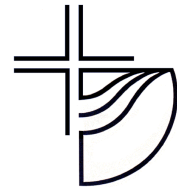


# News from the Brick

**Nettle Creek Church of the Brethren**  
5352 N. Brick Church Road  
Hagerstown, IN 47346

**Established 1820**



Paula Ulrich, Pastor  
Home: 765-935-7438  
[ulrich.paula@gmail.com](mailto:ulrich.paula@gmail.com)

## Office Hours:

Tuesday: 1:30 p.m. -- 4:30 p.m.  
Wednesday: 1:30 a.m. -- 4:30 p.m.  
Friday: 8:30 a.m. -- 12:30 p.m.



Sunday School: 9 a.m.  
Worship: 10 a.m.

**December/January  
2009**

***Continuing the Work of Jesus.  
Peacefully. Simply. Together.***



## ***From Paula's Desk – Advent Reflections***

***The light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness did not overcome it.***

***John 1:5***

Ah, the gray Indiana days can get to us sometimes, can't they? It seems we've had our fair share of them, lately, as I write this reflection. I much preferred the sunny days of October when the leaves were still brilliant red, orange, burgundy, green, and yellow. There's nothing like color to lift my spirits! I felt really disappointed when the leaves fell. But about two weeks ago, I happened to look out my bedroom window on the second floor of our house. For some reason, I wasn't needing to rush around that day. And the sun was rising. I hardly ever get to watch the sun rise, but that day, I stood still and watched for a long time. The horizon behind the bare, leafless trees of Richmond was full of brilliant, flaming, orange light. The feathery clouds in the sky took on a pink hue as the blue of day became visible. Brilliant, flaming orange. To me, that's the color of the Spirit. And I noticed how beautiful the trees are, even without their leaves. I saw the trees lifting their branches in praise to our Creator. Okay – so I'm a pastor and a poet, but I might not have thought of that had the leaves still been there. In fact, I might not have seen the sunrise so well because it would have been *blocked* by the leaves. I found deep peace that morning, though, as I stood still. I felt God's presence as the new day blossomed. “Pause awhile, and know that I am God,” we are told. (Ps. 46:10)

Most of us are pretty busy all the time. But this season – what the world calls Christmas and I call Advent -- can feel frenzied, stressful, and packed so full that we are unable to pause and reflect on the meaning of it all. We barely take a breath between one

activity and the next. I invite you, though, to pause every now and then. Take a deep breath. Notice the beauty that God has put before you. Remember the presence of God who holds you through all your busy days. Lift your arms with the bare tree limbs in praise to the Creator of the Universe, the Prince of Peace, the Messiah who comes as a light in our very dark world.

Jesus may not have been born in December. His real birth date is unknown. But, I'm glad that we celebrate the coming of Jesus as our days grow gray and dark. Somehow, remembering God's great action of incarnation – coming to earth as a tiny baby – does something for my heart and soul. I hope it will do something wonderful for yours, too.



**ADVENT/EPIPHANY  
DEVOTIONALS – *Discovering the Holy in the Ordinary***

Make sure to pick up this beautiful little devotional book to use during Advent and Epiphany. They are located on the table at the back of the sanctuary for every family in the congregation. This one is written by my friend, Yvonne Riege, who lives in northern Indiana. I have to say -- it looks wonderful! I can't wait to begin reading and praying with Yvonne's thoughtful words. I hope they will be a blessing to all of us as we watch, wait, and celebrate the birth of Jesus! *Pastor Paula*

**ADVENT CHILDREN'S STORY SERIES**

Beginning on Sunday, November 29 and going through our Christmas Eve Service, Pastor Paula will read portions of the beautiful story, *The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey*, to the children each week. And, each week, we will build the nativity set as "Jonathan carves the figures." This story will work

its way into the hearts of young and old alike. If there's a child in your life, or a family you know who does not worship anywhere, this might be a great time to invite them to join us for worship!

**"ADOPT A FAMILY" CHRISTMAS CHARITY**

Our congregation will once again participate in Jefferson Township's "Adopt a Family" Christmas charity. Gift ideas for the family will be hanging on a small Christmas tree in the sanctuary as soon as we receive them. If you plan to participate please bring **unwrapped gift** to the sanctuary by **Sunday, December 12**. Place unwrapped gifts under the tree.

The trustee's office staff and other volunteers will be wrapping the gifts Dec 17 & 18. Please contact Julie Potter or Joe Smith (765)489-4824 if you are interested in wrapping.

**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE**

Our Christmas Eve service will include candle lighting and music as usual, but

we also will be celebrating the birth of Jesus with a drama called “A Traditionally Untraditional Christmas Pageant.” Make sure to put this special night on your calendar, and to invite your friends and family! The service will begin at 7:00 pm.

### **EPIPHANY CHILDREN’S STORY SERIES ON JANUARY 10 AND 17**

To celebrate the magi's visit to Jesus during Epiphany, Pastor Paula will read Henry Van Dykes' classic *The Fourth Wise Man* to our children over the course of two Sundays. This story follows the fourth wise man, who never arrives at the manger to worship Jesus because of a series of “mishaps.” Everyone will appreciate this meaningful tale of the man who spends his entire life trying to find the Messiah. (Plus, there will be a little surprise for the children at the end.)

### **THE EAST ALCOVE INFORMATION GALORE!**

Check out the table and the new bulletin boards (which are still in process, I must admit) in the east alcove for all kinds of helpful and interesting information. You'll find a copy of our denominational magazine, *Messenger*; copies of *World Ark* from Heifer Project International; information on Manchester College and Brethren Volunteer Service; newsletters, fliers, and magazines from various agencies or organizations in the Church of the Brethren; SERRV catalogs; Brethren Press catalogs; and much, much more. Feel free to take something home if

you see something of interest, and simply return it when you're done.

### **December Calendar**

***Sunday, Dec. 6 – Community Advent Service at 6 p.m.*** with Pastor Paula preaching. This will be held at the UCC Congregational Christian Church in Hagerstown. Please come support Paula with your smiling faces and your prayers as she brings a message to the ecumenical community!

***Sunday, Dec. 13 – Our annual Christmas Ornament Exchange Party*** at Jon and Marcia Stout’s at 6 p.m. Please bring a covered dish to share; and come prepared for lots of laughs and hilarity as we open wrapped ornaments -- and then steal them away from one another! (Everyone who brings an ornament will get to take one home – it just might not be the one you want!)

***Sunday, Dec. 20 – Important Christmas Pageant rehearsal after worship.*** Lunch will be provided, and then we will rehearse in the sanctuary. This will be our only rehearsal for the pageant, so please plan to stay if you are participating.

***Thursday, Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve Service at 7 p.m.***

***Friday, Dec. 25 – Merry Christmas!***

***Saturday, Dec. 26 through Wednesday, January 6*** – Pastor Paula will be on vacation. In the event of an emergency or crisis, please call one of the deacons: Dan and Carol Goar; Leland and Beverly Nicholson; Brad Bowman; Jon and

Marcia Stout; Bill and Ruth Stout; and Darrel and Marjorie Briar.

***Sunday, Dec. 27 – Mike Cassidy will preach during worship.***

### **January Calendar**

***Sunday, January 3*** – Chuck Bell will preach during worship.

***Tuesday, January 5*** – Board Meeting at 6:30

***Tuesday, January 12*** – Pastor Parish Committee meets at 5:30 in the Pastor's Study

***Sunday, January 17*** – Bread and Cup Communion during Worship

***Tuesday, January 19*** – Deacons meet with leadership by Marcia Stout

***Sunday, January 31*** -- Pitch-In after worship, followed by Council Meeting

### **SPECIAL OFFERINGS DURING DECEMBER AND JANUARY**

December 13 – Christmas Achievement

January 10 – Global Food Crisis

Please remember that we also bring food items for the local Food Pantry on the **second Sunday** of each month. You may place your donations in the cart located in the foyer as you enter the front doors to the sanctuary.

### **Items always needed for the Food Pantry include:**

Ramen Noodles

Canned vegetables: Peas, carrots, etc.

Breakfast Cereals

Tea

Brownie or Cake mixes

Hamburger Helper

Chili ingredients

Coffee

Canned Soup

Rice

Canned Fruit

Pancake mix

Pork and Beans

Syrup

Shampoo

Flour

Toothpaste

Crackers

Peanut Butter

Tuna

Cooking Oil

Ravioli

Canned Spaghetti

Instant Potatoes

Canned Sweet Potatoes

Corn Muffin mixes

Instant Jello and Pudding mixes, regular and sugar free

### **GLOBAL FOOD CRISIS FUND**

Global Food Crisis Fund collection to benefit small-holder farm families:

**“REGNUH” = “HUNGER”**

### **TURNED AROUND**

A new "REGNUH: Turning Hunger Around" collection has been announced by the Church of the Brethren's Global Food Crisis Fund. If there's someone on your Christmas list this season, who has everything, you might think about offering a gift to REGNUH in his or her

honor. The collection features five items that help the world's small-holder farm families achieve healthy and productive lives:

- \$15 purchases a jerry can (water jug) to carry and store water in Myanmar.
- \$25 buys two dozen cashew saplings to replenish orchards in Honduras.
- \$40 provides one bag of high-quality seed to rice farmers in North Korea.
- \$100 supports a microcredit loan for a small business in the Dominican Republic.
- \$500 helps construct a deep and safe village well in water-stressed Niger.

“The designated gifts will be combined with other contributions (of any size) to reach as many small farm families as possible”, reported GFCF manager, Howard Royer. REGNUH note cards may be obtained to let people know you have given an alternative gift in their name for the holidays or another special occasion. You may contact the Global Food Crisis Fund, 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120; or [hroyer@brethren.org](mailto:hroyer@brethren.org) or call 800-323-8039, ext. 264.

The Global Food Crisis Fund will also receive the special offering that we collect on the second Sunday of January.

## **BRETHREN BITS AND PIECES**

### ***Raise the Turkey, Hide the Pastor***

Members of Lower Deer Creek Church of the Brethren in Camden, Indiana, have been having fun with a food collection project called "Raise the Turkey, Hide the Pastor." The church is collecting food for the Carroll County Food Pantry, and stacking it in front of the pulpit with the goal of eventually hiding Pastor Guy Studebaker. (Pastor Paula says, "I'm game!")

***Record numbers of Americans are going hungry***, according to new data released by the US Department of Agriculture. More than one in seven (14.6 percent of American households) suffered from food insecurity in 2008. This 3.5 percent increase from 2007 is the largest one-year increase since the USDA first began publishing data. However, Bread for the World president David Beckmann commented that the new data "is not surprising," because of skyrocketing unemployment. Millions of Americans who have lost their jobs. ***"What should really shock us is that almost one in four children in our country lives on the brink of hunger,"*** Beckmann said.

According to the USDA report, in 2008, 16.7 million children were "food insecure". That is 4.2 million more than the year before. Beckmann said. "To end hunger, our leaders need to strengthen nutrition programs and provide steady jobs that allow parents to escape the cycle of poverty and feed their families for years to come."

***“The brochure for the 2010 workcamps has arrived!”*** In a National Youth Conference year, most workcamps offered are for junior high youth, but there are still options for senior high youth, including an ***intergenerational workcamp*** co-led by On Earth Peace and ‘We Are Able’ and co-sponsored by Caring Ministries. In addition, a young adult workcamp in Haiti is scheduled for the end of May. Registration opens January 25 at 7 p.m. Central Time. For more information or request a brochure, go to [www.brethren.org/workcamps](http://www.brethren.org/workcamps) or contact [cobworkcamps@brethren.org](mailto:cobworkcamps@brethren.org) or 800-323-8039 ext. 286. As soon as we receive a copy of the brochure, it will be placed on the bulletin board in the east alcove of the sanctuary.

***Church of the Brethren general secretary Stan Noffsinger*** was one of more than 40 American faith leaders to sign a letter calling for Congress to do everything in its power to close the ***Guantanamo Bay detention facility***. The letter sponsored by the National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT) states, "Guantanamo is the symbol of our country's violation of our deepest values. Regardless of how it is operated now compared to how it was operated in earlier years, it stands, in the minds of hundreds of millions of people in our nation and around the globe, as a place where America broke faith with itself and used torture as an interrogation technique."

***Manchester College and Parkview Health Systems have announced a collaboration on the college's new School of Pharmacy campus*** in central Fort Wayne, Indiana. In 2012 the college will assume the Fort Wayne Cardiology building, according to a release from the college. The release added that Manchester will now focus on hiring a dean for the new campus, carrying out the extensive pre-accreditation process for a School of Pharmacy, and raising \$10 million in start-up costs. Manchester expects to enroll 265 students into the School of Pharmacy, with 30 faculty and 10 staff members.

***-- In more news from Manchester, the leader of the college's environmental studies, Jerry Sweeten, will be honored in Washington, D.C., as the 2009 Indiana Professor of the Year on November 19.*** Sweeten and his family attend the North Manchester Church of the Brethren. He is among 38 state winners being honored, along with the 2009 US Professor of the Year. The award is given by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education. Sweeten is the second member of the Manchester College faculty to receive the award; art professor emeritus James R.C. Adams was the 2002 US Professor of the Year.

***SERRV is announcing new markdowns of more than 150 items from its Fall/Winter Catalog,*** "just in time for holiday shopping!" The announcement

assured shoppers that "while you are getting a great deal, as always, our artisans have been paid fairly and in full." SERRV is a nonprofit fair trade organization with the mission "to eradicate poverty wherever it resides by providing opportunity and support to artisans and farmers worldwide." *You may see a catalog on the table in the east alcove of the sanctuary, or go to <http://www.serrv.org/>.*

**An Invitation from our Annual Conference Moderator, Shawn Flory Replegle**

Annual Conference this year will be in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, from Saturday, July 3 through Wednesday, July 7. Shawn writes, "I hope you had a chance to see or hear the 2010 Annual Conference theme, *Taking Jesus Seriously*, based on John 14:15 . . . "If you love me, you will obey what I command." . . . Please come to the 224<sup>th</sup> recorded Annual Conference! *This is the only gathering within the Church of the Brethren where everyone is invited to the table regardless of age, theology, and geography.* This is the place that members of the Church of the Brethren come to be the body of Christ, to be a part of the community of faith that is more powerful than we could be on our own. That body will not be the same without you. *Regardless of whether you will be able to attend this year, please hold the "big meeting" in your prayers. Please pray for the delegates who will gather to discern the Spirit's movement*

*in our midst.* Please pray for the safety, creativity, and wisdom of Annual Conference officers. Please pray for the volunteers and attendees who will gather to sense the Spirit, glorify God, and catch a glimpse, again, of the way the Church of the Brethren have taken Jesus seriously for over 300 years. . . and counting. Blessing in Jesus' name, Shawn Flory Repleton

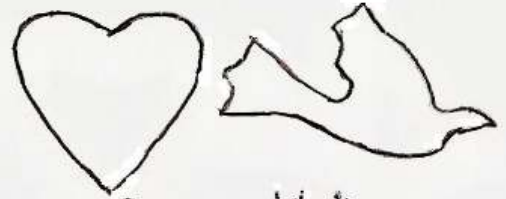
**BIRTHDAYS**

- Dec. 4 – Heather Owens
- Dec. 10 – Bill Stout
- Dec. 11 – Darrel Briar
- Dec. 14 – Gary Stout
- Dec. 19 – Beverly Andrew
- Dec. 20 – Barry Nicholson
- Dec. 21 – Donna King
- Dec. 22 – Betsy Longnecker, Daniel Potter
- Dec. 30 – Joel Stout
- Jan. 2 – Jean Gable (3642 N. Brick Church Rd., Hagerstown)
- Jan. 6 – Laura Nicholson
- Jan. 8 – Regan Klein
- Jan. 10 – Marcia Stout
- Jan. 13 – Dee Reneau
- Jan. 15 – John Andrew
- Jan. 17 – Beth Stone
- Jan. 19 – Jeff Bach
- Jan. 21 – Teresa Renaker, Steven Stout
- Jan. 24 – Todd Stout

**If you see that we have missed someone on the birthday list, please let Paula know.**

Also, there will be occasions when you see the name of a member who may not be attending worship anywhere but still lives nearby. Please send them a card, letting them know how much you miss seeing them on Sundays!

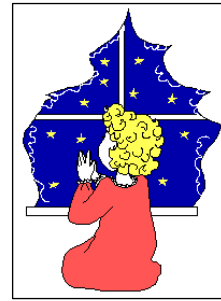
Kid's Korner



Regan Klein



The greatest Christmas gift of all  
was never placed beneath a tree,  
But lay within a manger,  
Beneath a star, for all to see.



O holy Child of Bethlehem  
Descend to us, we pray:  
Cast out our sin and enter in.  
Be born in us today.  
Amen.

The season of Advent (which means arrival) begins the first Sunday after Thanksgiving and extends through four Sundays. Advent celebrates the coming of the Christ child into the world and the significance of this event in the lives of every Christian.

### **The Nativity** Luke 2:1-20

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.

While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there

was no place for them in the inn. In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see--I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.



Don't forget about the pitch-in dinner and all church ornament party at Jon & Marcia Stout's on December 13 at 6:30 p.m.

## FAMILY FUN

### Word Search Puzzle

from [www.geocities.com/lectionarypuzzles/](http://www.geocities.com/lectionarypuzzles/) free to distribute for free with this notice. Words are in a straight line left to right or top to bottom.

(Luke 2:7) And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

**M B E C A U S E W**  
**C I F S H E M P R**  
**L R I N N A A L A**  
**O T R S O N N A P**  
**T H S L H G G C P**  
**H G T U I E E E E**  
**E A B K M R R T D**  
**R V O E F O R H W**  
**E E R L A I D E A**  
**B A N D S M Q M S**

### WORD LIST

FIRSTBORN	WRAPPED	BECAUSE
MANGER	THERE	PLACE
CLOTH	BIRTH	BANDS
THEM	LUKE	LAI
GAVE	WAS	SON
SHE	INN	HIM
FOR		



## **CONNECTING WITH KIDS IN THE KITCHEN**

### **SNOWBALL COOKIES**

Ingredients:

- 1 c. butter or margarine
- ½ c. sugar, powdered and sifted
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 2 ½ c. flour, sifted
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¾ c. chopped pecans

Preparation:

Cream butter in large bowl. Add sugar to the butter or margarine until it is light. Add a tsp of vanilla and stir the mixture. Sift the flour well and add salt and nuts to the mixture. Mix well. Once the above two steps are done, shape the mixture into balls. Place the balls on unbuttered cookie sheet. Bake them for about 15 minutes at 350 deg. Once baked, roll the balls in powdered sugar and roll again in powdered sugar when cool.

### **PAPER PLATE SANTA**

**What you will need:**

- Miniature paper plate  
(approx. 7" diameter)
- Flesh colored crayon
- White, red, and pink construction paper
- Small scrap of flesh colored felt
- Black fine tip marker
- Scissors
- White craft glue
- 18-20 cotton balls



1. Turn paper plate upside down.
2. Color center of plate with flesh colored crayon.
3. Cut a simple cone shaped Santa hat from red construction paper. Make sure the base of the hat is wide enough to cover the width of the plate. Glue hat in place,

covering about one inch of the flesh-colored center circle.

4. Cut a hat brim from the white construction paper; round the center if you like. Glue over the bottom strip of the red hat.
5. Cut two circles, about the size of a quarter, out of pink construction paper. Glue one on each side of the center of the peach circle.
6. Cut a small half moon from the flesh colored felt, about ¾ in. wide, for the nose and glue to the center of the flesh colored circle between two pink cheek circles.
7. Pipe white glue around the sides and bottom of the plate and press cotton balls onto the glue to form the beard.
8. Add glue to the tip of the hat and add a cotton ball.
9. Use a black marker to add a smile and eyes.

### **TEACHING KIDS TO GIVE AT CHRISTMAS**

Not everyone is able to have a Christmas dinner or give three or four presents at Christmas. As a family, make it a tradition to create a Christmas basket of food to donate to the local food bank or to support a charity that provides new presents for kids in the community. Encourage the kids to help with creating the shopping list, buying the items and taking them to the charity. Some families also volunteer at Christmas time to help out in the community, be it the food pantry or even just visiting a nearby seniors' home.

