripture Readers

November 6 – Melissa Andrews
13 – Dot Lambert
20 – Alisha Williams
27 – Buck Shrum

December 4 – Hanging of the Greens
11 – Michelle Koontz
18 – Beth Dirting
25 – Craig Orndorff

Greeters

November – Peggy Hollar & Melissa Andrews
December – Tim and Cathy Dalke

Nursery

November 6 – Beth Dirting
13 – Stephanie Dysart
20 – Courtney Brill
27 – Alberta Smith

December 4 – Hanging of the Greens
11 – Alisha Williams
18 – Allison Gregg
25 –

Service Assistants

November – Rick and Michelle Koontz
December – Phil and Dawn Stoneburner





THE PAUSE FOR APPLAUSE AND A PAT-ON-THE-BACK

Dear Pat,

October, my favorite month, is drawing to a close. A week from today many little humans will pretend to be superheroes, princesses, ghouls, etc. What fun it is to “playlike” for one special night a year. On Friday, October 28, small humans will gather for the church Halloween party – always a big hit. (As soon as everyone leaves Fellowship Hall, mousekins will “trick or treat” for pizza crumbs left behind.)

This October 9 St. Paul's shared the hospitality of Mt. Calvary at the lovely Harvest Home celebration. Jane stuffed me into her purse and took me on a field trip to the service. The church looked beautiful in its autumn finery. Rev. Jerrold Foltz, a former pastor of both churches, spoke. Collections were taken for Homewood and Hoffman Home. Shannon Naylor shared stories from Homewood. Voices from both churches joined in the anthem. The choir filled the loft and sounded great.

I loved Rev. Peter Mitchell's sermon on October 16. It was based on the scripture in which Jesus performs a miracle on the Sabbath and asks the Pharisees what they would do if an ox falls into a well on the day of rest. He brought this home by telling a story that had happened to him as he was leaving a “pick your own pumpkin” patch. Though his hands were full and his patience drawing thin, he encountered a lost child, Jesse, and stopped everything to find the parents. To bring his point home to the young humans in “children's sermon”, he re-enacted it with a very self-possessed Allen Brill as “Jesse” and a blushing Micah Holland and Anna Smith as “Jesse's parents”.

Pat, you would have loved it this past Sunday when, in the sermon for small humans, the pastor said that when one's own child is in the group, one hopes he will not say anything. When it is other people's children, he encourages them to “share their heart”. (Actually Paws loves it when small people “share their heart” as it gives him news to share with you, dear sister, Pat.)

I must end on a horrifying note – but this is the week of Halloween, so it is perhaps appropriate. The ladies' Sunday night book club is back in session. I love to hide in the parlor corner and share the laughter, tears, and the occasional snack with these charming ladies. This past Sunday night, however, I must say that some things I heard relating to the dispatching of rodent friends made my fur stand on end!!

As always, I remain your loving brother,
Paws, the church mouse (jcm)

