

---

# KOINONIA

*"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship (Koinonia) of the Holy Spirit be with you all."*

2 Corinthians 13:14

---

**NORWIN ALLIANCE CHURCH**

**DECEMBER 2015**

---



The Christmas  
Good News  
From  
John Bunyan

The Lord reaches out to the broken world at the birth of God's Son, Jesus. Immediately the Messiah impacts a great variety of people in the gospels who are all in desperate need of salvation like you and me:

- \* An unmarried couple named Mary and Joseph
- \* Shepherds at night
- \* Wise men following a star
- \* All Jerusalem disturbed (Matt. 2:3)
- \* Herod, the Messiah wanna be
- \* Pre-born John the Baptist
- \* An overworked Innkeeper

Will Jesus' salvation reach you and your world this Christmas?

John Bunyan describes Jesus reaching out in a devotional called, "The Saints Knowledge of Christ's Everlasting Love." Bunyan's words are paraphrased:

"Sometimes a man thinks he is so far off from God that he thinks himself beyond the reach of God's mercy.

When we think His mercy is gone and we are among those God remembers no more, . . . It is then God will reach us! Oh, the length of the saving arm of God! You and your loved ones are still within His reach. Just because you cannot reach God by your short arm, don't think He is unable to reach you with His long arm. It is God's arm that reaches you and none knows how long His infinite arm is."

Jesus came all the way from eternity and heaven to rescue us hell-bound sinners. He went to the cross and marched through death to offer us life forever with Himself. All our short efforts of religion cannot match the good news that Christ came into the world to rescue sinners. Know His arm reaches out to you and your loved ones this season.

Have a very blessed Christmas.





## EVENTS

Nov. 29 First Sunday of Advent

Concert of Prayer - 7:00 pm

Dec. 6 Second Sunday of Advent

Communion

Dec. 13 Third Sunday of Advent

Christmas Cantata ~ 10:45 am

Connection Service ~ 6:30 pm

Dec. 17 Keen-Agers' Christmas Dinner

Dec. 20 Fourth Sunday of Advent

Children's Christmas Program ~ 10:45 am

Advent Luncheon ~ Noon

Dec. 24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service ~  
7:00

Dec. 25 HAVE A VERY BLESSED CHRISTMAS!



The following items were approved and or discussed at the Elder and Ministry Board meetings in November:

1. Testimony was heard from a potential member.
2. A New Members class will be held Dec. 6 & 13
3. The Men's Fellowship Group will be going on hiatus.
4. Approved the following DMC motions: Youth Group Christmas caroling at Irwin Manor 12/23; Barbara Bradley to do a Biblical persona for the Youth on 12/30; Widows Ministry Group to assist caregivers so the caregivers can have some time to themselves or an afternoon out; Bible Quizzing participants to take part in a swim social at their Nov. Quiz meet; Youth Sunday School class to hold a Movie Night on 11/14.
5. Contributed \$2,000.00 for two members of our congregation to go on a mission trip to Honduras in June of 2016.
6. Approved sending postcard out to the community inviting them to the Cantata and Christmas Eve Service.
7. Since signing a contract with American Asphalt Paving, we have not from the company as to when they will begin. If we do not hear back from the company in the early spring, the process of obtaining bids will begin again.
8. A man-lift will be rented to remedy the mold issue on the Sanctuary ceiling. Church trustees and volunteers will perform this work.
9. A new laptop for the Music director will be purchased.

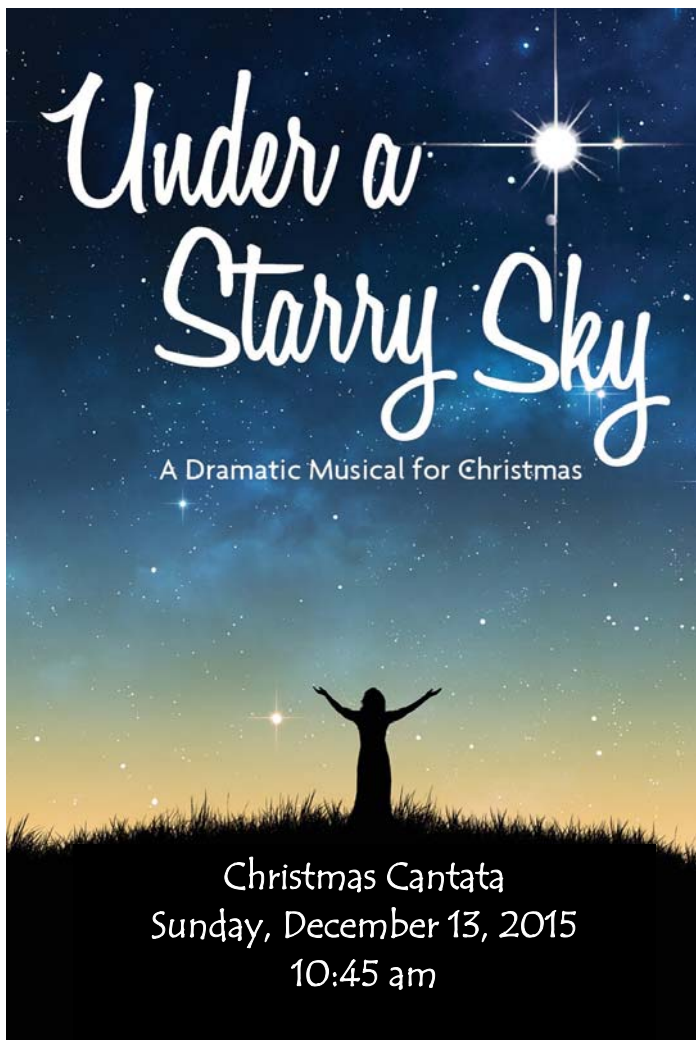
Please contact Harold Lawhorne (Ministry Board Member at Large) if you have any concerns you would like to bring to the Boards.



## CHRISTMAS CARDS



The window in the small narthex will be covered with paper so you can display Christmas cards to the congregation. You may sign one card to the entire church family and tape it to the "window".



### **CONNECTION Service**



### **CHILDREN'S CHOIR NEWS**

The Children's Choir will present  
***"WRAPPING ALL THE WAY"***

on

Sunday, December 20th  
10:45 AM service!

~ REHEARSAL SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER ~

**Sunday, December 6th at 10:45 AM**

Regular Full Group Rehearsal  
during the Service

**Sunday, December 13th**

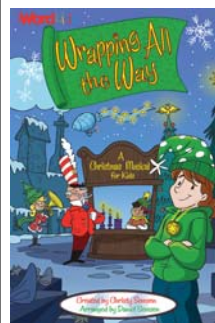
NO CHILDREN'S CHOIR REHEARSAL  
(Presentation of Adult Choir Cantata)

**Thursday, December 17th at 6:30 PM**

DRAMA ONLY rehearsal in the Sanctuary

**Saturday, December 20th at 10:00 AM**

Full Group Dress Rehearsal in the Sanctuary



*Our choir will transform into 'Tunies', the townspeople of Tuneville, and they love Christmas so much that they celebrate it every single day. But in Tuneville, the glitz and glamour of the celebration gradually becomes more important than the true meaning of Christmas. As their 'Tinsel Mania' celebration comes to a crashing halt because of a Sleigh Bell Storm, the Tunies are left searching for hope when their plans have failed.*

*Tansy and Filbert (the Christmas wrappers/rappers) remind King Dazzlebaum and the townspeople that Christmas can be celebrated without the tinsel, glitter and lights. With their catchy combo of rhythm and rap, Tansy and Filbert teach that we can celebrate and worship the Prince of Peace in many ways. From that moment on, each day the Tunies remembered God's great gift of light to a dark world, and the promise of hope to every heart that longs for peace.*



## KEEN-AGERS



Calling all senior citizens of Norwin Alliance Church to attend the final 2015 meeting of Keen-Agers on Thursday, December 17<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 A.M. The catered meal will be broasted chicken, ham, parsleyed potatoes, broccoli Normandy, tossed salad and cake. The price person is \$12.00 due to Ruth Long or Georgia Turnsek by December 6<sup>th</sup>. Installation of 2016 officers will take place at this meeting, and the program will be a rendition of Christmas music on the bells by Kevin Craycraft. Don't miss out on the final meeting of this year. If you are age 50 or over, please consider this your special invitation.

If you would like more information, please call Ruth Long (724-863-2761).

\* \* \* \* \*

Officers for 2016 were elected at our November meeting and will be installed at our December meeting. The 2016 Officers are as follows:

Co-Presidents	Joe/Patty Beyer
Vice-President	Ruth Long
Secretary	Phyllis Morgan
Asst. Secretary	Norma Wood
Treasurer	Georgia Conley
Asst. Treasurer	Bill Swope



### SAVE YOUR CANCELLED POSTAGE STAMPS

Used, canceled stamps (trimmed with a 1/4" border, please) are collected and sold to help fund Christian literature into Spanish for Central and South America. Half-a-million dollars has been raised since the project began with the Alliance in Florida.

Please save your stamps and deposit them in the box located in the narthex (on shelf above the coat rack).

## VIGNETTES by VIRGINIA

### CHRISTMAS EXCITEMENT!

Each Christmas is a time when each of us gets excited with an expectation of time to go slowly. We want to have hours, just to remember special family members and friends. Often we read the Christmas story in the Bible, watch a particular movie, skate on a local lake, help decorate the house, or participate in any seasonal speculations. In today's society, we get so busy with all the projects in our calendars; but we usually get the extra special suggestions that give us extra enjoyment that remind of a holiday time.

This has been a very hard year for many people. We have health concerns, some of us have family members who live far away with military or missionary services. Our world is not especially safe. As difficult as these challenges have been, it has seen many of us spending more time talking to God and knowing that God is always taking care of us. Thank God for His love to us.

The Christmas season reminds us that Jesus came to earth, gave His life for salvation, and will return for us some day. Remember His love.

\* this writer is taking a few months break from writing the Vignettes for the Koinonia. This has been a very difficult assignment since the surgery for cancer on my brain. Just writing the short article above, and having it make sense, has been very challenging for me. I also gave up music for a time. Talk about the many reasons I depend on God for helping me just think about basic day to day habits. Thank all of you who have been praying for me. MERRY CHRISTMAS and keep praying for Rachel; for our new granddaughter and another grand child who will soon be here.



Each of us is  
an Innkeeper  
who decides  
if there is  
room for Jesus  
-Neal A. Maxwell

**The Women's Corner**

by Janis Swope

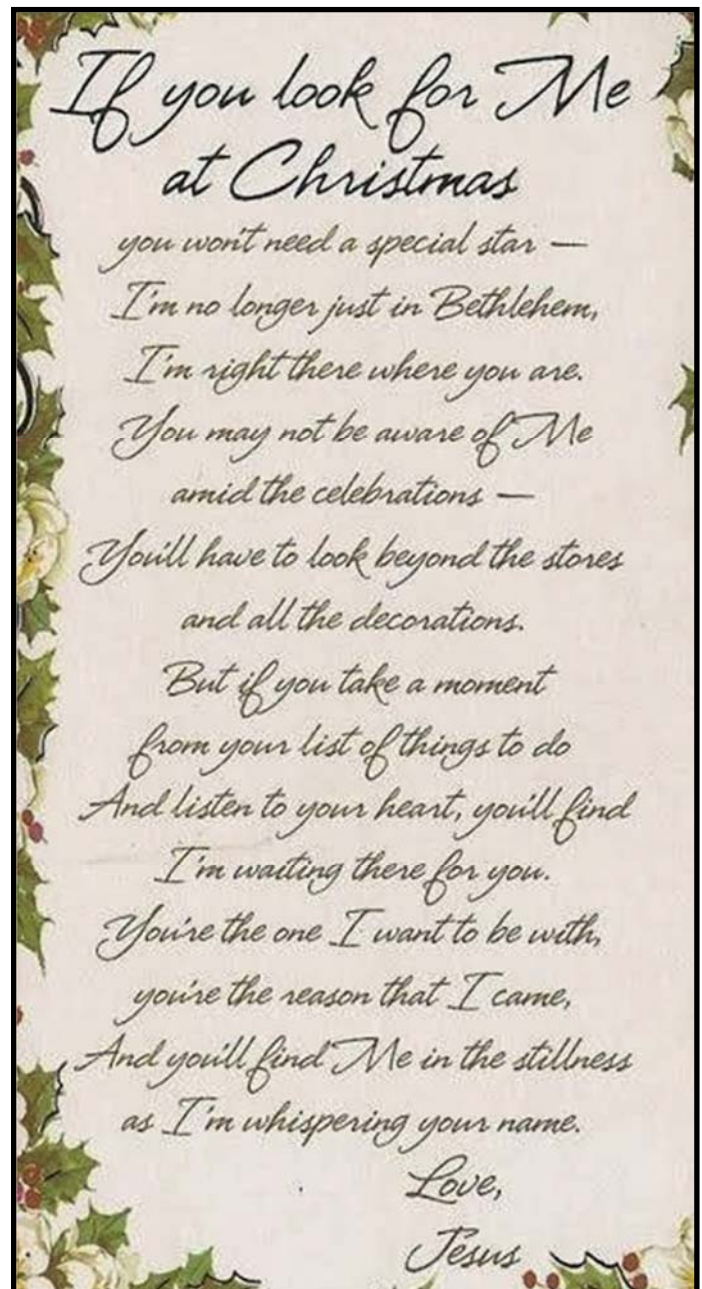
Even though this is the December issue of the Koinonia that you are holding in your hand, I am not going to write about the Christmas story, gifts or decorating for the holidays. Instead, I am going to write about thanksgiving (not the holiday!) A great church chorus taken from Psalm 100:4 says "I will enter His gates with thanksgiving in my heart; I will enter His courts with praise. I will say this is the day that the Lord has made, I will rejoice for He has made me glad!" We are so blessed by God through the sacrifice of Jesus. Be thankful with me for the wonderful work that Jesus did by suffering and dying on the cross so that we may spend eternity in heaven with him. There are so many reasons to be thankful. I read the story of a fellow who ran into his landlady as he was leaving for work. She said to him "How are you today?" He wasn't sure what to say so he uttered quietly "Well, it's Wednesday." Her response to this was, "It's a wonderful day! Be thankful you're up and breathing the air!" As he went on his way he pondered her response. It made him happier and more thankful for the rest of his day. I believe God wants us to be thankful and therefore become happy. There is another standard church song that goes "Count your blessings, name them one by one." I defy anyone to try counting their blessing and NOT be happy when they are through. I have been greatly impressed lately to experience the blessings God has given me. He has blessed me through people who have done me kindnesses that have touched me deeply. The way God chooses to bless me through his people and in unexpected ways amazes me. I sincerely hope that God will choose to use me to bless others as I have been blessed. Start counting those blessings and be grateful and thankful and you will be happier, too.

The Ladies Bible Study would like to bless you with fellowship and study as we continue our look at Genesis. If you would like to join us we would be happy to have you. We meet Monday mornings at 10:30

a.m. in the craft room and end at noon. And as usual, we'll have the coffee on!

The Last Word

"The Creator has made us each one of a kind. There is nobody else exactly like us, and there never will be. Each of us is his special creation and is alive for a distinctive purpose." - Luci Swindoll



To help your Christian citizenship and prayer for our government . . .

Information is from John Patrick and Pastor Bob:

MEMO



TO: Pastors, Ministry Leaders

FROM: Randall L. Wenger, Esq.  
Chief Counsel, Independence Law Center

DATE: October, 2015

Over the past several years, our attorneys have been working with churches, ministries and businesses to develop or amend corporate documents aimed at protecting their religious freedom, especially in light of the US Supreme Court ruling that redefined marriage in law across the entire nation. We offer this service free of charge.

But no such language is fail safe, especially when new laws arise that specifically target churches, ministries and people of faith. Such is the case with the "Fairness Act," legislation currently being considered in Harrisburg, a proposal that would grant special status to persons based on their "sexual orientation," "gender identity," or "gender expression" in Pennsylvania's Human Relations Act.

This bill would severely restrict religious liberty should it become law. It contains no effective exemption or protection for religious liberty. For example, under the public accommodation provision in the bill, use of certain church buildings could no longer be refused to those wanting to use it for an event (such as a same-sex wedding reception) even if such use is in opposition to church teaching.

The employment provisions of the bill would prohibit Christian schools from limiting the hiring of faculty and staff only to those that adhere to and live by Biblical sexual norms. Christian ministries such as adoption agencies have been put out of business under such laws, and tax-exemptions for Christian ministries are also put at risk.

Thus, we believe it is in your interest, and that of your congregation or ministry, to help defeat this legislation. I am asking you, as a leader and citizen, to use your voice and influence by contacting your State Senator and State Representative, and asking them to oppose SB 974 (Senate) and HB 1510 (House). If you are able, please consider a face-to-face visit with one or both of them. Such a visit would exert significant influence on behalf of religious freedom. All of these activities as described are permissible for you as a citizen and under 501(c)3 guidelines as well.

There is a sense of urgency to this request, since this legislation could move at any time, and Gov. Wolf views it as a priority.

We would be happy to speak with you to provide more information about this threat to religious liberty, and how to best communicate with your Senator and Representative. Feel free to call us at (717) 545-0600. You can also utilize our Citizen Action Center on our website at [www.pafamily.org/action](http://www.pafamily.org/action). Thank you.

---