

What do people expect from religion and the Church? What happens when their expectations are unfulfilled?

Religion has many functions for our society. Some equate religious life with private life. For these people, faith has a psychological dimension, a spiritual balm that soothes the stress and strains of daily life. Or, Church acts as a private club, a Sunday meeting place for friends.

Others see religion as a moral barometer, a social conscience. Religious leaders should point the way to a better life, a higher example. Religious people should help the needy and the oppressed. In this way, they can help to build a better society.

These, and many other reasons, are good, solid reasons that argue for religious life and the existence of the Church. But they don't get to the root reason for religion and religious groups. The ultimate reason for religion is faith, a relationship with God. The Church is to foster that faith. Jesus came to Nazareth for that purpose. But the expectations of the people lie elsewhere. (Read Luke 4:21-30).

Expectations can be caused by frustration. We want something to happen. So we look to others for fulfillment. Faith can become confused. And prayer can dry up. Why does prayer sometimes seem so hard? Prayer is sometimes difficult because we fight against ourselves and the temptations around us (including the devil). Prayer can become hard when we use prayer for selfish ends (praying only for a particular need or to reduce stress), or when we don't take the time to pray on a regular basis, or when we reject prayer as a "waste of time." Prayer can be extremely hard when we sense personal failure; we have the temptation to give up instead of persevering. As a result, we can feel dry and can be easily distracted in prayer; we can even lose faith and become depressed.

What can we do when prayer becomes hard? We can take two strategies when prayer becomes hard. First, we can realize that our faith is being tested; we can change our prayer in order to seek God's will for us. Second, we can realize that prayer is never wasted; we are challenged to use prayer as a means to overcome frustration in prayer. As St. Paul said, "Pray constantly." (1 Thess. 5:17).

How did Jesus pray in his time of difficulty? In John 17, Jesus prayed a prayer for his disciples called the "priestly prayer." Even before his death, he prayed for the unity of his followers and for union with his followers. His prayer teaches us the true measure of prayer, the desire to be one with God at every point in life. What do you expect from prayer? How have your expectations been fulfilled? How has your prayer life helped (or hindered) your faith life?

Expectations are always hard to fulfill. But, faith is not based upon expectations, but on a relationship with God. We must recognize the difference between the two. And place our expectations before God. (Not the other way around!)

LECTIONARY FOR FEBRUARY

February 7

Isaiah 6:1-8, 9-13; Psalm 138
I Corinthians 15:1-11; Luke 5:1-11

February 14

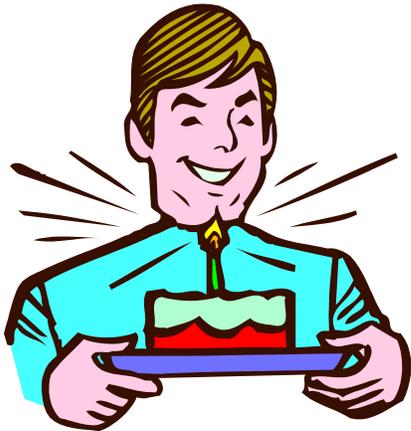
Exodus 24:29-35; Psalm 99
2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2; Luke 9:28-36

February 21

Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Psalm 91:1-2,9-16
Romans 10:8b-13; Luke 4:1-13

February 28

Genesis 15:1-12,17-18; Psalm 27
Philippians 3:17-4:1; Luke 13:31-35



HAPPY FEBRUARY BIRTHDAY TO:

<i>Bill Heinaman</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Joanne Murphy</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Thomas Henel</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>John Cameraman</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Joseph Stamer</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Alexander Mellor Henelsmith</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Celina Faye Henelsmith</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>John Henel</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Mark Halterman</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Johnson Michael Tan</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>James Stamer</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Susan Henel</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Mary Donnelly</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Walter Baldwin, Jr.</i>	<i>27</i>

.....any many, many more!!!



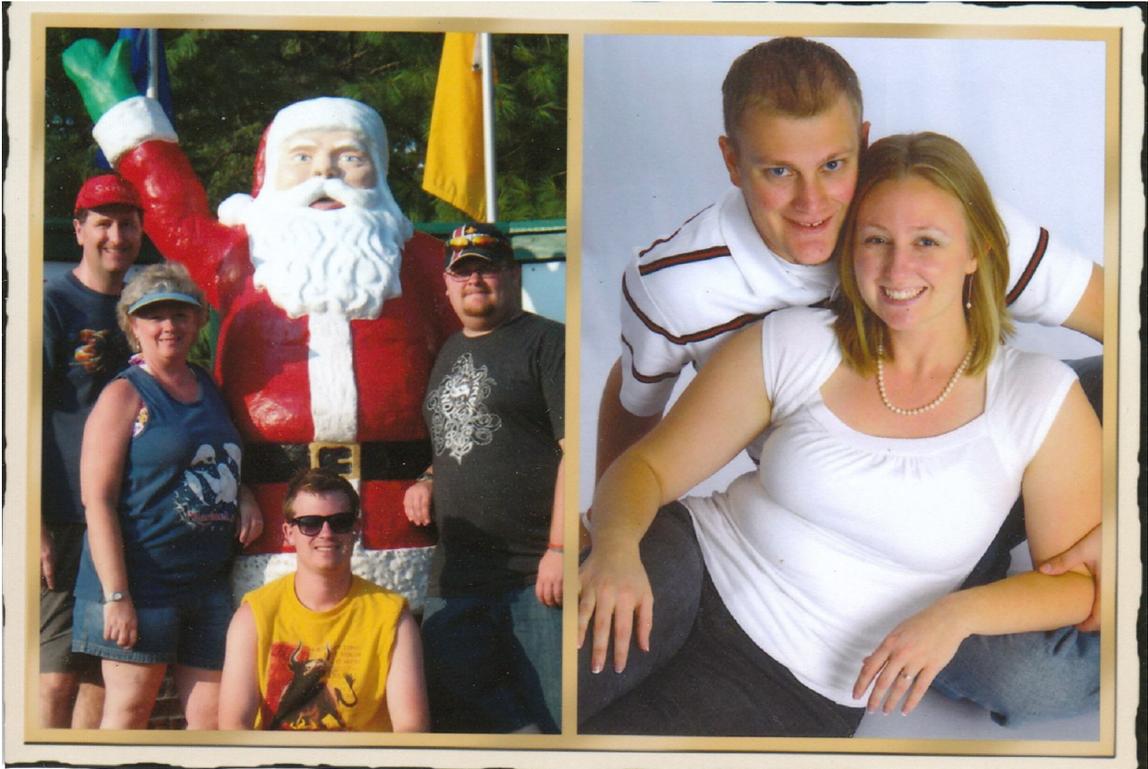
EACH YEAR WE ASK MEMBERS TO SEND CHRISTMAS CARDS TO THE CHURCH INSTEAD OF TO INDIVIDUALS. AND THEY ARE POSTED ON THE BULLETIN BOARD AT THE REAR OF THE CHURCH. LISTED ARE CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM THE FOLLOWING:

- Mary Barnes
- Dave, Karen, Scott, Billy, Beth & Mark
(The LeDuc's and Beth's fiancé)
- Ruth Schulte
- Faith & Dick Halterman
- Mary Dalziel
- MaryJane Koslosky
- Richard & Karen Brinckmann
- Grace Lawson Hickman
- Tom, Caroline & all the Long Family
- Joyce & Norman Carhart
- Lourdes Kozar
- Gertrude Baldwin
- Doris Henel
- Charles Lamont
- Jayne Cocco & Family
- Kathie & Vera Horsch & Family
- Marie Dziamba
- Mildred Ebert

On the next page you will find pictures that were sent with the Christmas cards from the Long and LeDuc families. We also received a lovely Christmas letter from Janet & Stan Pavlinic. Although 2009 has not been an easy year for them their letter is filled with love for all and appreciation for the blessing they have received. If you would like to read the letter it is in the secretary's office – just speak to her.

We thank everyone who sent cards to the church, remembering all their friends and sharing the Christmas season with them. Many are present members and some are previous ones who have moved away but have wonderful memories of their years with us. We wish everyone a very Happy New Year. May it be healthy and loving for each one of you!





The LeDuc's on vacation, and Elizabeth and her fiancé.



What a happy time! The Long family on a wonderful cruise.

TREASURERS REPORTS DUE

By the end of January all the treasurers that have bank accounts in the church name, should have received their final financial report from the bank. Please turn in to the Finance Chairperson, Doris Henel, 486-5571, your checkbooks and bank statements by February 15th, so that they can be sent to Rev. Miller for final audit of the 2009 books. Reports are due from:

- Kathie Horsch – Current Expense Treasurer
- Mary Barnes or MaryJane Koslosky – Scholarship
- Leona Parker – Memorial Fund
- Norman Carhart – Endowment Fund
- Bob Carhart – Building Improvement Fund
- Mildred Ebert – United Methodist Women

do you know anything about these problems??

If you have need to use the railing on the landing of the door at the foot of the driveway on wood avenue, you have probably noticed that it is very badly broken and cannot be used. it certainly looks like a car went into it either going too far up the driveway of backing into it. if you know anything about it or saw something happen that would be helpful, please contact the president of the board of trustees, Donald beyer, 862-8686. it cannot be used the way it is, so please be very careful and do not depend upon it until it is repaired.

in the same driveway, on the right hand side, next to the fence, there is a car that has a serious oil leaking problem. this is doing damage to our driveway and we would request that you not park there until the car is fixed. please check your car or some of the members of the board of trustees will have to check cars parking there.

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

Although, a motion made in the Spring to meet 4 times yearly, (March, June, September and December) was in effect for the last half of 2009, the chairperson of the Council, Bob Carhart, would like to discuss some changes.

We will have an Administrative Council meeting on WEDNESDAY, FEB. 10TH AT 7:00 P.M. One of the things to be

discussed will be the schedule of the Administrative Council meetings and what would be most effective.

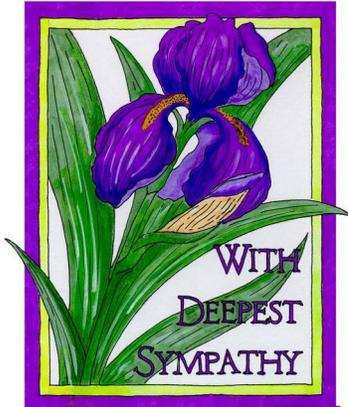
All chairpersons of committees and the members of committees are members of the Administrative Council. Please check the Church Conference booklet to make sure you know what committees you serve on. The following should attend:

- Lay Leader & Lay Repr. to Conference
- Chairperson, Staff/Pastor Parish
- President or Repr. of Trustees
- Nurture Chairperson & members
- Outreach Chairperson & members
- Finance & members
- Stewardship Chairperson & members
- President, United Methodist Women

Please mark the date on your calendar. It is important to have the input of all our church officers. Each one is very important!

THE FOLLOWING HAVE BEEN ON OUR PRAYER LIST THE LAST MONTH:

- Janet Pavlinic Anne Ogier Mary Dalziel
 - Howard Martinson Mary Barnes Steve Lutz
 - Miriam Hanns Leona Parker Eric Forcey
 - Robert Moore Eleanor Porambo
 - John Markus Richard LeDuc Susan Fibik
 - Debbie Chaven Family of Ginny Gibson
- We also pray for members of the Linden Fire and Police Department each week with the names listed in the church bulletin.



We were saddened to hear of the death of Virginia Gibson, on Saturday, January 2, 2010 but happy for the long and happy life of Ginny who lived to age 92. She lived most of her life with her deceased sister, and husband, Maxine & Vernon Woodfield, and her last years in that same house with Lois and Ed Burns.

The funeral service was held at Werson Funeral Home conducted by Rev. Dr. Ramos-Diaz on Wednesday, January 6th. Interment was in the Glenwood Cemetery in Long Branch. Since Rev. Frederick Boyle is the pastor of the UMC in that town, he conducted the graveside service. Ginny was a life-long Linden resident employed by Weston Instruments in Newark for over 30 years, retiring in 1970.

She was a 51-year member of the United Methodist Church of Linden and was so proud of her 50-year pin, she wore it every day since the day it was pinned on her.

She was predeceased by her parents, Darnell and Ella Gibson. Surviving are two nieces, Joan Adams and Lois Burns, and one nephew, Richard Woodfield, and several great-nieces and nephews. The memories that were shared at the funeral by her family and friends showed that Ginny was a caring and loving person. She will be missed by all those who loved her dearly.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the United Methodist Church of Linden Memorial Fund, in her memory, will be appreciated.

We read in the paper of the death of Rowland L. Stine, husband of Vera Wright and son-in-law of Marion Wright. Vera was a very active member of this church as she was growing up and until

she married and moved from the area. Marion, who lives with them, has retained her membership in this church since October 10, 1948 (62 years). Rowland was a carpenter for over 40 years and the past 18 years has owned and operated Suds and Dry Laundromat in Bridgewater.

He was predeceased by his son, Walter in 2007, and is survived by his wife, Vera, and his son, Roger and his wife, Jill.

Funeral services were held on Friday, January 8, 2010 at the Higgins Home for Funerals, Watchung, followed by interment at Graceland Memorial Park in Kenilworth.

Some of our members have many lovely memories of Vera & Marion Wright, and we extend our deepest sympathy to the entire family.



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

On Shrove Tuesday, February 16, THE UNITED METHODIST WOMEN WILL BE HOSTING A PANCAKE SUPPER AT 6:00 P.M. IN THE EVENING. ALL ARE WELCOME – BRING YOUR FRIENDS!

*We will be asking for a free-will offering, not to cover the expenses, but as a fund-raiser for one of our long-time members who is having some very serious health problems. we hope you will all be able to attend, but if not, you can still make a donation to help in this very worthwhile project. reservation slips will be in the church bulletin for a few Sundays. if you will not be there to fill one out, please call doris stamer, 925-0469, Gertrude Baldwin, 862-9473 or doris henel, 486-5571 to make your reservation or give a donation. If you make out a check make it to – **united methodist women - and mark it "DONATION"**. THIS WILL BE THE FIRST OF A NUMBER OF PROJECTS THEY WILL BE DOING TO RAISE MONEY FOR THIS AND EVERYTHING RECEIVED WILL BE KEPT IN A SEPARATE ACCOUNT. PLEASE REMEMBER THE DATE!!!!*

shrove Tuesday – February 16 – 6 p.m.

BRING YOUR APPETITE – ENJOY PANCAKES AND SAUSAGES,

AND SOME SURPRISES



BITS AND PIECES

We said good-bye to Mary Barnes and Ruth Schulte on January 19th as they were leaving for Vero Beach, Florida to spend the next months away from the cold north, and in the sunny, warm weather of Florida.

Would that they could have taken us all with them in their pockets so that we, too, could have left this cold winter weather.

We hope they will have a great time in Florida as they greet old friends and soak up that beautiful sunshine. Enjoy! and come back healthy and happy!

Ethel Steiniger is also getting some of that better weather in North Carolina with her daughter, Joan and her husband. We know she misses us all, but we also know that the kinder weather is much better for her. We look forward to her return when we will once again, have her join us for our Friday morning movies and lunch to follow.

Doris Henel had a wonderful Christmas visit with son John, wife, Julie and her 3 grandchildren, Tessa, Nina and Alec. She thought the weather in California would be nice and warm but north of San Francisco, it was not to be. One good thing, was there was no snow, and as she watched the TV report on the snow back here in the East she was glad she missed it.

She enjoyed a number of gatherings, some with previous Linden residents from Linden High School and also Cornell University.

After her return she celebrated a belated Christmas with the rest of her family on January 2nd. The turkey tasted just as good as the one eaten in California!

FISH & CHIPS DINNER BY ARGYLE'S OF KEARNEY

WHERE? Linden Presbyterian Church
1506 Orchard Terrace

WHEN? Friday, February 5th – 5:30 to 7:30
p.m.

COST? Adults- \$13. Seniors- \$11.50.
Children Under 10 - \$7.00
\$15.00 at the door (if available)

CALL 486-3066 FOR INFO OR RESERVATION

Beatrice Bradford was very happy to have her husband, Samuel, visiting from Ghana for a few weeks. And we were happy to see them both in church so that we could greet them and welcome Samuel back here again. We look forward to his next visit just as Beatrice does!

We understand that Bill Martin is no longer living at his 725 North Wood Avenue address. We think he is up in Maine, but if anyone has his new address, we would appreciate having it. Please email it to Doris Henel – djhenel@aol.com so we will be able to continue sending him the Messenger and keep him up-to-date about his church friends. We miss him!

Rev. Ramos was pleased to have his sister from Puerto Rico visiting for a short time. She is a police officer in her home area.

ATTENTION: LINDEN RESIDENTS

The Linden Public Schools are looking for Pre-School children – ages 2 ½ - 4 years old who are experiencing difficulties which may interfere with their future academic success:

- *Learning
- *Speaking
- *Hearing
- *Thinking
- *Walking
- *Seeing
- *Interacting
- *Emotional Problems
- *Behavior Problems

The TEDDY Program (located at School #10) is a comprehensive, highly individualized program, which offers intensive instruction in the areas of academic, speech-language, and social, emotional and self-help skills.

Please call Vicki Gilman at Pupil Personnel Services, 908-587-3285 ext. 120 to request further information.

The Linden Public School is also offering help for those 5 through 21 who are experiencing the same difficulties that interfere with their academic success. This is open to all including migrant and homeless

Please call Pupil Personnel Services 908-587-3285, Marie Stefanick, Director of Special Services

CHRISTMAS ANGEL TREE

What a great response to our Angel Tree!
Everyone wanted to remember their loved ones by placing a paper angel on the tree and taking a real angel for their own tree.
God Bless all the members and friends of our church for there continued support. We raised \$240. which was turned over to LINC'S to help feed the needy of Linden.

Blessings from the Outreach Committee

Carolyn Franz, Chairperson

Members: Mary Dalziel Doris Stamer,

Ruth Schulte Doris Henel

Mary Barnes

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PLEASE MARK THE FOLLOWING DATE ON YOUR CALENDAR:

Friday evening, march 5th at 7:30 PM

World Day of Prayer, a special church service, will be held at our church by the women representing all the member churches of the interfaith council. This year, the program will be about Ghana, Africa, which includes stories and music of Africa. a planning meeting will be held to discuss the program on January 24th at 4:00 pm in our church in aldersgate hall.

this is an annual program written by the women of different countries and held at a different church each year. all are invited to attend, including the pastors of all the churches.

please contact Carolyn franz, 908-486-3792, of our church, for more information.

Ladies – this is a great get-together and fun evening for all, as well as spreading the word of god. we encourage all our members to attend this very special service.

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THE FOLLOWING LETTER WAS RECEIVED FROM ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, 45 E. ELM ST., LINDEN:

“With heavy hearts, but with gratitude to God for the good we have been allowed to do, St. Paul’s announces the ending of its ministry of love and service to the City of Linden. On January 31, 2010 at 4:00 p.m., we will celebrate a Service of Holy Communion followed by a time of fellowship in the Parish Hall.

During the 82 years of St. Paul’s ministry, you (at one time or another) have been an important part of the life of this congregation. We would be honored to have you join us for this very special event.

Please RSVP (908-486-4090) We look forward to seeing you on January 31st at 4:00 p.m.

Sincerely,

St. Paul’s Church Council”

We were so saddened to receive this letter because it is never good news to see any church close. St. Paul’s has been an important part of the history of the City of Linden and over the years, has been the home church for many of its citizens. For myself, my grandfather (my mother’s father born in Germany) was a charter member of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church and I remember how important that was to him. I remember when they met at the Craftsmen Club before they built the church at the present location. St. Paul’s church may be closed, but they will always remain in our hearts and be part of our fondest memories.

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ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

Rev. Ramos will conduct the Ash Wednesday service in our sanctuary for both the United Methodist Church of Linden and El Redentor United Methodist Church on February 17th at 7:30 p.m. The service will be in English. All welcome.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE – BOARD OF TRUSTEES

members – Donald Beyer, President
Tom Henel, Sec’y, wayne hanns, joseph stamer,
Jack Valdez, Bill Harty, Charles Ettel
It is very important that all members of the board of trustees attend the monthly meetings (the 1st Monday of each month). some have been attending the meeting but not the majority so they have not been able to have a meeting. no business can be conducted. officers must be elected for 2010 and important business of the church. must be decided. each member is notified and reminded of the meeting and we ask that you please attend.
next meeting: Monday, February 1 at 7:00 p.m.
in the Youth room downstairs in the new building.
ONLY MEMBERS ELECTED TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES BY THE CHURCH CONFERENCE ARE VOTING MEMBERS

February 2010

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 7-Board of Trustees D.Beyer, T.Henel, W.Hanns, J. Stamer, J.Valdez, B.Harty C.Ettel 4:30-9:30=Fenc. Sch.	2 Bible Study –11 or 6 pm <u>NO UNITED METH.</u> <u>WOMEN TODAY</u> 4:30-9:30-Fenc Sch.	3 4:30-9:30- Fenc. Sch.	4 4:30-9:30-Fenc.Sch	5 -	6 9:30-1:30 - Fencing School
7 8:30 AM-Choir Rehear. 10 – Worship Serv.	8 4:30-9:30-Fenc.Sch.	9 11 am or 6 pm Bible Study 4:30-9:30- Fencing School	10 7-ADMIN. COUNCIL (Please attend) 4:30-9:30 Fencing School	11 4:30-9:30- Fencing School	12 	13 9:30-1:30 – Fencing School
14 8:30-Choir 10-Worship	15 4:30-9:30- Fencing School	16 SHROVE TUES. PANCAKE SUPPER 6:00 pm. All welcome <u>UNITED METH.</u> <u>WOMEN MEET 10 AM</u> Bible Study – 11 AM Fenc. Sch. 4:30- 9:30	17 ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE 7:30 pm 4:30-9:30- Fencing School	18 4:30-9:30- Fencing School	19 	20 9:30-1:30- Fencing School
21 8:30-Choir 10:00-Worship	22 4:30 – 9:30 Fencing School	23 11 AM & 6 PM BIBLE STUDY 4:30-9:30 Fencing School	24 4:30-9:30 Fencing School	25 4:30-9:30 Fencing School	26 	27 9:30-1:30 Fencing School
28 8:30-Choir 10-Worship Service						

It is possible that the Interfaith Council will be sponsoring Bible Study Classes during Lent on Sunday afternoons, but by the printing of this calendar, final decisions had not been made.

Please check the Sunday bulletins for further information.