

# *Leacock Communicator*

## *Leacock Presbyterian Church*

*Volume 55 Number 10 - December 2015 - January 2016*

### **Notes from the Manse**

Churches are challenged today. But in a very real way, society as a whole faces deep, persistent challenges. If anything, this is a time when people should find in churches what they most deeply need. Study after study show that a large percentage of the population expresses a spiritual hunger. Those same studies, however, show that large numbers of people have been turned off by institutional religion. These folks don't identify with any specific faith connection; they just call themselves spiritual. And so church attendance declines, more in some areas than others, most noticeably in traditional churches, such as Lutheran, Methodist, or Presbyterian, but also, increasingly, in non-denominational churches.

A pastor in the Pittsburgh area studied the phenomenon, and he discovered several things, among which was the tendency of churches to decline when their people expend most, if not all of their energy, on maintaining programs, on trying to keep things the way they always have been. In response to what he learned, he formed an initiative intended to offer ways to revitalize churches that he called Acts 16:5. When the Initiative came to our Presbytery, Leacock in time decided to join. The Session commissioned a group of six, diverse folks to serve on an Acts 16:5 committee. And this group has been meeting for over a year now, studying, learning, practicing some of the ideas the Initiative presents. A few weeks ago in a worship service, we told you a bit of what we have learned. For if the church is to grow, we will all need to work together.

There's a lot to the Acts 16:5 Initiative. It urges demographic study, which we have done and which reveals that there are challenges for churches in our area. But challenges can become opportunities. The Initiative encourages examining what has been, what it has to celebrate, and we need to affirm what Leacock has always been—a serving, giving church that never has been about getting notice or praise for what it does. In the end, however, the Initiative really boils down to a very simple idea—churches grow when its members deepen their fellowship. And this shouldn't come as a surprise. After all, Jesus said that where two or three are gathered in his name, there he will be among them. And he gave a new commandment, that we should love one another as he has loved us. But we already know each other. What does it mean to deepen our fellowship? How are we to do this?

What the Initiative suggests is that the key is found in small groups. Groups of three are suggested, but larger groups are possible, as long as they don't exceed ten by much. The members of a group can share a common work or grow out of an existing activity. There is talk about members of the softball team forming small groups. There are those who already participate in a Bible Study. But groups can also bring together people without any prior connection. Regardless of the way a small group comes to be, it should have a few, basic elements. The group should always begin with the Word, with a brief reading from Scripture. Then, the group's members should reflect on what that word speaks to them that day. Afterwards, the members should share the joys and concerns on their hearts. And at the last, they should pray for each other.

At first, some of this may seem strange or awkward, especially if the members of the group did not know each other well before. But over time, as the Acts 16:5 group has learned, a remarkable thing occurs—the strangeness vanishes, the walls come down, and a deep closeness comes. And then, if the members of that small group form another small group, including new and different people, that closeness will spread. In time, the whole congregation will become more connected, as individuals learn about and open themselves to each other. It is this that will revitalize a church. As for those in our larger community with no faith connection? As we come to care for and know, really know, each other, they will see our connection. And just maybe they will want to join us. Rev. Robert W. Birch

## Lectionary for Sundays in December & January

Dec 6	2nd Sunday of Advent Malachi 3:1-4 Luke 1:68-79 Philippians 1:3-11 Luke 3:1-6	Jan 2	2nd Sunday after Christmas Jeremiah 31:7-14 Psalm 147:12-20 Ephesians 1:3-14 John 1:(1-9) 10-18
Dec 13	3rd Sunday of Advent Zephaniah 3:14-20 Isaiah 12:2-6 Philippians 4:4-7 Luke 3:7-18	Jan 6	Epiphany of the Lord Isaiah 60:1-6 Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14 Ephesians 3:1-12 Matthew 2:1-12
Dec 20	4th Sunday of Advent Micah 5:2-5a Luke 1:46-55 or Psalm 80:1-7 Hebrews 10:5-10 Luke 1:39-45 (46-55)	Jan 10	Baptism of the Lord Isaiah 43:1-7 Psalm 29 Acts 8:14-17 Luke 3:15-17, 21-22
Dec 24	Christmas Eve Isaiah 9:2-7 Psalm 96:1-13 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)	Jan 17	2nd Sunday after the Epiphany Isaiah 62:1-5 Psalm 36:5-10 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 John 2:1-11
Dec 25	Nativity of the Lord/ Christmas Christmas Dawn Isaiah 62:6-12 Psalm 97:1-12 Titus 3:4-7 Luke 2:(1-7) 8-20  Christmas Day Isaiah 52:7-10 Psalm 98:1-9 Hebrews 1:1-4 (5-12) John 1:1-14	Jan 24	3rd Sunday after the Epiphany Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10 Psalm 19 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a Luke 4:14-21
Dec 27	1st Sunday after Christmas Day 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26 Psalm 148 Colossians 3:12-17	Jan 31	4th Sunday after the Epiphany Jeremiah 1:4-10 Psalm 71:1-8 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 Luke 4:21-30

## Blanket Offering

Winter is just around the corner and Church World Service needs our help. Last year, congregations worked in partnership with CWS to distribute 2,700 blankets to neighbors across the United States in response to the inclement weather and other disasters.

Your generous donation to CWS blankets and program tells people in crisis that "you are not alone. Someone cares."

The blanket envelopes will be in the pews on January 17th and 24th. Also please take time to check out our "Blanket Certificate" for 2015, on the Sunday School bulletin board by the women's restroom. It's honoring our vital partnership with CWS in building a world where there is enough for all.



### Happy Birthday To

January 9  
Bill Berkhimer  
1614 Bentley Ridge Blvd.  
Lancaster, PA 17602



## Christmas News



"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light." This is one of the great themes of Advent--waiting in faith that our omnipotent God will overcome the darkness of sin with the light of Christ.

We hope that each of you will participate in the special events of Advent that bring that light to us so that we can share it with others.

Worship with your church family each week as we are inspired by the Advent Tree and Wreath, seasonal decorations, and special music and messages.

Our special **Christmas Sunday will be celebrated on December 20 at one 9:30 service.**

Attend one--or both--services on **Christmas Eve.**

There is a **Family Service at 7:00 p.m. at Paradise** featuring a Christmas Pageant, the Bell Choir, carols, and candle lighting.

The **11:00 p.m. service** of Lessons and Carols with candle lighting is held **at Old Leacock.**

## Thanks From the Worship Committee

The Worship Committee Elders, Sharon Williams and Karen Homsher, would like to thank Pastor Bob Birch and the lay members of the committee for their faithful, helpful service and support in 2015.

They are Lois Snader, Sue Funk, Loretta McClarigan, and Scott Shenk.

We would also like to thank the volunteers who commit to various duties to facilitate our wor-

ship: Beadles Tom Burkins and Ed Margerum, Head Ushers Skip Brackbill and Ed Margerum, Usher Coordinator Karen Shue, Bell Choir Director Karen Homsher, Church Historian Ralph Homsher and Assistant Historian Skip Brackbill, Decorating Task Force Karen Shue and Lois Snader.

Bless you all for sharing your time and talent.



## Flowers

You may purchase flowers for the sanctuary on Sundays, December 13 and 27 in honor of or in memory of someone or a special occasion.

Also, all the Sundays in January are available for you to purchase the flowers for the church sanctuary.

Call the church office at 687-6619.

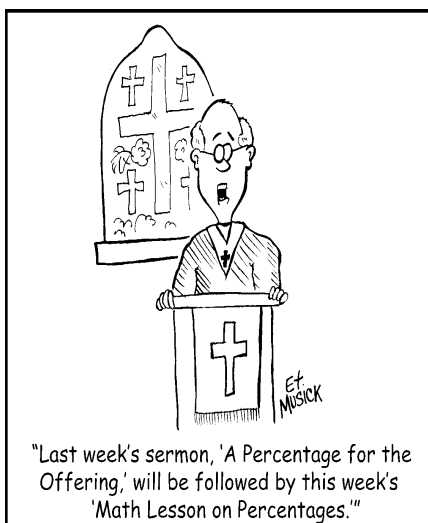
## November Session Snippets

The Session met with Rev. Jane Busey as moderator November 19 in the new “Conference Room” (formerly known as God’s Place — check out the table and comfy chairs).

Jane told us she learned a long time ago how to have a productive meeting and promptly sweetened the evening with chocolate.

Dates from all committees for 2016 were approved as well as offerings from the Mission Committee.

An idea from the Thoughts and Idea Box in the Narthex that we only have one service was referred to the Acts 16:5 Committee and the Worship Committee for further discussion.



## More Choices Leacock Youth Group

We’re still talking about choices every other Sunday now with our Leacock youth, who are also learning in their communicants class about various religious choices, as Reverend Birch and Milt Hostetter lead them in a class about the world’s religions.

We’ve discussed the choices we can make about fear and about responding to friends’ judgment, among other things.

Right now, we are very grateful to Skip and Marie Brackbill for inviting us to come out to the farm for a Christmas bonfire on Sunday December 20th. We’ll roast hot dogs and make S’mores around the fire, exchange gifts, and maybe play “ghosts on the farm” instead of “ghosts in the graveyard.”

In the new year, we will set dates for a number of things: a lock-in, a board game marathon (to raise money), and our trip to Philadelphia to make the homeless smile.

We will once again be collecting back packs and tarps beginning in the New Year. If someone asks you what you want for Christmas, and you’re the sort who always answers, “I don’t know. I have everything.” Please

think about saying, “A back pack,” which you can then donate to us.

As always, if you ever have any questions about youth group meetings, you can call or text Emily on her cell phone: 717-725-6572 or email: [emilymb95@gmail.com](mailto:emilymb95@gmail.com). Those of you on Facebook can also email via Facebook messenger.

## A Note from the Trustees

As the year draws to an end, the Trustees would like once again to thank everyone for their continued support of our Building and Facilities Fund, and the help we have received in the past year.

A special Thank You to the outgoing Trustees – Sean Carney and Karen Shue for the past three years of service to our church. And welcome to the incoming Trustees – David Homsher, Eric Hughes, and Scott Shenk.

Wishing everyone a Very Merry Christmas!

Trustee President – George Shue  
(And a BIG THANKS to George from all of us.)

Merry  
Christmas

## Leacock Fellowship

Every Sunday, after the 10:30 service, a group of Leacock folks gathers for fellowship and lunch at the Olde Mill Restaurant at the Best Western in Intercourse.

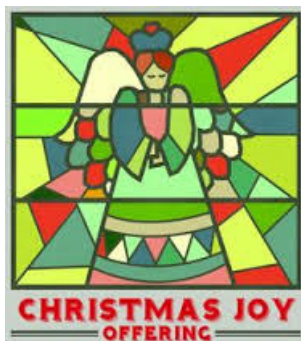
This isn't some special club. You don't need to pay a fee to get in. All you need to do is to come along and join us and be willing to laugh and to get to know people with whom you worship on Sundays whom you might not know.

Everyone is invited (even if you attend 8:00 service, you're welcome to come have lunch with us).

We do need to know how many to expect, so the restaurant staff can pull tables together for us, so after church, if you'd like to come along, please let either Margy Hershey or Mary Alice High know. Hope to see you there!



## Christmas Joy Offering



During Advent, we will be receiving the annual Christmas Joy Offering. This offering specifically helps church workers who are financially struggling and helps with education and leadership development opportunities.

The Advent season is a time of great joy. We celebrate the joy of our faith as we recall God's great love for us as shown in the birth of His promised Son, Jesus. It's a time when we gather together and sing Christmas carols with family and friends and are filled with expectation and a sense of joyful peace.

Giving to the Christmas Joy Offering spreads joy to church workers and their families who find themselves in need by providing assistance through the Board of Pensions assistance program and to the racial ethnic leadership of the church through

development programs and education at Presbyterian related schools and colleges.

At a time when everyone is thinking about giving, may we, as a family of believers, remember the Greatest Gift that God has given us. Let us be open to helping other church workers and our educational programs.

50% of the money collected goes to the Board of Pensions and 50% to the racial ethnic leadership programs. Envelopes will be in the pews from Sunday, Nov. 29th to Sunday, Dec. 27th.

### Prayer Families Persons

- Dec 6 Earl & Jacqueline Miller
- Dec 13 Richard Miller
- Dec 20 Mary Jane Mowrer
- Dec 27 Robert, Jr. & Robert, III Mowrer
- Jan 3 Shirley Musselman
- Jan 10 Arthur Myers
- Jan 17 Keo & Khamtanh Phongxaysanith
- Jan 24 Carl Plomchok
- Jan 31 Bonnie Rice





## Women's Bible Study

**Come To The Waters**  
Small Group Bible Studies - All Are Welcome

December - **Dangerous Waters - God's Deliverance**  
Joshua 3 and Psalm 69:1-3

Dec 10	2nd Thursday	9:30am	Arlene Brackbill's Home
Dec 14	2nd Monday	7:30am	Fellowship Hall
Dec 15	3rd Tuesday	7:00pm	Church Library

January - **Stormy Waters - Faith**  
Matthew 14:22-33

Jan 11	2nd Monday	7:30am	Fellowship Hall
Jan 19	3rd Tuesday	7:00pm	Church Library
Jan 21	3rd Thursday	9:30am	Arlene Brackbill's Home

Note the change from the regular 2nd Thursday

These are stand alone studies, dropping in to any one of them is easy. Any questions call Marie (201-4211) or Arlene (390-8470).



## Youth Group Schedule

The youth group schedule for the rest of 2015 is as follows:

Nov 29	5:00pm	Advent Family Night
Nov 29	7:00 - 8:00pm	(Following Advent Family Night) Communicants Class
Dec 6	7:00 - 8:30pm	Youth Group
Dec 13	5:30 - 6:00pm	Supper
	6:00 - 7:00pm	Communicants Class

*Sunday - December 20*  
*Youth Christmas Party*  
*Brackbill Farm*

## Small Group Buzz



Many of you heard the Acts 16:5 Team emphasize the importance of small group connections.

During December there will be a sheet in the Narthex where you can indicate your possible interest in being in such a group.

This includes a place for your idea (s) on topics of interest, several of which have already been mentioned to us such as aging, caregiving, healthy lifestyle, etc.

Also, anyone interested in adding this dimension to an existing group is encouraged to contact a member of the Team if you would like help with ideas or materials. (Robert Birch, Linda Erikson, Ehren Graybill, Mike Hartmann, Karen Homsher, Jennifer McElhaney).



## The Book Thief

The Leacock book and movie group had a great discussion of the book *The Nightingale*, a fascinating tale about two courageous sisters during WWII in France. We all agreed (I think) that we'd highly recommend it.

A few years back, we read *The Book Thief*, another tale set during WWII, so we've decided our next movie will be *The Book Thief*.

Please join us on Friday December 11 at 5:00pm for a pot luck supper, followed by a viewing and discussion of the movie.

Our next book will be *Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End*, a book that I say without any hesitation, is an important read for every adult as author Atul Gawande explores how to bring meaning and purpose to the last phase of life. Stay tuned for discussion date for that one.

Emily Birch  
Book and Movie Group  
Coordinator

## Gratitude Corner (Those Who Go Above and Beyond to Care for their Minister and His Wife)

It's beginning to get cold, which means I (who love it) am beginning to think of snow, which means digging out my snow shoes.

Some of you may know that Bob and I love to go snow shoeing, and that we had a little discussion a couple of years ago with two Amtrak cops who made it very clear to us that we weren't to go snowshoeing on Amtrak property behind the church. This, as you might imagine, put an end to the great route we thought we could follow into Paradise Park.

But who cares? I mean, who needs Paradise Park when you can go snow shoeing up and down hill and through woods and around a pond and never see another hu-

man soul (although other mammals and birds are often sighted).

Afterwards, you're guaranteed laughs and great company in a warm home. Not that we don't still snow shoe in Paradise Park (and Longs Park sometimes, too), but our favorite spot to snow shoe is at **Bob and Margy Hershey's** place.

They've been so kind to allow us to come there, along with Clare, anytime. And I can assure you, when they tell you they still have snow, even when it's melted everywhere else, they mean it! Thank you, Bob and Margy, for letting us tramp all over your place. We really love it.

Emily Birch



## Blood Drive Schedule



Lancaster General Hospital has scheduled community blood drives throughout the year at the following locations. Won't you consider giving blood - every pint is very important!

### BLOOD DRIVE SCHEDULE DECEMBER 2015

<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Time</u>
Wed, Dec 2	White Horse Fire Company	2:00pm to 7:00pm
Tues, Dec 8	Bareville Fire Company	2:00pm to 7:00pm
Thurs, Dec 10	Intercourse Fire Company	2:00pm to 7:00pm
Tues, Dec 15	Lampeter-Strasburg High School	8:00am to 2:00pm
Wed, Dec 16	Gordonville Fire Company	2:00pm to 7:00pm
Wed, Dec 30	Kinzer Fire Company	2:00pm to 7:00pm

The Lancaster General Suburban Outpatient Pavilion (Health Campus) Blood Drive is located in Building 2104, Suite 202. The hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 8:00am to 7:30pm. For more information call 544-0170.

## Stanley Update

Please keep little Stanley in your prayers. We have heard nothing recently, but I expect to hear something in the beginning of December. As far as we know, Stanley and his Dad are in the capitol, Port Moresby, awaiting Indian medical visa's and other papers they are required to have to travel to India.

Please ask God to keep Stanley, Stanley, Jr., and Julie wrapped in His loving arms, to comfort them and give them the strength they need to get through these next difficult weeks. And again, thank you for all your support.

Lois Eshleman

## Community Meals

The community meal for December will take place on Thursday, December 10th from 5:30 to 6:30pm in the church fellowship hall. This month the meal is again earlier than usual because of the Christmas holidays.

In January we will once again return to the last Thursday of the month which will be January 28th.

This congregation has been so helpful in providing items needed for these meals and the physical help to serve and clean up from these meals, that as chairperson

of this committee, I just want to say a BIG THANK YOU. You have truly shown Christ's love to this community.

Lois Eshleman  
Mission Committee





**REMEMBER THE AT-HOME MEMBERS  
AT CHRISTMAS**

Jean Beane 2001 Harrisburg Pike Lancaster, PA 17601	Bill E. Berkhimer 1614 Bentley Ridge Blvd. Lancaster, PA 17602	Mildred Carpenter 214 Boyer 1520 Harrisburg Pike Lancaster, PA 17601
Ethel Danner Apartment Suite 113 433 S. Kinzer Avenue Garden Spot Village New Holland, PA 17557	Miriam Keneagy Room 3 Village Manor Brethren Village 3001 Lititz Pike Lancaster, PA 17606	Helen Kreider 3253 Lincoln Highway East Paradise, PA 17562
Miriam Latshaw 1520 Harrisburg Pike Lancaster, PA 17601	Betty Taylor Fall Crest 117 433 S. Kinzer Avenue New Holland, PA 17557	



## Stewardship Report - Financial Update October 2015

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	<b>Offering October</b>		<b>Expenses October</b>	
	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
Monthly Total	\$14,726	\$15,120	\$13,417	\$17,997
Year-to-Date	\$151,811	\$162,261	\$156,927	\$168,017

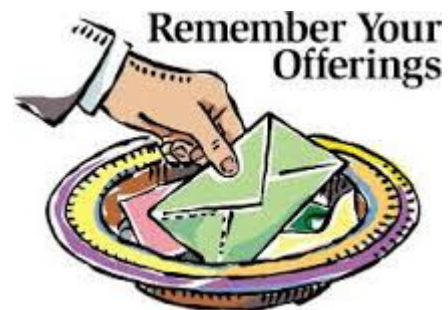
### **Budget Tracking Through October**

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
Total Annual Budget	\$225,312	\$226,889
Year-to-Date Expenses	\$156,927	\$168,017
% of Budget Spent	70.0%	74.0%

As of the end of October, we are now \$5,116 BEHIND in offering versus expenses, making up a SMALL amount of ground from end of last month.

As we move toward Christmas and the end of the year, please consider our situation when giving your offering. If you could see your way to offer only a few dollars more each week for the remainder of the year, we could make up this deficit and hopefully have more offering than expenses for the year.

Also, please keep in mind that for every dollar you give in offering, 17.5 cents goes directly to benevolence and mission purposes! Your Church needs your financial support now, more than ever. Thank you so very much!





# “A New Year – A New You”

Find the words from 2 Corinthians 5:17.

A	D	F	H	L	N	R	T	Y
	C	E	G	I	M	O	S	W
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

“ e ’ 3  
 8 4 2,3 7 2,3 3 6,7 7 2,3 4,5 3  
 1 6 9 6,7 6 2,3 4,5 7,8 4,5 6  
 1,2 4 7 4,5 7,8 8 ’ 4 2,3 4,5 7,8 1  
 6 2,3 8,9 1,2 7 2,3 1 8 4,5 6,7 6 ;  
 8 4 2,3 6,7 5 2 4 1 7,8  
 3,4 6,7 6 2,3 ’ 8 4 2,3  
 6 2,3 8,9 4 1 7,8  
 !”  
 1,2 6,7 5,6 2,3



Answer: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

**USHERS - DECEMBER, JANUARY & FEBRUARY****Skip Brackbill, Head Usher**  
**8:00 Service****Ed Margerum, Head Usher**  
**10:30 Service, (442-4027)**DecemberArt Myers  
David HomsherBob Brackbill  
Keo PhongxaysanithJanuaryScott Shenk  
Cathy ShenkMike Ruhl  
Alba RuhlFebruaryDonald Andrews  
Tracy DippnerLinda Erikson  
Kelly Erikson

PLEASE NOTE -- If you are unable to serve the month or part of the month you are scheduled for, please try to trade with someone else and contact the head usher. THANK YOU!

**NURSERY - DECEMBER, JANUARY & FEBRUARY**

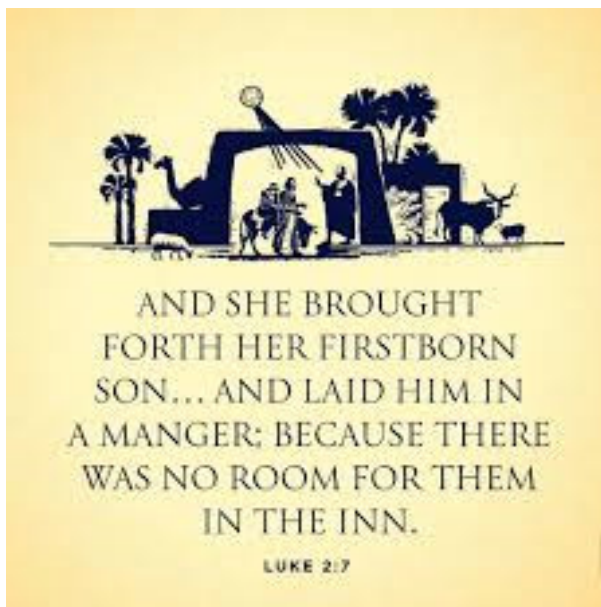
If you are unable to serve as a volunteer, PLEASE TRADE WITH SOMEONE SCHEDULED ON ANOTHER SUNDAY. Call the office secretary, 687-6619, so she can make the bulletin change. THANK YOU!

**NOTE: The 8:00 nursery will be staffed from an on-call list of those from the 8:00 congregation who are available to care for our kids. Please contact an usher if you desire care for your preschool age child/children. Thanks.**

Dec 6	10:30	Darwin Eshleman & Lauren Appel
Dec 13	10:30	Stephanie Gray & Ehren Graybill
Dec 20	10:30	Jane Witmer & Danielle Short
Dec 27	10:30	Deb & Dick Sindall
Jan 3	10:30	Mary Alice High & Michele Lichty
Jan 10	10:30	Karen & George Shue
Jan 17	10:30	Fran Sattazahn & Chuck Ankney
Jan 24	10:30	Charlene & Steve Boas
Jan 31	10:30	Craig Keenan & Lea Lichty
Feb 7	10:30	Carol & Dave Berkhimer
Feb 14	10:30	Alba & Mike Ruhl
Feb 21	10:30	Christy & Don Fieldsa
Feb 28	10:30	Margy & Bob Hershey

**SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS DECEMBER 2015, JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2016**

Dec 8	10:30am	Michele and Lea Lichty
Dec 13	10:30am	Carol Shearer and Marie Brackbill
Dec 20	9:30am	Emily Birch, Tom and Vicki Burkins
Dec 27		CHRISTMAS BREAK
Jan 3		CHRISTMAS BREAK
Jan 10	10:30am	Maureen & Sean Carney
Jan 17	10:30am	Maureen & Sean Carney
Jan 24	10:30am	Johanna Gingher & Margy Hershey
Jan 31	10:30am	Emily Birch & Jenny Keenen
Feb 7	10:30am	Johanna Gingher & Margy Hershey
Feb 14	10:30am	Jenny McElhaney & Kathy Ankney
Feb 21	10:30am	Jenny McElhaney & Kathy Ankney
Feb 28	10:30am	Loretta McClarigan & Lea Lichty







Please see separate  
icon for December  
Church Calendar



**Please see separate  
icon for January  
Church Calendar**

LEACOCK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
3181 LINCOLN HIGHWAY EAST  
PARADISE, PA 17562  
PHONE 717 687-6619

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**The February 2016 Newsletter**  
**Articles Are Due**  
**Sunday, January 24, 2016**

**Editor - Vicki Burkins**  
**392-7253**