

January – February 2012

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

I don't know anyone who actually enjoys paperwork, but preparing this year's Annual Report has been a wonderful exercise in gratitude. We as a congregation have begun some wonderful ministries and continued others; we have said good-bye to some beloved ones and welcomed new members.

We watched the seasons change as they always do (although as I write this the lawn is still green!) The farmers in our midst faced great challenges and yet continued to co-create with God, and those of us who appreciate living close to the land watched in awe as storms of all kinds blew through our area.

Now the landscape looks bleak; perennials appear dead... but we know that their roots are just resting. We have just passed the longest night of the year and hold faith that the sun is returning. It is a wonderful time to reflect, review and assess. It is also a wonderful time to look forward.

We as Christians celebrate the coming of the Light of Christ at this time of year because it makes sense and it matters. During difficult, dark times, it is easy to forget that the light always returns; for us, that Light is actually WITHIN the darkness. Darkness happens in every life. The presence of the Body of Christ, the congregation that surrounds and supports us is a constant reminder of Emmanuel. God-with-us. Always. In every season.

Let us all reflect on 2011 and give thanks. Let us all look toward 2012 and discern how we can witness the Light of Christ to others. It is not only our calling; it is our joy to do so.

"Don't let the light go out; it's lasted for so many years.

Don't let the Light go out; let it shine through our love and our tears!"

Loving Blessings..... *Susan*

Worship/Tech Committee

During the year 2011, we continued with the monthly Contemporary Services from September through May. We met as a committee each month to plan, prepare and practice for our Contemporary Service on the 4th Sunday of each month. We also have begun using the projector at other times during the month to illustrate a theme Rev. Susan is using such as our Advent theme on the circle of life.

Through the choir budget we managed to buy the choir copies of the third installment of the newest Methodist Hymnal supplement. This includes all the modern sacred music deemed appropriate for our service. We are looking forward to adding the congregational version in the future. Unfortunately there are no CD's to go with this latest version yet.

Our new web master Bob Phelps has done a marvelous job of redoing the technical aspects that actually make our website work properly. We now have updated church groups, sermons and special events to come. We have also added a special photo ops group that you can see the progress and comradeship that each of our groups share.

As the year 2011 comes to a close, we look at the hopes and dreams for this last year and feel very encouraged by the fact that by the grace of God and many helpful hands we have been able to accomplish five out of the six dreams on our list. We have a prayer chain, a birthday calendar, an updated website, a church directory, and continued contemporary services each month. For this we are truly thankful.

Our plans for the 2012 year include an updated directory, expansion of contemporary services, and seeking information on a new sound system.

As always we appreciate any comments, prayers and constructive criticism to help us improve.

Newsletter

If you would like to have your newsletter sent to your email, let Barbara know at babst3@verizon.net. Also, if you have any comments, ideas, wishes for the newsletter please discuss them with Barb. This is *your* newsletter to keep you in the know. **You can also find the newsletter on the website along with any current notices.**

Annual meeting

All are welcome and encouraged to attend the Annual Meeting of the Stephentown Federated Church. This will take place following the Jan. 15th worship service. Come and hear what has been done in the past year and what we are looking to do in the future.

Budget

Here is a copy of this year's budget that will be voted on at the Jan 15th annual meeting. You will notice that the budget has increased. Part of the increase is because of oil. We were given oil for last year and this year we have to pay.

PROPOSED BUDGET				
STEPHENTOWN FEDERATED CHURCH				
	2012	2012	20111	2011
1. PROFESSIONAL MINISTRY				
2. PASTOR'S SALARY	\$14,300.00		\$13,000.00	
3. CAR ALLOWANCE	\$2,500.00	New rate .55	\$2,500.00	
4. HEALTH INSURANCE	\$0.00		\$0.00	
5. PENSION/BENEFITS	\$0.00		\$0.00	
6. BOOK ALLOWANCE	\$500.00		\$500.00	
7. CONTINUING EDUCATION	\$400.00		\$400.00	
8. SOCIAL SECURITY OFFSET	\$1,094.00		\$1,000.00	
9		\$18,794.00	\$17,400.00	\$17,400.00
10. PROGRAM AND DENOMINATION				
11. CHOIR MUSIC	\$800.00		\$800.00	
12. SUPPLY PASTORS	\$800.00		\$800.00	
13. SUNDAY SCHOOL/CHRISTIAN ED.	\$300.00		\$300.00	
14. TECKNOWLEDGE/LICENSES	\$1,000.00		\$1,000.00	
15. ORGANIST MILEAGE/SUPPLIES	\$1,400.00		\$1,400.00	
16. NURSERY SERVICE	\$1,040.00		\$1,040.00	
17. METHODIST APPORTIONMENT	\$3,269.00		\$3,632.00	
18. PRESBYTERIAN APPORTIONMENT	\$1,218.00	Plus 300 Benevol	\$1,291.00	Includes 300 Ben
19. ELDERS/CONFERENCE EXPENSE	\$600.00		\$600.00	
20. STEWARDSHIP EXPENSE	\$0.00		\$0.00	
21		\$10,427.00	\$10,863.00	\$10,863.00
22. ADMINISTRATION				
23. OFF.SUP/NEWSLETTER/XEROX	\$800.00		\$800.00	
24. CHURCH SUPPLIES non-office	\$1,000.00		\$1,000.00	
25. NURSERY SUPPLIES	\$100.00		\$100.00	
26		\$1,900.00	\$1,900.00	\$1,900.00
27. BUILDINGS EXPENSES				
28. ELECTRICITY-CHURCH	\$1,300.00	973 last yr.	\$1,300.00	
29. ELECTRICITY-MANSE	\$400.00		\$400.00	
30. TOTAL FUEL OIL	\$10,000.00		\$6,250.00	
31. ISP internet/phone	\$1,300.00		\$1,300.00	
32. WATER SOFTENER	\$0.00		\$100.00	
33. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	\$0.00		\$0.00	
34		\$14,900.00	\$9,350.00	\$9,350.00
35. BUILDING MAINTENANCE				
36. CHURCH	\$3,000.00		\$3,000.00	
37. MANSE	\$1,000.00		\$1,000.00	
38. EQUIPMENT	\$6,000.00		\$1,000.00	
39		\$10,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00

41. INSURANCE	\$2,800.00		\$2,000.00	
42. CUSTODIAN & TRASH COLLECTION	\$4,500.00		\$4,500.00	
43		\$7,300.00	\$6,500.00	\$6,500.00
44				
45. BUDGET TOTALS	\$61,421.00		\$51,023.00	

During the January 15th service, Madison Rontey will be baptized.

Donations for Poinsettias at Christmas: In memory of our loving parents John & Gladys Farrell & our grandparents- the Beal Family; In memory of Jean Eckhardt-the Eckhardt family; In honor of friends and fellow farmers affected by this year's terrible weather-Larry, Heather, Matt & Andrew Eckhardt; in memory of Francis & Roberta Mayen and James & Marion Deaver-Doug & Laurelyn Mayen; In memory of Tal & Mac Lancaster- Helen & Fred Wallbank; In memory of beloved family members-Frank & Mary Hamilton; In memory of John & Dorothy Morris- the Morris family; In loving memory of our family and friends who have gone before us and in eternal hope and love for those to come- The Hennigs; In memory of our loving parents-Don & Judy Leab; In memory of Edythe & Arthur J. Schinzel- the Schinzel family; In memory of George & Sara Burgoon & Alvin McMillan-Paul & Joan McMillan; In memory of Marion & Ed Mullet Sr. & Lydia & Reine Heck-Donna & Ed Mullet; In memory of Alice Beach-Kevin & Kate Beach; In memory of Donald & Rose Hall & Gertie Hoag-Charles & Donna French

Prayer List Contact Joanne at joannehennig@gmail.com or see her at church to keep the list up to date.

The Big Event

The Men's Group Presents

The Annual Church Family and Friends

TURKEY DINNER

Saturday February 25, 2012 at 6:00 p.m.

At the Church Hall

This dinner has no ticket sales, just a free-will offering. Break the mid-winter blues and get out and enjoy the company of family and friends of our church community and the community at large.

We will need volunteers to cook turkeys, bake pies, prepare food and help clean-up after dinner. Let Larry, Ted, Malcolm or Paul know in what capacity you might be able to help. **All hands on deck!!!**
Mark your calendar!!!

The Stephentown Federated Church Men's Group

Please join us for breakfast – first Sunday of every month until June. Join us for good food and great fellowship. The 2012 schedule is:

January 8, 2012.....Breakfast at 8:00 am

February 5, 2012.....Breakfast at 8:00 am

February 25, 2012.....**Church Family and Friends Turkey Dinner 6:00 pm**

March 4, 2012.....Breakfast at 8:00 am

April 1, 2012.....Breakfast at 8:00 am

April 8, 2012.....Easter Sunday – Continental breakfast after Sunrise service

May 6, 2012.....Breakfast at 8:00 am

May 12, 2012.....Church Cemetery and Grounds work day. *Details to follow*

June 3, 2012.....All Church Breakfast – Everyone come and join us for a really big breakfast meal! This is the last breakfast meeting 'till fall! 8:00 am

The officers for the group were elected in November. President-Larry Eckhardt, Secretary- Rich Terpening, Treasurer-Ted Bears, Men's Rep to the General Committee-Malcolm Beal

SonShiners

We had a great turnout for our December meeting and cookie swap. It was great to see so many people enjoying each other's company.

Meeting dates:

January 15th, 2012 – Discuss further fundraiser for March

February 19th, 2012

Reminder – The Men's Group will be looking for pies for their annual Friends and Family Dinner in February

Forbidden fruits *create* many jams

The church is thankful for all the generous donations you have bestowed on us during the year.

Rev. Susan continues her ministry with the site on Facebook which reaches many beyond our doors.

January/February Calendar 2012

Jan 1 Morning Worship at 9:30 a.m.-Communion *Coffee hour following worship*

Jan 2 General Commt. Meeting 7 p.m.

Jan 3 Heavenly Quilters 9 a.m. in Pierce Hall

Choir rehearsal 6:30-7:45 p.m. in sanctuary

Jan 8 Men's Breakfast 8:00 a.m.

Choir Rehearsal 9:00 a.m.

Morning Worship at 9:30 a.m. *Coffee hour following worship*

Jan 10 Heavenly Quilters 9 a.m. in Pierce Hall

Choir rehearsal 6:30-7:45 p.m. in sanctuary

Jan 15 SonShiners Breakfast 8 a.m.

Choir Rehearsal 9:00 a.m.

Morning Worship at 9:30 a.m. **Baptism** - Madison Rontey *Coffee hour following*

Annual Meeting following church

Jan 17 Heavenly Quilters 9 a.m. in Pierce Hall

Choir rehearsal 6:30-7:45 p.m. in sanctuary

Jan 22 Choir Rehearsal 9:00 a.m.

Morning Worship at 9:30 a.m. *Coffee hour following worship*

Jan 23 General Commt. Meeting 7 p.m.

Jan 24 Heavenly Quilters 9 a.m. in Pierce Hall

Choir rehearsal 6:30-7:45 p.m. in sanctuary

Jan 29 Choir Rehearsal 9:00 a.m.

Morning Worship at 9:30 a.m. *Coffee hour following worship*

Feb 1 Heavenly Quilters 9 a.m. in Pierce Hall

Choir rehearsal 6:30-7:45 p.m. in sanctuary

*The Will of God **never** takes you to where **the** Grace of God **will** not protect you!*

Feb 5 Men's Breakfast 8 a.m.

Choir rehearsal 9:00 a.m.

Morning Worship at 9:30 a.m. **Souper Bowl Sunday**-support our local Food Pantry
with collection/food *Coffee hour following worship*

Feb 7 Heavenly Quilters 9 a.m. in Pierce Hall

Choir rehearsal 6:30-7:45 p.m. in sanctuary

Feb 12 Choir rehearsal 9 a.m.

Morning Worship at 9:30 a.m. *Coffee hour following worship*

Feb 14 Heavenly Quilters 9 a.m. in Pierce Hall

Choir rehearsal 6:30-7:45 p.m. in sanctuary

Feb 19 SonShiners Breakfast 8 a.m.

Choir rehearsal 9:00 a.m.

Morning Worship at 9:30 a.m. *Coffee hour following worship*

Feb 21 Heavenly Quilters 9 a.m. in Pierce Hall

Choir rehearsal 6:30-7:45 p.m. in sanctuary

Feb 25 Family & Friends Church Dinner 6 p.m.

Feb 26 Choir rehearsal 9 a.m.

Morning Worship at 9:30 a.m. *Coffee hour following worship*

Feb 27 General Commt. Meeting 7 p.m.

Feb 28 Heavenly Quilters 9 a.m. in Pierce Hall

Choir rehearsal 6:30-7:45 p.m. in sanctuary

Mar 4 Men's Breakfast 8 a.m.

Choir rehearsal 9:00 a.m.

Morning Worship at 9:30 a.m. Communion *Coffee hour following worship*

Mar 6 Heavenly Quilters 9 a.m. in Pierce Hall

Choir rehearsal 6:30-7:45 p.m. in sanctuary