



# The Taftsville Chapel Current

God calls us as followers of Jesus Christ and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to grow as a community of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to our world.

“The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.” John 3:8

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## Celebrate!

Having been involved in a number of weddings, especially in my own family, it's standard operating procedure for the time of preparation leading up to the Big Day to be pretty busy. One proverb in our culture is: "If your relationship can survive the stress leading up to the wedding day, it can survive anything." Of course, the anticipation and the waiting are good things. The Big Day can feel that much bigger when it finally arrives because of the planning, organizing and preparation that comes before. But wait...the actual amount of time set aside for nothing other than celebration of the happy occasion is very brief indeed. The ceremony may have some celebratory moments, but the party for rejoicing with the couple on the birth of their new life together lasts only as long as the reception afterwards.

Some of the same dynamics can be seen in the season upon us now: Christmas. I often hear folks speak of this season as something to "get through", as if it's a time of over-booked and over-produced events piled up together that guarantee depletion. By the time the Big Day arrives, many are just too tired to actually celebrate the Birth of the author of our New Life. The amount of time to actually celebrate what is already true about the Incarnation can seem all too brief sometimes.

In the Christian church much good thought goes into the season we call Advent as a time of intentional waiting and anticipation for the arrival of The Day. It can be, and should be, a time of reflection and pondering. Most often Old Testament promises, pointing to the birth of the Savior, are used to help us connect to what an amazing and loving event the birth of Immanuel really was. It's a time to remember and marvel at God's plan all along, to slow us down, and tune us in to the wonder of it all. And yet, sometimes, as good as that is...the chance to just celebrate the finished truth of it goes by too quickly.

This particular year at Taftsville, our focus on Sundays during the Advent season will simply be *celebration*. There will be lots of singing! HE has arrived already, and is among us now! God has done this thing, and it is marvelous in our eyes! Rejoice! In the Hebrew culture all the appointed times of special worship celebration went on for days or weeks, not just one morning.

We read that the shepherds who were tending their flocks by night had no special season of anticipation or preparation at all. Their everyday lives were invaded by angel messengers with the best news of all. It was a complete surprise. They simply hurried off to see, and returned rejoicing because it was so. They were really happy!

Rejoicing for the sake of joy requires a special kind of grace. We may be called to set aside our intellect a bit, and enter the kind of appropriate giddiness that accompanies the Biggest Day. With Paul, I will say it again: Rejoice!

Merry, merry Christmas. *Randy*

## Church life items

### Thanksgiving offerings support ministries of The Haven

The total for the special Thanksgiving offering for The Haven was \$2908.00.



Bringing our food offerings for The Haven



Evelyn McCrory inspects the food and decorations

### Chapel roof ready to sustain winter snow

*Editor's note: Unfortunately, no one thought to bring a camera to record the event described below. Thanks to Randy, Dale, and Fred for their work. As Fred said, when someone commented that the three men had given up a Saturday, "The fellowship that happened was just as important as the work."*

Randy Good, Dale Snader, and I met early at the Chapel on the morning of November 21<sup>st</sup>. Dale came with a "manlift", which is a self-propelled machine that can extend 45 feet into the air. It was maneuvered behind the church and, with Dale at the controls and Randy and I in the basket, we commenced patching the fragile slate roof. Pieces of these 90-year-old slates have been falling to the ground in increasing numbers over the past several years. Last summer several leaks were detected and the trustees and church council determined that something needed to be done. Having used 12 tubes of roof cement and uncountable pieces of flashing and asphalt shingle, we are confident that our roof will survive another winter! That being said, we are in the process of collecting bids on a new roof that we hope will be installed next spring or summer.

– Fred Schlabach

### Special Christmas Caring Project

Please bring new caps, mittens, scarves, and socks to hang on the Christmas tree in the Millen room.

These items will be given to PATH - Department of Prevention, Assistance, Transition, and Health Access to share with needy area families.

## Advent themes begin winter Sunday school quarter

**Children:** The winter quarter Gather 'Round lessons for children begin with November 29, the first Sunday of Advent, and the first lessons are on Advent/Christmas themes. As the worship services this year will not feature any Advent focus for the children, the Sunday school and home will be the settings for that emphasis. Teachers are invited to use the church's nativity sets and Bible costumes with the children during Sunday school, and Janet North plans to teach the children a new song, which they can share in worship sometime during the Christmas season, perhaps on Epiphany. The three families with Sunday school children have received the new "Talk About" for at-home follow-up throughout the quarter.

- Virginia Schlabach

**Adults:** During the winter quarter we will "...fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith..." He is our Lord, our Savior, the Messiah, the Son of God, indeed he is God incarnate. He is the one in whom we put our faith. But how can we know that Jesus the Christ was who he said he was?

Many aspects of Jesus' birth, life, teaching, death and resurrection fulfilled Old Testament Messianic prophesy. In his gospel John wrote that "These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled". In all, over 300 Old Testament prophesies were fulfilled in the life and ministry of Jesus. The odds makers tell us that the likelihood of someone fulfilling all those prophesies is 84, followed by 97 zeroes - to one!

In December we will be examining *The Promised Birth Fulfilled*, from Matthew, Luke and Isaiah.

Then in January it will be *Evidences of Jesus as Messiah*, again from Matthew, and finally in February *Testimonies to Jesus as Messiah*, also from the gospel of Matthew. - Ted Shattuck

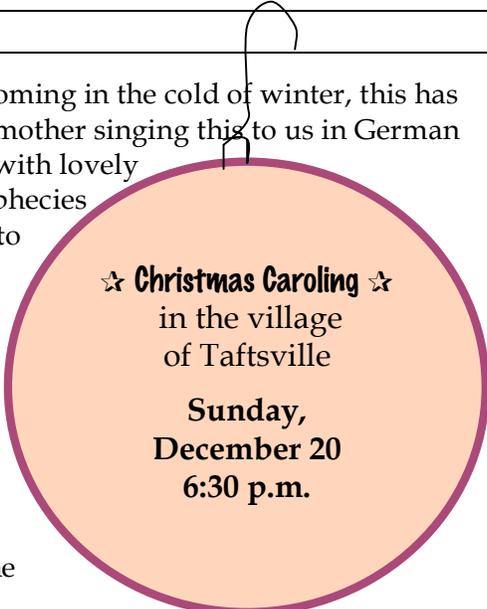
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## Favorite Christmas music and memories

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**Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming:** Though I've never seen a rose blooming in the cold of winter, this has always been one of my favorite Christmas hymns. I remember my mother singing this to us in German as a bedtime song during Advent. It is a comforting, melodic song with lovely poetry that, to me, beautifully ties together the Old Testament prophesies of Christ with the peaceful image of that special night when Mary, to show God's love aright, bore to us a Savior.

I've learned that this old German carol was composed sometime in the 15th century, and has undergone many variations and translations. I recall, in fact, that it is unclear whether the word *Ros'* (rose) or *Reis* (branch) is the original reading of line one. Though many associate this Christmas Rose with Mary the virgin, I like to associate it with medieval iconography in which the tree of Jesse is often depicted as a rose plant. When I sing this special hymn, I rejoice that Jesus is this Christmas Rose, the branch from the stump of Jesse. - Carie Good



☆ Christmas Caroling ☆  
in the village  
of Taftsville  
  
Sunday,  
December 20  
6:30 p.m.

I have wonderful memories of celebrating Advent as a child: lighting the candles in the Advent wreath each Sunday night and opening a window in my Advent calendar each morning. As an adult, I have come to relish the quiet waiting of this season. My body and soul yearn for a rest and for the reminder that, without the Light of Christ, we wait in darkness forever. Dave and I enjoy reading through the book, *Watch for the Light* (it's in our church library), together, which has a different meditation from various literary and theological sources for each day of the season. My five years attending an Episcopal church introduced me to a liturgical Advent in which we didn't sing Christmas carols until nearly Christmas, focusing instead on hymns of waiting and acknowledging our need for a savior. Two of my favorite hymns of waiting are **Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus** and **O Come, O Come Immanuel**.

It has been fun for Dave and me to think about developing Advent traditions with Clara. We are reviving the Advent traditions of our childhoods and adding some new ones of our own. One thing we have come to cherish in the past two Advent seasons is a fast from electric lights so that we may bring our bodies into a more visceral awareness of the darkness of this time of year and the darkness of sin in our lives. We still use electricity to fuel our refrigerator and such, but we keep our house lit only by oil lamp and candles, which cast a very particular, and calming, kind of light. We wish you joy, peace, and rest this Advent season as we wait for the Light of Christ together! – *Caren Swanson*

My favorite Christmas carol is called **Christmas Isn't Christmas 'til It Happens in Your Heart**. There it is, the heart of the matter – and how wonderful it is to welcome Jesus right into our very own hearts where he promises to live. What a Savior we have! – *Karen Cox*

I have many favorite Christmas memories, but the one that sticks out the most is my mother singing **O Holy Night** at the Christmas Eve service. This was truly a magical experience that people still talk about to this day! Forgive the bit of bragging, but my mother has an angelic voice, pure, beautiful, truly a gift from God. What captivated me most, however, was not the sound of her voice but how in love with Jesus she seemed as she sang. The lights had been turned off, the candles lit, and then she sang. I felt transported to the stable where Jesus lay in the manger and the angels sang overhead. Her face glowed with a radiance that I think God used to communicate his amazing love for us. This combined with the powerful words, the beautiful composition-wow! I will never love another song at Christmas as much as I love O Holy Night.  
– *Rebekah Dietrich*

Ken's favorite carol is **What Child Is This** and Jane's is **O Holy Night**. For Jane, two special Christmas activities are caroling up and down the streets of Taftsville with our church family each year and going to hear **Handel's Messiah**. – *Jane and Ken Glick*

My favorite memory of Christmas when I was a child was Christmas Eve. My parents would take us to the Christmas Eve service at our local church. At the end of the service, the congregation would sing **Silent Night**. The sanctuary would be darkened, and we'd all stand there with our lit candles singing. What a thrill to be young and be allowed to hold a lit candle! After the hymn was done, we'd all file out. The service was held at 11:00 p.m., so it would be about midnight when we left and the church bell would ring twelve. Sometimes it would be snowing, and I'd be in awe - the crisp clean air, fresh snow on the ground - Christmas at last! – *Mary Fullerton*

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## **Bits 'n Pieces**

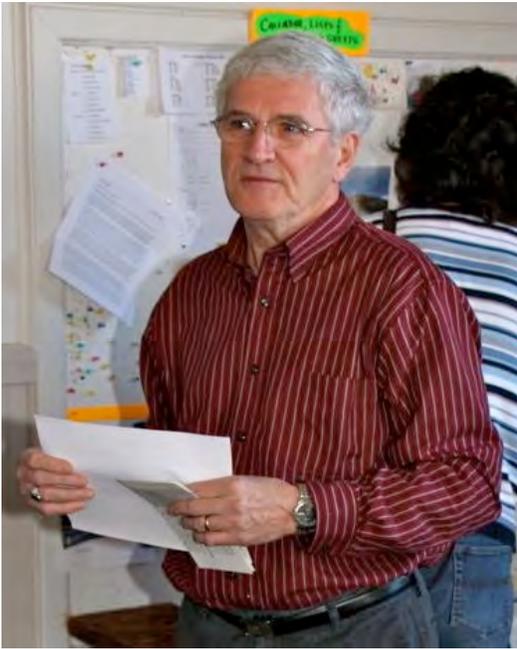
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### **Wife of former pastor dies**

On November 1, 2009, Evelyn Godshall died suddenly after a medical procedure. Her husband Arden was the first pastor of Taftsville Chapel. Arden and Evelyn and their children arrived in Taftsville in 1959 and lived in Skunk Hollow, just down the road from Homer Welch. Arden and Evelyn re-visited our church in May 2008 when they were in Vermont for a reunion. It was very special to have Arden speak in church that Sunday.

Evelyn had education in social work and counseling and was employed as a bereavement counselor at Hospice Southwest in Washington State. She is survived by Arden, three children, and five grandchildren. She was preceded in death by a son Loren. Ev was a vibrant and caring person and will be missed by many. She was known for her faith in Jesus Christ and her passion for those dealing with death and dying. She had an uncanny knack for sensing when someone needed an empathetic ear or a shoulder to cry on.  
– *Ruth Ann and Richard Glick*

## Bob Collins Retires



November 1<sup>st</sup> marked the beginning of a new era for Bob Collins. On May 14, 1973, Bob started working at the White River Post Office, thinking it would be just a temporary job. More than 36 ½ years later, he retired from the Post Office. With his service time and other accumulated time, he had more than 40 years of employment with the U.S. Government. Through these years Bob saw many changes in the Post Office as work became more automated and computers took the place of people. Bob held various positions throughout the years and he won numerous awards for a job well done, which always acknowledged his accuracy, patience, cool-headedness, and friendliness. Many co-workers and customers will miss his smile and humor.

During coffee hour on Sunday, November 1, our church family joined us in celebrating Bob's retirement by offering many congratulations on his accomplishments and blessings for his next phase of life. He plans to take some time off before delving into "new waters". In the few weeks since his retirement, he has enjoyed working on various projects and taking many walks and

hikes. He said numerous times that he doesn't see how he had time to work before. As his wife, I enjoy having him home more as well as having him stop in at my workplace to bring me coffee! - *Jan Collins*

## Coxes are 'in the swim'

At the Hartford Aquatic Center, Hannah Cox is competing in "age group" swimming events and her mother, Karen, has just become a certified Water Aerobics Instructor. Karen writes:

We told Hannah that when the Aquatic Center was completed she could start to swim year round. Swimming seems to be this girl's passion! She has already qualified in two events for "age groups". I would say that only the top few racers in each meet make times quick enough to qualify to compete at age groups, so we are pretty excited about her accomplishments. We pray she will feel God's pleasure as she swims.

I have only recently discovered the joys of working out in the water. While I love swimming I'm finding that water aerobics is a fun way to accomplish a workout that I would never have the patience for on dry land. Benefits include aerobic exercise, greatly reduced stress to joints, improved flexibility and range of motion, better sleep, and a wonderful sense of accomplishment, all in a fun environment. I hope to be scheduled to teach soon and will keep you posted!

## Bikers bring gifts

On November 21 we rode with over 1000 other bikes to bring toys to the steps of the Henderson County (North Carolina) Courthouse. These will be distributed to foster children, abused kids in the state's custody, and others in need. All bikers are not bad — most have hearts of gold! You can see in this picture that Jake didn't have room in his bags for his gift. Both he and GiGi got lots of comments. Hugs to all! - *Amena Reess*



## Life-changing lessons on faith and values

*This fall Hunter Cox traveled from New Mexico, where he is a student at St. John's College, to Washington DC, where he attended the National Student Leadership Forum on Faith and Values. In the following letter to a friend he reflects on what he experienced and learned.*

I just wanted to share a few of my experiences and thoughts regarding the National Student Leadership Forum on Faith and Values. I flew out of Santa Fe Friday morning around 8 in the morning and landed at Reagan Airport circa 3 p.m. I had no idea what hotel I was heading for or who to look for so I just walked around the shuttle area looking for other college age kids. Luckily I was able to find a group of other students who were very excited and knew where we were headed. When I arrived at the hotel I was able to see Haylie for a little while, which was really good, and I also ran into a friend of mine from Work Crew at Saranac who I did not know would be there. At dinner I met with my small group of about 10 people and two facilitators - all guys in our group, which was really good. Also at dinner we were introduced to a few congressmen and senators, some who still held office, others who did not.

One of the coolest stories was from a Texan congressman who always passed a homeless man on his way to work. Finally, one day in the winter he bought a brand new coat and when he saw the homeless man, he gave him the coat. The man was so thankful that he tried to give the congressman a hug, but because the homeless dude was dirty and smelly, the congressman only gave him a little pat on the back. Later, while sitting in his car, the congressman couldn't figure out why he wasn't happy - after all, he had just put Jesus' teachings into practice. Then he heard God say to him that the homeless man had tried to hug him that day but the congressman had turned away instead. We talked about that in our small group - what it means to be a leader who allows himself to be loved and to be served, and how often, as a group of all guys, we would try to be big and strong instead of letting others love and serve us.

On Saturday we heard from a student who had started a non-profit organization to help Uganda orphanages and learned what it means to serve. After this we went on a service project to help clean up old folks' yards and porches. One lady had a lawn, which looked like it had not been mowed for many years. After the project we went to the house

of one of our facilitators where we ate PBJ sandwiches. This may have been one of my favorite parts because I got to hear about the lives of the guys who were in my group. One of them had been living in a house with a group of guys, trying to be intentional in their relationships for over a year. The stories that he had about his relationships really made me question what I am doing if I'm not looking for the type of relationships that he described.

That night we heard from Florida Senator Bill Nelson's wife Grace, who shared with us about forgiveness and reconciliation. She told about how in Rwanda after the genocide the government rounded up everyone who was involved and threw them in jail. Then they would bring them out into the village and make them tell of all that they did in front of the women of the village. They had to tell of killing the women's husbands, of raping her daughters until they died, and even of raping the women themselves. After they told all their crimes they committed, it was up to the women in the village to decide what their sentence would be. In almost all cases the women forgave those who had wronged them and, after they forgave them, they invited them into their homes and adopted them as their own sons. Such forgiveness was amazing to hear of, and it was really shocking to hear all that these women had been through and all that they were able to forgive.

Then on Sunday we woke up early to take a tour of the Vietnam memorial and the Lincoln Memorial. Afterwards we had a private tour of the capitol. To be honest, I cannot remember anything of the speakers that day because I was so overwhelmed at being in the capitol building and seeing all the history that it had to share. After the weekend was over I was able to see Haylie one more time and really just talk over some of the things that I learned. The one thing that I came away with that weekend was how much I craved a community of friends that really knew me and knew my heart, and how I would do just about anything to get into a scenario where those sorts of relationships were present all the time. - *Hunter Cox*

## Schedule for December

**Each Sunday morning:** 9:30 am – Worship Service  
 10:45 am – Coffee and Fellowship  
 11:00 am – Sunday School

### December

- 5 7:00 am – Men’s Breakfast @ Mickey’s, Enfield
- 5 7:30 am – Women’s Breakfast @ Panera, W. Lebanon
- 11 Pastoral Care Team Meeting
- 13 Leadership Team Meeting
- 20 6:30 pm – Christmas Caroling in Taftsville

### Birthdays in December

|                   |                  |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 2 Judy McCrory    | 11 Laura Beidler |
| 4 Janet North     | 18 Hunter Cox    |
| 6 Randy Good      | 24 Jane Glick    |
| 8 Micah Schlabach | 29 Jan Collins   |

### Anniversaries in December

|                            |
|----------------------------|
| 21 Toby & Rebekah          |
| 21 Kevin & Karen Cox       |
| 30 George & Susanne Abetti |

### Childcare

#### December

|                      |
|----------------------|
| 6 Karen Cox          |
| 13 Mary Guntz        |
| 20 Carmeleta Beidler |
| 27 Carie Good        |

### Song Leaders

#### December

|                       |
|-----------------------|
| 6 Janice Zook         |
| 13 Richard Glick      |
| 20 Carmeleta Beidler  |
| 27 Virginia Schlabach |

### Coffee

#### December

|                   |
|-------------------|
| 6 Abner Schlabach |
| 13 Ken/Jane Glick |
| 20 Janet North    |
| 27 Mary Guntz     |

### Cleaning

#### November

|                |
|----------------|
| 5 Deitrich     |
| 12 Deitrich    |
| 19 K & J Glick |
| 26 K & J Glick |

## Treasurer’s Report

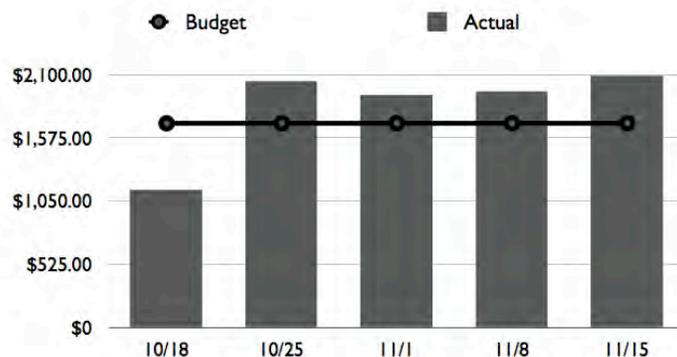
While Oct. 18th was a little low, every other week has been consistently high enough to surpass the overall budget. Praise God! We’re still continuing to do well, and able to give generously! - Tim Good

### Taftsville Tally

| Oct. | Attendance | Offering<br>Actual |
|------|------------|--------------------|
| 18   | 50         | \$1,143.00         |
| 25   | 37         | \$2,045.00         |
| Nov. |            |                    |
| 1    | 47         | \$1,930.00         |
| 8    | 52         | \$1,960.00         |
| 15   | 68         | \$2,090.00         |

Weekly Budget: \$1,695.00

## Weekly Offering



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## Taftsville Tidbit Trivia

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*Do you remember when...*

### 40 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

*December 1, 1969*

Monthly fuel and electricity expenses:  
\$24.00

### 35 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

*December 15, 1974*

The Christmas Program this year will be from 4-6 pm. A special community invitation will be given, perhaps in the form of a door-to-door solicitation. Refreshments will be served.

### 30 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

*December 16, 1979*

Earl Bishop is our guest speaker on Sunday.

### 25 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

*December 23, 1984*

A Christmas puppet play is planned for the morning service, with a candlelight service and caroling in the village for the evening.

### 10 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

*December 2, 1999*

We have heard nothing further from our contact person in Macedonia regarding the Kosovar refugee family, so this seems to be a dead end.

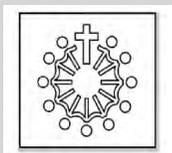
*December 2, 1999*

There was a brief discussion on filtering the water system at the chapel. A decision was made to replace the hot water heater and also add a water filter. Randy and Omar will take care of this.

*December 31, 1999*

As we end this century, Randy will have the chapel open for an unstructured time of prayer from about 10 pm to midnight on New Year's Eve. Anyone who is interested is invited to drop in during that time.

## Taftsville Chapel Mennonite Fellowship



*Located in the village of Taftsville,  
one block south of Rte. 4 on  
Happy Valley Rd.*

**Randy Good, Pastor**  
<http://www.taftsvillechapel.org/>

Send your contributions for

**"The Taftsville Chapel Current" to:**

[rdjgcollins@mac.com](mailto:rdjgcollins@mac.com)  
OR slip a note in my church mailbox  
OR contact a Newsletter Staff Member:  
Carie Good, Janet North, and Virginia Schlabach