

# CONGRUITY CONNECTION

*Cliff's Notes*



The prophet Isaiah declares in the 9<sup>th</sup> chapter: “For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace...” As we begin the month of December, we will be on our journey through the Season of Advent—a time of preparing ourselves to receive God’s gift of the Christ Child. Over the last several days I have been thinking about those titles that Isaiah wrote...Prince of Peace. We have all too painfully been reminded that we live in a world where peace has been shattered by wars, by terrorist attacks, by suicide bombers, by economic uncertainty, by all of the issues surrounding the health care crisis and countless other things that are at work in our world and culture to shatter God’s Shalom—God’s Peace.

Yet in the midst of all the chaos and calamity that surrounds us, our attention is drawn to that Bethlehem stable where the Christ Child—the Prince of Peace is laying in the manger. In the midst of this hectic time of the year as we stand in lines at the store, when we are shopping for gifts for those on our list, when we are decorating our homes and trimming the tree, when we are getting that pile of cards to be mailed, when we are frazzled trying to get everything done on our ‘To Do’ lists, I hope that we will each set aside some intention time to prepare ourselves for the coming of Christ. As we hear or sing our favorite Christmas Carol or song, may this be a time of renewal for us as we celebrate the birth of Christ. As the Advent Candles of Hope, Peace, Love and Joy are lit may we reflect on the depth of God’s love shown to us in the Christ Child fill us with the reason for this season. The Hebrew word for Peace is Shalom and it conveys much more than simply the absence of war... Shalom also implies well-being, wholeness, safety and security, success and prosperity.

In the midst of the uncertain times in which we live, may the Prince of Peace fill us with the assurance of the embracing arms of God’s love and God’s presence with us through each and every step we take along the road of life. In the midst of the hustle and bustle of getting ready for Christmas, may the Prince of Peace fill our lives.

“For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace...” I wish each of you a very Merry Christmas.

Yours in Christ,  
Cliff





# W O R S H I P L E A D E R S F O R D E C E M B E R

## Liturgists



### E L D E R S

John Blank

Sue Blank

Dave Foresman

Kathy Hamilton

Carol Hohman

Jim Kepple

Scott McInay

Bob Schweppe

Linda Youngbauer

12/6

12/13

12/20

12/27

John Blank

Dave Foresman

Ronda Weinell

Caroline D'Aurora

Those serving Communion on December 20th are ~

John Blank    Jim Kepple    Kathy Hamilton

Jay Perino    Debbie Perino

If you would like to serve as a liturgist please see Cliff.

If you are interested in becoming an acolyte please see

Dave or Pam Foresman.

## S E P A R A T E D B Y S P A C E U N I T E D I N P R A Y E R



The congregations and pastors from Neighborhood 1 for our prayer support during the month of December are as follows:

### D E A C O N S

Dorothy Brant

Sue Derek

Evelyn Foresman

Phyllis Frye

Nancy Lauffer

Debbie Perino

Jay Perino

Amber Sellinger

Mim Schweppe

12/6    Murrysville, Newlonsburg † Curtis Paul, Pastor  
Marnie Silbert, Assoc Pastor

12/13    Murrysville, Union † Derek Campbell, Pastor

12/20    New Alexandria, Community † Kathy Shirey, Pastor

12/27    New Alexandria, Congruity † Cliff Foster, Pastor



## N E W T E S T A M E N T B I B L E S T U D Y

S U E D E R E K

December 30th at 1:00P.M. the New Testament Bible Study will be meeting. We shall be finishing the Book of Luke.

Remember if you need a ride to or from any activity at Congruity, we will be glad to arrange for someone to pick you up. Please call the office to make arrangements.

# DECEMBER CELEBRATIONS BIRTHDAYS

- |       |                   |       |                  |
|-------|-------------------|-------|------------------|
| 12/4  | Kathy Hamilton    | 12/20 | Terri Hoffman    |
| 12/6  | Caroline D'Aurora | 12/22 | Kerstin Stellato |
| 12/7  | Sue Aaron         | 12/23 | Fred Sehring     |
| 12/10 | Bob McDonald      | 12/25 | JESUS            |
| 12/12 | Greg Kaufman      | 12/27 | Joe Stopansky    |
| 12/15 | Jay Perino        | 12/28 | Alex Kuzmkowski  |
| 12/17 | John Aaron        | 12/31 | Michael Jobe     |
| 12/18 | Owen Eidemiller   |       | Jill Klems       |
|       | Marty Kuzmkowski  |       |                  |



## ANNIVERSARIES

12/23/1957 Harold & Meryle Kaufman



## CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE AT 7:30PM

A Congregational Meeting is set for 12/6/15 for the purpose of approving the pastor's terms of call, receiving the budget, electing various officers, and electing the nominating committee for 2016 and the first reading of changes to the by-laws.

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

PAM FORESMAN



**\*DON'T FORGET!!\***

Another one of our very special days is coming up this month at Congruity!! Sunday, December 13th is our annual Christmas program and we hope you will all mark your calendars and plan to attend our festive, fun-filled day!! The program will be performed during our church service. Don't forget to bring a covered dish meal that we will enjoy immediately following church and a Christmas table decoration to place on the table. We also request that each family bring one dozen cookies to share while we enjoy some other activities including a special visit from the jolliest of all elves. We're really looking forward to seeing all of you (and any friends and family you'd like to bring) there for this very festive day of family fun!!



## MISSION

PHYLLIS FRYE

Hands-on will be starting a new project in January. We could use donations of white or light colored bath towels (Walmart has a nice size, not too heavy, not too thin, towel for \$2.74).

The week of April 3rd has been set for the 2016 Redstone Mission trip to only God knows where. We are checking with PDA to find out which camps are available during that week. We are always open to new volunteers, so please pray about going with us. We have fundraisers to help with travelling expenses. Camp fees usually run about \$20-\$30 each night (usually 6 nights) and are the volunteer's responsibility. Contact either Judy Koontz (724-668-2843) or Phyllis Frye (724-468-3740) if interested or have questions.

Mark your calendars for February 9, 2016 for the mission team's Mardi Gras Tuesday Pancake Dinner. Please think about donating either complete baskets or items for baskets for the silent auction. Watch for more info in the January newsletter.

## WOMAN'S ASSOCIATION

PHYLLIS FRYE



Women's Christmas Party for all the women of the church (and friends) will be on Wednesday December 16 at 6 p.m. at the church. We will begin with a covered dish dinner and later reveal our 2015 secret sisters and then pick new ones for 2016. Gifts for either secret sisters or grab bag gifts for anyone who doesn't have a secret sister are \$10. We will not have a regular meeting in December. Any necessary business will be brought up at the Christmas Party.

There will not be Hands-on Mission at the church in December. On December 3 we will be going to Redstone Highlands in Greensburg to decorate the Congruity Women's Association Christmas tree. We plan to meet in the lobby at 12 noon, decorate the tree, then have lunch at Redstone's Bistro (on your own).

The Women's Association are selling Rada Knives and accessories for a fund raising project. There will be two books in the kitchen with a notepad if you are interested. Any questions please see Debbie Perino.



## ITEMS FROM SESSION

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JOHN BLANK

Session met on November 16, 2015 and reports the following:

- 1) Elder Sue Blank led us in devotions reading from Luke 17: 11-19.
- 2) Approved the Clerk's, Treasurer's, and Moderator's Reports
- 3) MIS reported that the General Fund was in the red by \$5,171.83 at the end of October.
- 4) The Christian Education Committee reported on plans for the Christmas Program (12/13.)
- 5) Presbytery met on 11/17/15 with Sue Blank serving as elder delegate
- 6) Deacons reported that the Harvest Home collection finished on 11/22/15 with distribution to needy families and that the Hanging of the Greens will take place at 10:00 AM on 11/28.
- 7) **NEW – NEW – NEW:** Session is responsible for reviewing the minutes of all organizations at least annually. Session decided to do this in January in conjunction with the auditing committee's review of financial records in January
- 8) Reminder: Congregational Meeting on 12/6/15 at the end or worship.
- 9) Session reviewed the MIS committee recommendation for Rev. Foster's terms of call. The congregation will vote on these terms of call at the congregational meeting on 12/6/15.
- 10) Took action to set Congruity's pledge to the wider church through the First Fruits Offering at \$7,800.00.
- 11) Took action to recommend a change in the by-laws that would permit the treasurers and financial secretaries to serve more than 10 consecutive years noting that they will still be elected for one year terms. The change will be read at the 12/6/15 Congregational Meeting and will be voted on at the Congregational Meeting in January.
- 12) Approved the budget for 2016. The budget will be presented to the congregation for information at the 12/6/15 Congregational Meeting
- 13) Approved the slate of nominees for various offices. The election will be part of the Congregational Meeting on 12/6/15.
- 14) Set the following goals for the 2016 special offerings as follows: One Great Hour of Sharing - \$900; Pentecost Offering - \$375 with the local portion (40%) to go to the Blackburn Center; Peace and Global Witness - \$375 with the local portion (25%) to go to the Welcome Home Shelter; and the Christmas Joy Offering - \$375.
- 15) Appointed to the Class of 2016: John Blank, Clerk; Jim Kepple, Asst. Clerk; John Blank, Treasurer (6<sup>th</sup> Year); and Caroline D'Aurora, Asst. Treasurer.
- 16) Agreed to read and study Chapter F-2 and F-3 of **The Book of Order**
- 17) Completed our discussion of Chapter F-1 of **The Book of Order**
- 18) The next regular meeting of session is set for 12/14/15

The Mission of Congruity Presbyterian Church is to lead all persons to a biblical and theological understanding of reformed faith, to glorify God, to bear witness to Jesus Christ and to be the channel of God's saving power, so that His Kingdom may come and His Will be done in all the earth. We are the family of God. Therefore we focus on living as a loving family. Fellowship and worship will be the heart of our loving, caring church. (4/18/05)

## WOMEN'S SHELTER



Jay and Debbie Perino are collecting again this year for the children at the Women's Shelter in Greensburg. There will be a list of ages of children the beginning of December when we will know how many there will be.



### DEACONS

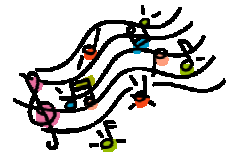
DEBBIE PERINO & PHYLLIS FRYE

Poinsettia Sale ~ We are taking orders for our annual poinsettia sale.

The price is a 6" poinsettia for \$8.00. Order envelopes are in the church pews. If paying by check, please make payable to "Congruity Deacons" and mark poinsettia on it. Order and payment deadline is December 20th. We ask that you please leave your poinsettia in the sanctuary until after the Christmas Eve service.

### CONGRUITY MUSIC & CHOIR

VICKI WALTERS



Hello!

My name is Vicki Walters, and I am happy to come to Congruity Presbyterian Church as your new Organist/Music/Choir Director. I know many of you already, but to those I do not, allow me to introduce myself.

I am a child of Salem Township, a Fennell and Bowman descendant. I married a young man from Salem Township over 41 years ago, Dean Walters, of Walters' Slickville Vali Vue Farm. We reside in Trees Mills and have 3 grown children, (2 married), 2 small grandchildren, two dogs and a cat, and various grandpets!

I've been a church musician for as long as I can remember. I started singing as a child at Middle Presbyterian Church in Mt. Pleasant, then later became the Music/Choir Director/Organist/Handbell Director at Delmont Presbyterian, Choir Director/Organist at United Church of Christ in Jeannette, and most recently the organist at Faith United Methodist Church in Delmont.

I look forward to worshipping with everyone at Congruity, and will do my best to lead you in song! It would surely make my heart glad to have more voices join our choir. With the Christmas holidays fast approaching, we've started to take a look at the choral music for the season. We sincerely invite you to join us on Thursday evenings at 7:00 pm.



## MISSION

PHYLLIS FRYE

### OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Congruity sent 19 shoeboxes to Operation Christmas Child, a division of Samaritan's Purse. Since some of the boxes were registered on-line, we should be learning where the boxes went. We set a record for the number of volunteers packing shoeboxes at Congruity. Thank you and God bless you and keep doing good works each shoebox is followed up with a 12 course study so you are helping not only to spread the love of God, but helping teach the Good News of Jesus Christ to children somewhere in the world.

Those who helped were: Michelle Kepple, Evy Anderson, Janet Rugh, Sue Derek, Dorothy Brant and Phyllis Frye



Evy Anderson working on the line filling bags and Janet Rugh carrying sealed bags to the packers.





# TREASURER'S REPORT

JOHN BLANK

## General Fund

	NET Receipts	NET Expenses	Actual Balance	To Date Balance
<i>Adjusted Balance as of January 1</i>			\$ 12,938.26	
January	\$ 5,933.00	\$ 11,997.04	\$ 6,874.22	\$ (6,064.04)
February	\$ 4,759.23	\$ 8,269.62	\$ 3,363.83	\$ (9,574.43)
March	\$ 16,292.27	\$ 8,775.89	\$ 10,880.21	\$ (2,058.05)
April	\$ 10,608.32	\$ 8,935.41	\$ 12,553.12	\$ (385.14)
May	\$ 8,425.68	\$ 7,694.75	\$ 13,284.05	\$ 345.79
June	\$ 5,610.28	\$ 8,705.42	\$ 10,188.91	\$ (2,749.35)
July	\$ 5,916.26	\$ 8,083.21	\$ 8,021.96	\$ (4,916.30)
August	\$ 10,027.24	\$ 8,880.54	\$ 9,168.66	\$ (3,769.60)
September	\$ 7,342.81	\$ 7,472.49	\$ 9,038.98	\$ (3,899.28)
October	\$ 6,220.83	\$ 7,493.38	\$ 7,766.43	\$ (5,171.83)
	\$ 81,135.92	\$ 86,307.75		

## First Fruits

	Received	Pledged	Balance
January	\$ 428.00	\$ 650.00	\$ (222.00)
February	\$ 504.00	\$ 650.00	\$ (368.00)
March *	\$ 1,836.00	\$ 650.00	\$ 818.00
April*	\$ 1,157.00	\$ 650.00	\$ 1,325.00
May*	\$ 702.00	\$ 650.00	\$ 1,377.00
June	\$ 520.00	\$ 650.00	\$ 1,247.00
July	\$ 485.00	\$ 650.00	\$ 1,082.00
August	\$ 590.00	\$ 650.00	\$ 1,022.00
September	\$ 455.00	\$ 650.00	\$ 827.00
October	\$ 355.00	\$ 650.00	\$ 532.00

\*Includes Per Capita

	Previous	This Month	To Date
<b>Souper Bowl of Caring</b>	\$ 185.50	\$ -	\$ 185.50
<b>Cents-Ability</b>	\$ 139.07	\$ 21.88	\$ 160.95
<b>Change for the Future</b>	\$ 29.65	\$ -	\$ 29.65
<b>Per Capita</b>	\$ 1,673.00	\$ -	\$ 1,673.00

	Received	GOAL	Balance
<b>One Great Hour of Sharing</b>	\$ 864.23	\$ 900.00	\$ (35.77)
<b>Pentecost</b>	\$ 376.11	\$ 400.00	\$ (23.89)
<b>Peacemaking</b>	\$ 320.00	\$ 400.00	\$ (80.00)
<b>Christmas Joy</b>	\$ -	\$ 400.00	\$ (400.00)
<b>Presbyterian Disaster Assistance</b>	\$ 377.25	\$ -	\$ 377.25

## **Included in General Fund Balance**

Memorial Fund (Excel WKS) **\$ 21,527.98**

	From 2014	Year to Date	Balance
Elevator Fund	\$ (2,000.33)	\$ (1,885.95)	<b>\$ (3,886.28)</b>
Local Mission	\$ 2,841.50	\$ (235.00)	<b>\$ 2,606.50</b>
Building Maintenance	\$ 2,745.44	\$ (424.52)	<b>\$ 2,320.92</b>

## O F F E R I N G T O T A L S

10/04/15	\$ 1,501.00
10/11/15	\$ 743.00
10/18/15	\$ 891.00
10/25/15	\$ 811.00
11/01/15	\$ 1,734.00
11/08/15	\$ 2,006.00



## MISSION INTERPRETATION & STEWARDSHIP

JOHN BLANK



### FALL STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

Earlier in the year session decided to forgo a formal stewardship campaign but asks that each member take a close prayerful look at his/her/their level of giving to Congruity. If everyone stepped up their level of giving even a little bit we could reduce or even eliminate the deficit in the General Fund. If each "giving unit" would increase it's their level of giving by just \$2.50 per week we would eliminate the deficit in the general fund.

There will not be any pledge cards but we are asking everyone to make that personal, prayerful pledge to increase his/her offering. Recently I saw a card that shows 5 steps to giving:

- 1) Give for the first time – If you have never given to the work of God
- 2) Give consistently – Start giving on a consistent basis
- 3) Give intentionally – Increase you percentage giving on a regular basis
- 4) Give a Tithe – Purposefully give 10% of your net income
- 5) Give Sacrificially – Give beyond 10% as God prompts you

### UNDERSTANDING THE FINANCIAL REPORT

There are five columns to the General Fund report. The first column lists the 12 months of the year. The second column lists the net receipts for that month and the third column lists the net expenses for the month. The fourth column lists the "Actual Balance" in the general fund. At the beginning of 2015 there was \$12,938.26 in the general fund. By the end of October the balance had dwindled down to \$7,766.43. The fifth and last column lists the "To Date Balance." This is the state of the general fund for this calendar year, 2015. I hope this helps and please talk to me if you need a further explanation.

### FEEDING THE HUNGRY

Don't forget that on the first Sunday of each month we receive the Centsability Offering (what was at one time called the 2-cents/meal offering) and collect non-perishable food items to go to local families in need.

John Blank is the adult in charge of the Kid's Store on 11/1/15

### State of the General Fund

As you can see from the General Fund report Congruity has spent \$5,171.83 more that we have received.

*Congruity Presbyterian Church*  
*136 Fenneltown Road*  
*New Alexandria PA 15670*



We're on the web!  
[congruitychurch.org](http://congruitychurch.org)

**NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION**  
**U.S. POSTAGE PAID**  
**PERMIT NO 5**  
**NEW ALEXANDRIA PA 15670**

**SUNDAY SCHOOL AT 9:45 AM**  
**WORSHIP AT 11:00AM**  
**PLEASE JOIN US!**



**A T T E N D A N C E**

	Worship	Sunday School		
		Adult	Youth	Total
10/25	31	4	20	24
11/1	40	8	19	27
11/8	46	4	21	25
11/15	32	6	18	24

**C H U R C H   S T A F F  
A N D   O F F I C E R S**

Pastor	Cliff Foster
Clerk of Session	John Blank
Deacon Moderators	Phyllis Frye Debbie Perino
Treasurer	John Blank
Financial Secretary	Michelle Kepple
Church Secretary	Dorothy Martz
Music Director	Janet Henry
Newsletter Editor	Yvonne McIlroy
Webmaster	John Blank

Dorothy is in Monday & Thursday mornings. Cliff is in the office most mornings.



Please put newsletter items in the folder at the church or email to  
[congruitynewsletter@yahoo.com](mailto:congruitynewsletter@yahoo.com)