



St. Peter's United Church of Christ

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From the Study

Recently, the following text from *I Thessalonians 5:12-23* was read at a Pastor's Prayer Network gathering in November, 2004. I hope you find this text as meaningful as we begin a new year as I did listening to this text a few weeks ago.

“¹²But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labor among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; ¹³esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. ¹⁴And we urge you, beloved, to admonish the idlers, encourage the faint hearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them. ¹⁵See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. ¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise the words of prophets, ²¹but test everything; hold fast to what is good; ²²abstain from every form of evil.

²³May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

This text has great goal statements for us as we begin the new year, 2005. Each of us might rephrase the text in various ways, but I would suggest the following understandings as suggestive not exhaustive. I suggest the following goals as our mission in the New Year.

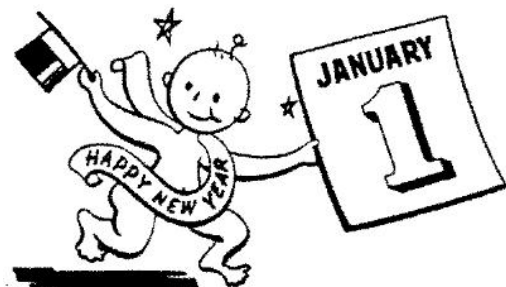
1. Respect those in our midst who have been given leadership positions. I see leadership in a variety of settings beyond a narrow vision of leadership. Each of us in the body of Christ, the Church, have been given gifts, and all of us have a role with our individual gifts in the implementation of Christ's challenge to us.

2. We are to minister to those persons in our midst who have great needs.
3. Always seek to do good to one another.
4. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances.
5. Do not despise the words of prophets as you receive the Spirit of God. I would add that we support the modern prophets as well as the prophets of old.
6. Test everything. The guideline is to hold fast to what is good and to abstain from every form of evil.
7. Trust that God is in control and that ultimately everything will be done according to God's will.

These principles are quite a challenge as we begin a new year. These principles we believe are the Word of God as we receive from God's servant: the Apostle Paul. Our apostle was misguided in his early years, but then was transformed by the Christian gospel. What counts for us is not the mistakes of our past, but rather our willingness to be transformed by the gospel of Christ in the present age as we move to a new year. May these principles guide us as we make our New Year's resolution.

Sincerely,

Pastor Glenn





In the Spotlight this month —

Jump into January with WINN!

Forget the cold and wind outside – join us for some warm, sunny fun at WINN in January! Check out the

schedule and menu listed below. If you have any questions, please call Rhonda Shoudel at 352-3353 or Cheryl Lehmann at 398-4817.

January 5 Game Night “Monopoly & Munchies” featuring Party Food! – teriyaki chicken skewers, meatballs, cocktail hotdogs, cheese & crackers, veggie tray

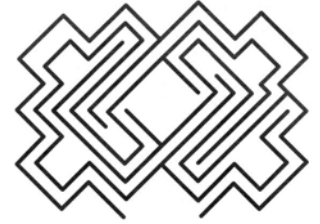
12 Hawaiian Hula featuring pork tenderloin & pineapple skewers, rice, vegetable egg rolls

19 Lights, Camera, Action! featuring meatloaf, baked beans, applesauce, jello, rolls

26 Mardi Gras Mayhem featuring corn dogs, soft pretzels, onion rings

Prayer Path . . . A Personal Faith Journey

On Sunday, January 16, the high school youth and leaders will be hosting Prayer Path. This is an experience you **will not** want to miss.



Prayer Path is a Christ-centered labyrinth experience that includes music, meditation, art, media and activities at stations along the path. These explore a number of themes.

Journey – We are all “journeying” in our relationships. The labyrinth gives us the space to explore the highs and lows of our journeys and to commit ourselves to journey onward.

Letting Go – Many of us live lives that are stressful and over-busy. The labyrinth is an opportunity to symbolically “let go” of the busyness that may spoil our relationships.

Centering – The journey around the labyrinth can symbolize a desire on our part to center and focus our lives on God. At the center, we are free to meet God and sit and rest for a while.

Incarnation – In the original incarnation, God came as Christ to share our experience of human existence. As we journey back out of the labyrinth, carrying something of our encounter with God, we are encouraged to be God’s “incarnation” in our own lives and world.

You may be thinking, “What does a labyrinth have to do with a Christ-centered faith journey?” Take an hour to step out of your life of stress and busyness and step onto the path focused on God.

If you have questions or would like more information about Prayer Path, call Bonnie Joop, Lisa Lynch or Rhonda Shoudel.



From Our Hearts to Yours

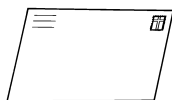
The St. Peter’s Staff would like to thank the members of the congregation for your generous contributions toward the staff Christmas gifts. We are grateful for your thoughtfulness in showing your appreciation to us. It is truly a joy to work at such a wonderful place!

Mark your Calendar!

o VBS 2005 – June 13-17th o
5:30-7:30 p.m.

18 – 25 – 52 – 59!

These are just a few of the numbered envelopes that we have left for 2005. If you would like to “adopt” one of these numbers, please contact Bonnie in the Church Office.



Looking for a Winter Break?

Are you ready to get out of the house for a few hours of crafting fun? Come craft with us! The Craft Club will meet on Thursday, January 20 from 5:00-9:00 p.m. at St. Peter’s. Bring your stamping, scrapbooking or other crafts and join us for an evening of fun. The club is open to any church member, family member or friends. Bring a snack and beverage if you wish. If you can’t make it at 5:00 p.m., don’t worry. Just come when you can and leave when you need.

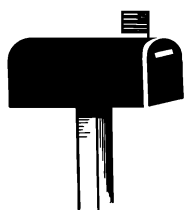


With Deepest Sympathy

St. Peter's is saddened by the death of member, Jesse Dale Bennett. Mr. Bennett died on December 10, 2004 at the age of 73. Mr. Bennett was an upholsterer at Bland's Upholstery for 28 years and at the University of Illinois furniture shop for 17 years. Jesse enjoyed bowling, golf and woodcarving. Jesse is survived by his wife Wilma; two sons, Thomas Patrick Bennett and Timothy Michael Bennett, both of Oakwood; two daughters, Janet Largent of Mahomet and Julie Davis of Dewey; two stepsons, Hobert "Butch" Roberts of Monticello and Jack Roberts of Bement; two stepdaughters, Carol Meeker of Monticello and Linda Burgess of Eugene, Oregon; three sisters, Helen Willard of Dewey, Betty Hemrich of Mahomet and Ruth McCartney of Urbana; a brother, James Bennett of Lafayette, Indiana; 10 grandchildren; eight stepgrandchildren; five great-grandchildren; and 11 step-great-grandchildren. Our thoughts and prayers are with Jesse's family.

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the February issue of *Connections* is Monday, January 17. Please submit your articles to the Church Office or leave them in the Office Manager's mailbox. Please include your name and phone number. Thank you!



New Address

David Ho
58 E. Healey, #308
Champaign, IL 61820
359-1992

January Ushers

Jim Acheson	William Henderson
Bernice Benn	Mildred Luther
Omer Benn	Al Shoudel
Kathryn Luther Henderson	Cal Twenhafel

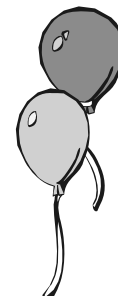
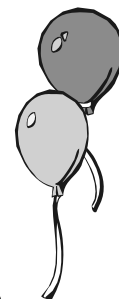


January Anniversaries

29 James and Dorothy Woller (1960)
30 Paul and Gladys Hemp (1954)

January Birthdays

1	Roy Colson
	Heinrich Schmidt
2	Judy Moller Vaiden
4	Celeste Honn
6	Jeff Hallett
7	Shirley Records
8	Doris Hershbarger
9	Lloyd Phipps
11	William Limp
12	Crystal Vowels
	Cassidy Marcum
13	Henry Voigtlander
	Roth Vowels
14	Blake Lehmann
15	Doth Sysouvanh
21	Ted Eichhorst
22	Jama Fager
	Paul Marcum
24	Aileen Schindler
	Jennifer Crone
26	Sally Martinie
	Jeff Jewett
27	Clayton Lehmann
31	Julius Demlow



January Greeters

2	Bernadine Helbling and Pam Bostwick
9	Howard and Felice Rhodes
16	Bill and Debby Malone
23	Millie Luther and Virginia Lewis
30	Kurt and Fern Eheart

Editor's Note: We apologize for omissions or errors. Information for the newsletter mailing list, birthday list and anniversary list is taken from Church records.

Please report changes in writing to the Church Office (weekdays 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.). You may mail changes, place notes in the Office Manager's mailbox or send an email to trost@net66.com. *Thanks for your help!*

