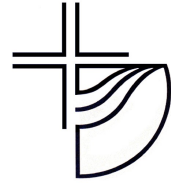


News from the Brick

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

Established 1820



Carol M. Pfeiffer, Pastor
Church Phone: 765-489-4430
Parsonage Phone: 765-489-3435
pastor@nettlecreekcob.com
www.nettlecreekcob.com



Jodi Johnson, Secretary
Sunday School: 9:00 a.m.
Worship: 10:00 a.m.

**December
2006**

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

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**Carol's Comments**

**"The Wish Book"**

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. Isaiah 9: 6-7 NIV*

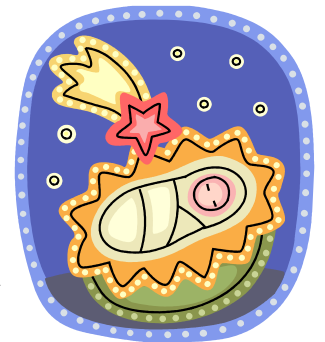
When I was a little girl, I would curl up with the "Wish Book" and dream of what I wanted for Christmas. I couldn't wait till it would come out after Thanksgiving. I'm talking about the Christmas Sears and the J.C. Penney catalogues. They were the books that had lots of toys listed. Of course, I looked at the toys back then. They were usually in the back of the catalogue. But I would also thumb through every page and gaze at the beautiful sweaters and fabulous gifts that were offered for everyone. It was called the "wish book," because people looked at it and made out their Christmas lists after perusing its many pages. And did I peruse them! Over and over again...wishing for some fabulous gifts for Christmas. Though I wished for things, I didn't always receive all those wishes.

I don't even know if they still have those catalogues. Today we have ads in the paper that come weekly or the internet to surf out specific gifts. But to me, there was nothing like the good ole "wish book." There was just something enticing about them...the colorful pictures...the fairy tale-like articles that were dreamy.

Christmas will soon be upon us. We are in the season of Advent awaiting the birth of the Christ child. And children wait with the same anticipation though they may not have a catalogue to dream and wish over. Adults are grown up children, who can lose that child-like wonder of Christmas with all the busyness of the season. But it is still a wonder creating time.

I question if we stop to think that we have our own book with us for all time, not just at Christmas time—the Bible. People of the ages had the book read to them, so to speak, throughout Israel's history. In a sense, it was their "wish book," for the Book told them of marvelous things to come. They dreamed of a better life...of the advent of the Messiah...comfort...peace... "the Wonderful Counselor... the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace". Like children they hoped. They anticipated.

We still have the Bible with us today. Not to trivialize the Bible by calling it a "wish book," but it still gives us the wonderful picture of the future. It is a glorious future in Christ. Yet that future is here and also not yet. We know that Jesus, the long-awaited Messiah was born in Bethlehem. We know that he grew in knowledge and wisdom as well as stature. We know that he showed us how to be compassionate...how to love our enemies...how to be peaceful...how to forgive...how to trust in God...how to become new creatures in him. Wow! What a Book! What a dynamic, living, breathing book that continues to come alive when we continue to read and study it daily. When I need direction, I can go to the Bible. When I need comfort, I find it in the words of Jesus. When I need hope, it is there.



What a book that is more than a book! What a joy that we don't have to wait till after Thanksgiving to delve into this book. It's more than a "wish book." It is THE BOOK of all time!

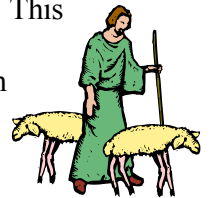
May you find the blessings of Christmas to be more than wishes but to be reality lived. And may it be so.

In Christ, for Christ,  
Pastor Carol Pfeiffer

### Christmas Eve Candlelight Service



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will begin at 7:00 p.m. December 24. This year's theme is "Shepherds Remember" using the monologues written by Dan Petry from Middlebury Church of the Brethren. Several of our youth will be shepherds and we will have a nativity scene using a child as Mary, the mother of Jesus. There will be singing of carols and the Christmas story will be read. Candle lighting will close the service with the violin playing as we sing "Silent Night." Come join us in this celebration of Christ's birth.



### CBWF Christmas Party

The next meeting of the CBWF will be **December 14 at 6:30 p.m.** A Christmas party is planned. Each woman is asked to bring a \$5 gift and play Christmas bingo. We will also make favors for "Meals on Wheels." For further information contact Geneva Davis.



### Need a Place for Christmas Dinner?



For anyone who doesn't have a place to go on Christmas Day, a meal will be served at **noon at the Masonic temple**, 200 S. Pearl St., Hagerstown. The dinner is sponsored by the Nettle Creek Ministerial Association. Area churches are providing the food. **For reservations call: Jefferson Township Trustees Office 765-489- 4824.**

### Angel Tree Gifts

According to their website <http://www.angeltree.org/contentindex.asp?ID=83>, *Angel Tree Christmas gives churches an opportunity to share Christ's love by helping to meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the families of prisoners. Participating in Angel Tree is a powerful way for your church community to lovingly answer the biblical call to minister to the least of these. Many churches make an annual commitment to this highly rewarding program, and recognize it as a way to care for some of the most overlooked members of our culture. Angel Tree Christmas works by connecting parents in prison with their children through the delivery of Christmas gifts. In most cases, local church volunteers purchase and deliver gifts and the gospel to children in the name of their prisoner-parent. Our congregation has had the opportunity to give to Angel Tree again this year. This has been a project that many people enjoy. Our deadline for bringing the gifts was December 3.*

### Hagerstown Food Pantry

Nettle Creek is in charge of serving the Food Pantry in December. The pantry is in need of canned goods of all kinds. You may put your contributions in the grocery cart in the foyer of the church. The Nettle Creek Ministerial Association serves around 60 families a month. Monetary donations are also accepted.

### Harvest Dinner a Success

The Harvest Dinner was held November 4 at the **Congregational Christian UCC Church** in Hagerstown. Our congregation helped with the dinner. Thanks to all who donated food and helping hands.

### Church Women United – World Community Day Has Good Attendance

**Church Women United** met at the **Congregational UCC church November 11**. There was an excellent turn out. The theme was "Peace and Unity". The guest speaker, Angelica Reyna-Bland, spoke about her life as a migrant worker and her journey in life. A Hagerstown resident and author of *Last Ride on the Ferry*, she

brought humor and information to everyone. Her book honors her father. All enjoyed her talk as well as the refreshments which were served. If you didn't get to hear her, you missed out on a wonderful opportunity to hear someone within our own community talk about life growing up in a migrant worker family.

**CBWF – Church of the Brethren Women’s Fellowship Noodlers**



The CBWF met November 18 to make noodles to sell at Hometown Christmas December 2. We had approximately 12-15 women gather together and get floured up for the rolling out of noodles. We had a regular assembly line going with mixers of the ingredients, rollers of the dough, and cutters of the noodles. We even had some “little helper” hands. We made a lot of noodles. After we were done (we thought), we discovered more eggs in the refrigerator. By that time we were all cleaned up. But still we had a lot of fun working together.

**Community Rewards Program Applications**

Application/brochures are available on the cabinet at the back of the church Sanctuary. If you shop at Meijer, we encourage you to take an application home and fill it out. You can also fill it out online: <http://www.meijer.com/services/>. Look under “Community Rewards”. Meijer will send the organization a check each month based on the amount spent by those listing our code on their individual applications. You will need the Church Code Number for Nettle Creek that as been assigned by Meijer. It is: **585361** this is one small way we can help with the Church finances. If you have any questions, see Brad Bowman, Finance Chairperson.



**Giving For November**

|                                                           |                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Average Weekly Offering needed to meet budget.....</b> | <b>\$1,390.77</b> |
| <b>Average Offering for November .....</b>                | <b>\$1,328.63</b> |
| November 5.....                                           | \$1,727.00        |
| November 12.....                                          | \$ 718.00         |
| November 19.....                                          | \$1,722.50        |
| November 26 .....                                         | \$ 1,147.00       |



**Average Attendance for November .....** 41

**Other Giving:** Hagerstown Food Pantry: \$91.00; Reimbursement for CCLI License: \$50.00

**Dinners:** Harvest Dinner: \$401.00 - to be used for general fund

Nettle Creek Museum Dinner: \$297.00 – to be used for general fund

**Special Offering Dates**

December 10 – Christmas Offering

**Worship Leader and Speaker Information for December**

December 3 - Ann Bach Rev. Ray Armstrong brings the message

December 10 – Beverly Nicholson

December 17 – Leland Nicholson

December 24 – Pastor Carol

December 24 – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, Pastor Carol

December 31 – **Laity Sunday**, Teresa Renaker and Laura Nicholson



**Diaper Pantry**

Donations of diapers and money are being accepted. Also, save those diaper coupons. If you know someone in need of help with diapers, contact Julie Potter, 765-478-4305 for information on signing up to receive diapers.



## Gifts That Matter

There is a booklet on the bulletin board "Gifts that Matter" which has items listed from Brethren Press. You might find some **Christmas gifts** in this small catalogue of items. If you need some gift ideas, check out the bulletin board.

## Heifer International- Another Way of Giving



Choose a meaningful gift to give a loved one and help children and families around the world receive training and animal gifts that help them become self-reliant. There is a catalogue on the bulletin board by the secretary's office or check it out online:

<http://www.heifer.org/site/c.edJRKQNiFiG/b.204586/>. There are varieties

of choices in animals and price range from chickens and rabbits to heifers. This is just another way of giving to help those in need around the world.

## Prayer Concerns

|                                                                                    |                       |                         |                 |                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Terry Poole                                                                        | Guy Warmoth           | Cheryl Oakes            | Clova Hollowell | Rob Althoff     |
| Dennis Nicholson                                                                   | Greg Giffen           | Laura & Barry Nicholson |                 | Brad Richardson |
| Don Seibert                                                                        | Howard & Geneva Davis |                         | Mark Werking    | Lance Nobbe     |
| Gratia Waskom                                                                      | Mary Knipp            | John & Sondra Roberts   |                 | Jay Burroughs   |
| Home: Mary Werking, Harriet Burroughs, Ruth Crull, Viola Nicholson, Bernetha Davis |                       |                         |                 |                 |
| Care Center: LuFreda Bowman, Margaret Briar                                        |                       |                         |                 |                 |

(Please let Pastor Carol or Jodi Johnson know if you want someone placed on or removed from the Prayer List.)

## District News

- **Safety Tips on a Sensitive Subject** - Church Mutual Insurance Company has asked to distribute a DVD containing Safety Tips on a Sensitive Subject: Child Sexual Abuse. I have (Allen Kahler) previewed this presentation and found it to be a good tool for churches to use in educating their staff and volunteers. Please review this information and use it as you call volunteers for the different ministries in your church. They are also sending along some forms that are mentioned in the DVD for you to use in you would like. Please note this information comes with no obligation to the church.
- **Recordkeeping Requirements For Cash Contributions** - A change that has taken place due to the Pension Protection Act of 2006 is the way that cash contributions are substantiated. All cash contributions must be substantiated by either a bank record (canceled check) or a written communication from the charity receiving donation showing the name of the charity, the date and the amount of the contribution.
- **Meet DeEtta Balsler, the new South Central Indiana District Treasurer** - DeEtta is a member at Eel River Community Church of the Brethren. She is an accountant and works at Himes & Krull, LLC in Pierceton. We are very thankful to have DeEtta join the district board as Treasurer.

## Denominational News - taken from CoB Newslines

- **Easing burdens of disaster recovery in Mississippi.**

Through its 300 volunteers who began arriving in Mississippi in January, the Church of the Brethren has lifted some of the burdens of families with unmet needs after Hurricane Katrina. They've helped primarily in George County by rebuilding or repairing more than 60 homes, replacing roofs and taking on countless other tasks that have earned them the respect and friendship of several communities mauled by Hurricane Katrina.

The Church of the Brethren is one of many voluntary agencies that work together in their disaster preparedness efforts through the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD), formed after the devastating Hurricane Camille in 1969 to coordinate services provided to communities affected by disasters. NVOAD participate in the National Response Plan. The plan forms the basis of how the federal government

coordinates with the state, local and tribal governments, and the private sector during domestic natural or man-made disasters.

- **Retirees have a new option for tax-free giving to the church or church agencies through the Pension Protection Act of 2006.**

Those age 70-and-a-half or older may give up to \$100,000 in 2006-07 directly from an individual retirement account (IRA) without reporting the gift as income.

Previously such gifts would be taxable. Gifts must be made on or before Dec. 31, 2007, and transferred directly from the IRA by its administrator or trustee. Some funds are ineligible to receive such gifts including charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts, and donor-advised funds. For more information contact one of the funding staff of the Church of the Brethren General Board or the Brethren Benefit Trust, or a personal financial advisor.

- **The US federal budget for 2007 calls for cuts in domestic human needs programs so that more money can be allocated for defense, said an Action Alert from the Brethren Witness/Washington Office.**

The alert supports a call for action by the faith community from Domestic Human Needs, an ecumenical faith-based working group. The budget will be finalized in the upcoming "lame duck" session of Congress. The alert listed how budget cuts will affect domestic human needs programs including cuts in job-training programs for the fifth year in a row; cuts in the budget of Head Start of \$140 million less than the program would need to provide a 2006 level of service; a cut of \$43 million for child care, primarily provided through the Child Care and Development Block Grant, likely to cause 11,000 children to lose assistance; funding for Pell Grants for low- and middle-income students of \$725 million below the 2006 level plus inflation; funding for the National Institutes of Health that is \$351 million below the 2006 level plus inflation. The office is providing a sample letter expressing these concerns to send to a local newspaper or to members of Congress. Contact the Brethren Witness/Washington Office at 800-785-3246 or [washington\\_office\\_gb@brethren.org](mailto:washington_office_gb@brethren.org).

- **A workshop titled, "A Faithful Response: Supporting and Welcoming Those Who Choose Military Service or Conscientious Objection,"** was held Nov. 11 at Messiah Church of the Brethren in Kansas City, Mo.

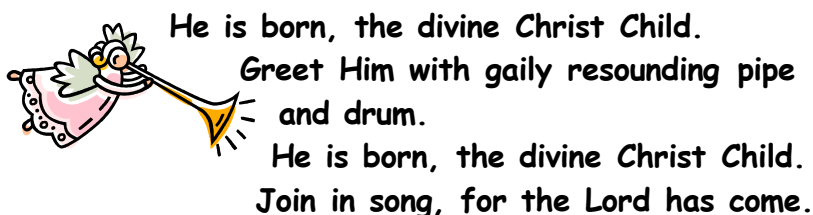
On Earth Peace staff Susanna Farahat and Laura Partridge of the American Friends Service Committee, along with Kansas City pastors Barbra Davis and Sonja Griffith, provided leadership for the day-long peace retreat sponsored by the Kansas City Metro Parish. Sessions included "Christian Nonviolence," "Military Recruitment/Conscientious Objection," "Sharing Stories in Community," and "Welcoming Veterans Home."

- **The National Council of Churches has released a report giving churches "bright ideas for reducing utility bills and caring for creation."**

Lighting, heating, and housing activities comes at a cost to a church's bottom line and negatively impact the environment and human health, the NCC said in a release about the report. "Bottom Line Ministries that Matter:

Congregational Stewardship with Energy Efficiency and Clean Energy Technologies" outlines how congregations can save money as they reduce carbon emissions that lead to global warming. The report promotes moral and financial stewardship and gives examples of how churches successfully saved \$8,000-\$16,000 a year using energy efficient technologies. Download from

[www.nccec.org/network](http://www.nccec.org/network) (user must sign up for the network to download resources) .



CHURCH OF THE COVERED DISH by Thom Tapp

