

Happy Birthday to our Seniors!

FEBRUARY:

16—Eva March
20—Ron Ludwig
22—Jerry Ludwig
27—Barbara Harding



Coming up in MARCH:

Russell McVaugh—March 3
Louise Styer—March 13
Bud Bowman—March 18
Art Gordon—March 19
Joe Smith—March 19
Lois Beam—March 20
Mim Spence—March 30

Did we miss anyone? If you are a “Senior” Member over age 55 and wish to be included on the birthday list, please call the church office at 610-856-7242.

PARISH REGISTER

Membership Loss:

1/9/2014—Savanna Lorah—removed at own request to join the Church of the Latter Day Saints

Funeral:

1/6/14—Susan K. Babyak, 55.

New Members:

1/5/14—Corrine Gebhart—affirmation of faith
Stephen Moyer—renewal
Dorothy Maxwell—Transfer form Immanuel U.C.C.,
Shillington

Baptism:

1/12/14—Benjamin Kohl—adult

HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE:

Page 2—Office & Leadership Information
Page 3—Feb. Services & February Wednesday Church Nite
Page 4-6—Pastor’s Letter
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Please find enclosed the new Time and Abilities Survey. We are please requesting that you take the time to prayerfully consider where you can use your time and talent and then return the completed sheet to the church office. Thank you!

The Parish Digest

From the Pastor:



⁵⁷ As they were going along the road, someone said to him, ‘I will follow you wherever you go.’ ⁵⁸ And Jesus said to him, ‘Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.’ ⁵⁹ To another he said, ‘Follow me.’ But he said, ‘Lord, first let me go and bury my father.’ ⁶⁰ But Jesus said to him, ‘Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.’ ⁶¹ Another said, ‘I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home.’ ⁶² Jesus said to him, ‘No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.’
Luke 9:57-62

¹⁹ Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh), ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, ²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Hebrews 10:19-25

Do Not Rob God (continued on page 4)

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A mailbox is located outside the church office for anyone who has written information for staff, chairpersons, preschool, or other leaders.

Rev. Michael Ware, Pastor

Home: 610-875-0015 Office: 610-856-7242

Office hours: Wednesday and Thursday, 9-12 and 1:30-3:00;

Day off: Monday;

Email address: revmikeware@gmail.com

Rev. Luther Route', Associate Pastor

Home: 610-372-0536 Office: 610-856-7242

Email address: routteluther@gmail.com *(please note new email)*

Susan J. Creed, Minister of Christian Ed. —Home 610-779-0179

Office Hours: M-TH 1:00-4:00 610-856-7242

Email address: screed@dejazzd.com

Mark Lauer, Youth Ministry Leader—Home 610-286-0800

Office Hours: T & TH 10:00-1:00 610-856-7242

Email address: Mark.Lauer12@Houghton.edu

Meghan Brown, Minister of Music—Phone: 610-207-4587

Email address: MB687417@wcupa.edu

Debbie DeMarco, Parish Secretary

Home: 610-856-7386 Office: 610-856-7242

Office Hours: M-TH 9-4; Friday **9-12:00**

Email address: ddemarco@dejazzd.com

Linell McCormick, Office Assistant, T & Th, 12-4

Home: 610-775-2571 Email: lmmr52@aol.com

Dale Creed, Maintenance Supervisor—M-Th mornings

Robin Werner, Sexton—Phone: 610-698-0688

Email: robinbaskets@aol.com

Kristen Davis, Preschool Director

610-856-7613

Council Officers:

Chris Gerace, President

Craig Eppright, Secretary

Kay Good, Treasurer Special Funds

Lori Sifford, Financial Secretary

Other Council Members:

Jane Meyers

Sue Besecker

Joy O'Donnell

Bill Haney, Vice President

Dorothy Martin, Treasurer

Maggie Lauer (youth)

FROM OUR MAILBOX:

To the people of Robeson Lutheran Church,

I would like to thank you for all the prayers, cards, and well-wishes you sent my way during my recent stay in the Reading Hospital. They were all so appreciated!

A special thank you to Pastor Route' for his visit in the hospital and the phone call after I was home.

Also, a special thank you to my friend Judy who stayed with me the first two nights I was home.

This is truly a loving and caring congregation and I am so happy to be a part of it.

Sincerely,

Betty Zellner

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING YOUR WEEKLY OFFERING ENVELOPES:

You will notice that the offering envelopes look different this year (2014). In order to be better stewards of your gifts and reduce unnecessary costs, we have changed the envelopes to the type that must be mailed with a regular mailing envelope. So, when you would like to mail your weekly / monthly offering to the church, just place it in a regular envelope with a stamp and address it to the church address.

Other changes include: The weekly Youth envelope has been omitted. The regular envelope now has a line for current expenses (regular giving) and two lines for other designated giving. You may use these lines to indicate any special giving of your choice such as youth, benevolence, improvement, music, etc., or you can leave them blank and your offering will be used in all areas of our budget as necessary.

With these small changes, it enables us to reduce our ordering costs considerably (by more than \$1500.00 per year). Your help and understanding is appreciated as we constantly work to be wiser stewards of our resources here at Robeson.



RECYCLING OPPORTUNITIES:

HELP YOUR CHURCH AND COMMUNITY:

Please bring in your used **ink cartridges** (any kind) and we will recycle them at Staples earning \$2 each for the church.

Cell phones, eyeglasses, good used clothing also continue to be collected for local ministries.

Paper Recycling Bins are located at the rear of Hoeffler Hall to accept your **newspaper, magazines, office paper, "junk" mail**, etc. Please no phone books, "trash" or cardboard. And please no plastic; take your paper out of the plastic bags before you throw it in the bin. Thanks for your help!

COMMUNITY NEWS:

BREAKFASTS: Geigertown Fire Company—First Sunday; Brecknock Fire Company—Second Sunday; St. Benedict R.C.Church—Third Sunday; Joanna Furnace—Third Saturday, 7-11 a.m.; Union Lodge in Birdsboro Third Sunday, 7:30-11.

REDNER'S TAPES FUNDRAISER:

Robeson Lutheran Church has started an ongoing fundraiser and we're asking our members, friends and neighbors to help by saving your Redner's receipts and bringing them to the church at your convenience. Boxes are located in the narthex and foyer. Please make sure you use your Redner's gas card when you make your purchase and then bring in your receipt—it's that easy! And you'll be helping your church.

(If you shop at Redners but don't have a gas card, just ask for one. It's free!)

Seniors and shut-ins: just send your receipts with Pastor Route or any member of the visitation team. Thank you!!!

FEBRUARY SERVICES & SPECIAL EVENTS

FEB 1—5:30 p.m. **Saturday Evening Communion**

FEB 2—7:45 & 10:15 a.m. Holy Communion; 9:00 SCS

SOUPER BOWL AND SCOUT SUNDAY

Our Senior Youth, Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts will be holding soup kettles to collect money for the hungry in our community following the worship service on this day. They will also hold a soup lunch fundraiser following the 10:15 service. You will receive soup, bread, dessert and a drink for \$6. All proceeds will go to the local food banks. Please plan to attend.



FEB 9—7:45 & 10:15 a.m. **Holy Communion; 9:00 SCS ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING** following the 10:15 service

FEB 16— 7:45 & 10:15 a.m. **Worship Services; 9:00 SCS**

FEB 23—7:45 & 10:15 A.M. **Worship Services; 9:00 SCS Joyful Noise offering for the Twin Valley Food Bank 11:30 Healing Service**

FEBRUARY WEDNESDAY CHURCH NIGHT

Features A Special Evening with Teen Challenge

February 5, 6-7:30 p.m.



Teen Challenge
at
Robeson Lutheran Church

Please come out and support our Berks County division of Teen Challenge, Rehrersburg. Join us for a special choral concert and testimonials from young men who have recovered from

life-controlling addictions through the Word of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Senior Youth is sponsoring the event which will begin at 6PM with a savory pizza and salad meal from Paolo's. Please bring a dessert to share. A free will offering will be taken for Teen Challenge (the youth are paying for the meal).

This is one night you won't want to miss as we will hear the results of the Lord's work through the awesome efforts of Teen Challenge: "Rekindling Hope, Renewing Life, Restoring Families."

Just a few years ago, Larknews.com, a satire website, carried the following fictional news release. It reported:

Julie and Bob Clark were stunned to receive a letter from their church in July asking them to “participate in the life of the church” – or worship elsewhere. “They basically called us freeloaders,” says Julie. “We were freeloaders,” says Bob.

In a trend that may signal rough times for wallflower Christians, the Faith Community Church of Winston-Salem has asked “non-participating members” to stop attending. “No more Mr. Nice Church,” says the executive pastor, newly hired from Cingular Wireless. “Bigger is not always better. Providing free services indefinitely to complacent Christians is not our mission.”

“Freeloading” Christians were straining the church's nursery and facility resources, and harming the church's ability to reach the lost, says the pastor. “When your bottom line is saving souls, you get impatient with people who interfere with that goal.”

Faith Community sent polite but firm letters to families who attend church services and “freebie events,” but never volunteer, never give, and do not belong to a small group or other ministry. The church estimates that only half of its regular attendees have volunteered in the past 3 years, and a third have never given to the church.

“Before now, we made people feel comfortable and welcome, and tried to coax them to give a little something in return,” says a staff member. “That's changed. We're done being the community nanny.”

Surprisingly, the move to dis-invite people has drawn a positive response from men in the community who like the idea of an in-your-face church. “I thought, A church that doesn't allow wussies—that rocks,” says Bob Clark, who admires the church more since they told him to get lost. He and Julie are now tithing and volunteering. “We've taken our place in church life,” he says”

Now, I want to be very clear that I am not suggesting
(continued on page 5)

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Income for December:	\$23,452.20	
Other Income:	\$ 1,685.04	(in/out)
Checks issued for December:	\$29,938.11	
Checking balance brought forth:	\$(-1,706.76)	
Checking balance as of 12/31/2013	\$ 1,492.37	
Unpaid Bills:	none	
Unpaid Synod Benevolence commitment:	\$10,390.00	

Respectfully submitted, Dorothy Martin, Treasurer

SPECIAL FUNDS REPORT:

TOTAL ASSETS: 11/30/13	\$40,369.43
Special funds received in December:	171.00
Bat Fund Donations	988.00

OUTFLOW:

Transfer to general fund:	\$ 8,000.00
Reserved special funds	\$ 1,000.00

BALANCES:

Checking Account balance 12/31/13	\$ 26,789.84
National Penn Money Market	\$ 5,731.59

TOTAL ASSETS: 12/31/13	\$ 32,521.43
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-Kay Good, Treas. Spec. Funds

The Joyful Noise offering for December (\$248.55) was given to St Benedict's Food Bank.

REMINDER: Annual reports for the **Annual Congregational Meeting to be held on February 9, 2014** will be ready for pick-up in the church office the week prior to the meeting. If you are unable to attend the meeting and would like a report mailed to your home, please call the church office.



HELP FOR ALL THOSE 60 AND OVER!!

Where: Robeson Lutheran Church

When: **3rd Tuesday of the month from 11-3** (please note new day and time to coordinate with our Robeson Robins meeting)

The **Berks County Area Agency on Aging** will have a staff member at Robeson Lutheran Church, 3520 Plow Road, Mohnton, PA 19540 **every 3rd Tuesday from 11AM –3PM.**

Our Staff member will be able to explain available services, answer questions and provide information on programs and community resources for you, family members or anyone you know who is 60 years of age and older. No appointment necessary. We look forward to talking with you.

MINISTRIES AVAILABLE TO OUR SENIORS, SHUT-INS, SICK, ETC.:

CD Ministry—CD's of the weekly services are being mailed out to all those senior, sick or and shut-in members who cannot attend church services.

Large Print Devotionals—these are the same as our small, daily devotionals but have larger print for those needing it.

Prayer Shawls—These are available for sick, hospitalized, shut-in or senior members who would like one. They are very comforting to those who have received them. Recipients do not need to be a member of Robeson so please take them for others who would like them.

Robeson Hammers—Helping members in need with minor repairs at home, mainly small projects that would make their homes more safe or comfortable.

Home Visits—Our visitation team is visiting a number of our seniors and would be more than happy to visit others if invited. If you would appreciate a visit please call the church office. If you have a need or request for any of the above ministries, please call the church office and we will be happy to help you.

that we should enact such a strict dis-inviting policy. This article is purely satire, and like all good satire it exaggerates reality to make a point. Instead I share this article in hopes that it will make us each think about just what it means as a Christian to be truly involved in the life of the faith and in the life of the church.

After all, growing up in a consumer culture, so often we are asking ourselves the question, “What’s in it for me?” We are taught to look to businesses and markets to satisfy our wants and desires, and if we are not happy with a certain product or practice, we know simply to move onto something more convenient or comfortable.

Unfortunately, this same attitude has crept into our Christian culture so that we learn to shop around for the church that best satisfies our current wants and needs, and when we no longer get all of our wants or needs met, we either go to another church, or find reasons and excuses not to go to church at all.

Surely Jesus foresaw this tendency in the folks he ministered to who were excited to follow him, particularly because they had received loaves and fishes for hungry bellies and healing for broken lives. Yet Jesus’ calling to us is more than just a “come and get it.” Rather, Jesus teaches us that we are to become servants to one another, to give from our blessings to those in need, to “seek ye first the Kingdom of God.”

It is in this way that our Christian faith is most recognizable by how we set our priorities, i.e. is worship of God and service to others truly a priority for us, or do we merely come to church when it’s convenient and look only to meet our own needs in this life?

Truth is, a consumer model of Christianity simply doesn’t make for good disciples, instead it creates a level of entitlement amongst those who should rather remember that everything we have is first and foremost a gift of God’s grace; it is not payment for services rendered, it is not something owed to us. God has already blessed us with every good thing, (cont. p. 6)

6 and so to that end then, the Christian is never about, "What's in it for me?" but is instead more concerned with engaging the faith and actively serving others to the glory of God.

Thus, one might say to all those who truly wish to live as Christians (to paraphrase JFK) "ask not what your church can do for you, but what you can do for the church." After all, just imagine how much more effective we could be in reaching out to our community and our world with the love of Jesus Christ if we got more involved in our churches. Imagine the positive changes that would happen in our own lives and in the lives of those around us if we show up with a right attitude towards service and an honest commitment to participate in the life of faith. Why, we just might move some mountains and change the world!

Think about it!

Your brother in Christ,
Pastor Michael

P.S. It is my hope that you will prayerfully consider renewing and recommitting to your support of Robeson Lutheran Church this year by filling out the attached time and abilities sheet, and turning it into the church office.

Remember, we are a family, and just like in a family, we all have something to contribute to the common good.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Men's Group

The men of Robeson Lutheran Church continue to meet for breakfast and fellowship on the second Saturday of each month at 7:30 a.m. here in our own Hoeffler Hall. This is a great opportunity to get to know your brothers in Christ and learn more about your faith through brief bible study and mutual conversation. Come and see how the men of Robeson live out their discipleship. The next Men's Breakfast is scheduled for **February 8th.**



Robeson Robins Senior Group

THE ROBESON ROBINS will be holding their regular meeting on February 18. Please bring a covered dish to share for lunch. Following lunch the seniors will enjoy a program presented by Berks County commissioner Kevin Barnhardt.



For more information about the Robins, contact Billie at (610-401-8496).

*Resources
for Seniors*

ATTENTION SENIOR CITIZENS:

Fuel assistance program forms for Low Income Housing (LIHE) are now available. If you are a single senior with an income of \$16,765 or less, or a couple with \$22,685 or less, you are eligible to receive \$100-\$400 rebate for your fuel. Please stop by the church and talk to our representatives from the Office of Aging between 11-3 on the 3rd Tuesday of the month. They will be more than happy to help you fill out the proper paperwork and share other money-saving offers available to low income seniors.

THIS AND THAT AT ROBESON LUTHERAN:

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!! We have posted volunteer sheets on the white board in the new foyer. If you are willing to help during any of the services please sign up on this board. There are lists for acolytes, lectors, ushers, greeters, sound technicians, nursery attendants, worship assistants, and communion servers. We appreciate and need our volunteers!

REMINDERS:

Committee reports are due in the church office on the first Thursday of the month for the council meeting which will be held on the 2nd Thursday.

All Property concerns and requests should be brought to the attention of Dale Creed or the church office. Please do not take concerns directly to the Property Committee. Thanks for your help with this.

PARISH DIGEST DEADLINE: Articles for the next newsletter are due in the office by February 17th for the March Digest.

ALTAR FLOWERS and BULLETIN SPONSOR openings are coming up in future months so if you are interested please call the church office. Reminder: Altar flowers cost is \$33 and bulletins are \$25.

IMPORTANT:

- Any group or individual sponsoring special projects, collections, etc. please contact Bill Haney (Social Ministry) for coordination purposes and especially Debbie at the church office for advertising these events and projects.
- Any committee or group that has events etc. to advertise in the area papers should please copy to Linell at lmrm52@aol.com.

FAMILY FUN/JUNIOR YOUTH GROUP FRIDAY, FEB. 28

This will be the final Family Fun Night for the current academic year. February 28th youth in kindergarten through 6th grade will have the opportunity to have fun and burn up energy with numerous games including: tug-o-war, crab soccer, and



a few possible surprises. The evening will begin with kid friendly food at 6:00 followed by the events of the evening beginning at 6:30. Friends are welcome to attend.

Beginning in September this ministry will be known as Junior Youth Group since not all parents (or adult friend) will be required to be present for every event. It is the intention of the visionaries of this event that Mark Lauer will facilitate the programs and a few parents will volunteer their help each month. Hopefully, this will be a build-up to the Senior Youth Group, which already exists.

ALL YOUTH IN GRADES 5-12 are invited to attend the **West Berks Mission District 2014 Youth Event** featuring **CAPTIVE FREE NORTHEAST**

February 21st at 7:00 p.m. through Saturday, February 22 (following the 7:00 p.m. concert)

Hosted by Trinity Lutheran Church, 108 S. Robeson St., Robesonia. Cost is \$30 for the weekend.

What's Included: A food packaging event led by Captive Free Team (we'll be packaging more than 7,000 meals to feed our hungry neighbors), Lots of Music (bring your own instruments to jam with the band), Worship, Bible Study, Games, Food, Break-out sessions (grades 5-8 and 9-12). Discover new ways that YOU can make a difference! See Mark Lauer or call the church office to make your reservation.

ALTAR GUILD: Altar care volunteers are needed for 2014. If you are willing to serve on altar care for a month with at least one other volunteer please call Marion Kachel (610-856-1683) or the church office.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH (offered during the 10:15 service for children ages 4 through 4th grade) has gone on hiatus beginning in Advent, for the purpose of restructuring. In the meantime activity bags are provided for children's use during the worship service. The bags are located in the narthex at the main entrance to the sanctuary (worship area). Anyone willing to help with Children's Church in the future, please contact the church office (610-856-7242).

PLEA FOR NURSERY ATTENDANTS: In order to continue to be a welcoming church we would like to offer nursery care of our little ones under the age of 4. Those who had been serving in the nursery were burned out due to the limited number of volunteers. To prevent this in the future we are asking for your help! Please consider volunteering for the nursery at the 10:15 service one time every 3 months. There is a sign up sheet in the new foyer for February. We have recently had visitors who specifically asked about the nursery for their preschoolers. Please help us continue to offer this service for young families.

NO MORE BATS! At the congregational meeting in October we voted to have the bat guano cleaned up from the attic area of the sanctuary and to have the roof and belfry sealed so that the bats could not return in the spring. Work has been completed at a cost of \$7300.00. We are now asking for your help toward this expense. We have a Bat Gauge in the narthex and we are filling it in as the offerings are received. So far, \$1513.01 have been received. Please place your donations in an envelope marked "Bats" and drop it in the offering plate or mail it to the church office. Thank you!!



FEBRUARY IS REGISTRATION TIME FOR 2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR!

February 4th & 5th are registration for children currently enrolled.

February 11th & 12th are registration for siblings, church members, and families previously enrolled at the school. The week of February 24th it is open to the public.

Other news: The snow delay policy has been changed effective immediately. If Twin Valley has a two hour delay, the preschool also has a two hour delay with the exception of the toddler program which is closed.

GIANT FUNDRAISER: Those of you who shop at Giant can help our preschool by registering your Giant bonuscard and using your card when you shop at Giant. You can do this online at www.giantfoodstores.com/aplus now through March 22. Please use Robeson Lutheran Preschool's ID # 06822. If you do not have internet access, you can get a form in the preschool or church office. Thank you!