



# Agape Herald

The Newsletter of the Presbytery of Huntingdon  
Mission: Loved by Jesus Christ, called to love others.  
[www.huntingdon.org](http://www.huntingdon.org)

## January 2005

General Presbyter :  
Joy Kaufmann  
[gnrlpres@atlanticbbn.net](mailto:gnrlpres@atlanticbbn.net)

Treasurer:  
Liz Armstrong  
[treasurer1@atlanticbbn.net](mailto:treasurer1@atlanticbbn.net)

Mission Treasurer:  
Joann Kimmel  
[hsk235@innernet.net](mailto:hsk235@innernet.net)

Stated Clerk:  
Virginia Rainey  
[statedclerk@atlanticbbn.net](mailto:statedclerk@atlanticbbn.net)

Pastoral Care Consultant  
Lynn Illingworth  
814-234-2415

Resource Center Coordinator  
Marie Carlson  
[admina@atlanticbbn.net](mailto:admina@atlanticbbn.net)

Presbytery Office  
Phone: 814-742-2200  
Fax : 814-742-2214

## TSUNAMI & EARTH- QUAKE RELIEF

Funds can be sent through  
local Presbyterian churches  
or to :

South & Southeast Asia  
Disaster Relief, DR000167  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
Remittance Processing  
P.O. Box 643700  
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700

## WHAT SHALL I OFFER HIM'' *Submitted by Joy Kaufmann, General Presbyter*

"In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.'" *Matthew 2:1*

For centuries, Christmas was an entire season. It began with the celebration of Jesus' birth on December 25 and ran to Epiphany on January 6 when the visit of the wise men was lifted up in Scripture and song. The wise men brought gifts to the Christ child to pay homage to him and show their devotion to God. Ever since, even in our culture where we have lost all sense of the 12 days of Christmas, we still give one another gifts as a sign of the greatest gift of all, Jesus Christ, given to us by God.

In a famous carol by Christina Rossetti, one stanza reads, "What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb. If I were a wise man, I would do my part. Yet what can I give him? Give him my heart." If you think about it, we disciples of Jesus spend our lives trying to give back to him for all his goodness to us.

One of the members of our presbytery who gives back to Jesus Christ through how he lives his life is our pastoral care consultant, The Rev. Mr. Lynn Illingworth. Lynn's ministry is to reach out in compassion and support to the clergy members of our presbytery. His call is entirely funded by the Mission & Program portion of our presbytery's budget. Yet many people don't know about the ministry Lynn quietly, behind the scenes, performs.

If you are a new pastor to the presbytery, Lynn has probably taken you to lunch just to let you know that he is here and cares about you. If you are a pastor and have been in the hospital, Lynn has no doubt come to have prayer with and for you. And if you are a clergyperson and going through particularly challenging times in your life or ministry, Lynn is there as a listening ear - a compassionate friend in ministry.

If you are not a clergyperson, you may not even know that Lynn fulfills this ministry. But in my time among you, I have found it invaluable to have a colleague whose express purpose is to be there for our pastors. My calling requires that I give nuanced references for our pastors - that I be honest about our pastors' strengths, and yes, weaknesses. But Lynn simply cares about and advocates for our pastors. Mine is a ministry of administration, while his is a ministry of compassion.

When your church makes a unified mission pledge to the presbytery Mission & Program portion of our budget, you are helping pay for Lynn's call among us. He in turn gives of himself, for Jesus Christ's sake, that our pastors might have a friend who will protect their confidentiality and be "in their corner".

"What can I give him? Give him my heart." Thank you Lynn for your ministry among us.

Love to all of you in this deep midwinter. *Rev. Kaufmann may be reached at 814-742-2200*



**NEW: Summer Camp EARLYBIRD DISCOUNT!!!**

The new and exciting summer camp brochures have arrived. They are being mailed to former campers and names on individual church mailing lists. Inside each brochure is a special EARLYBIRD DISCOUNT offer. The \$15 off discount applies to all six-day camp applications postmarked by 2/28/05. Additional brochures with discount offers can be ordered by calling the camp office (814.422.8878) or with e-mail (info@krislund.org).

***Nite for Valentines, Feb. 12***

**SIGN UP NOW!**

Bring your valentine for a night to remember at Krislund on Saturday, February 12. Arrive at the remodeled and decorated Retreat Center at 5:00 for hors d'oeuvre, followed by a three-course dinner with your choice of scrumptious entrée, and topped off with a homemade dessert bar. Live dinner music will be provided by Vitamin J and entertainment by camp staff. A pastor will conduct an optional wedding vow renewal ceremony after supper. Dancing to music from the 40's – 70's will fill the second half of the evening, ending at 9:00. Discounted guestroom arrangements are available at the nearby Comfort Inn in Lamar for those wishing to take advantage of an overnight option. Space is limited to 30 couples; cost is \$75 per couple. Sign up by calling the office or e-mailing the camp secretary at sharonrishel@krislund.org.

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**Summer Camp Program Highlight: Jr. High "Aquatic Adventure"**

Are you currently in 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade? Do you like swimming, canoeing, innertubing, and water games? If you answered, "yes", then you will like the new Aquatic Adventure camp, June 26-July 2. Canoeing will include an overnight campout and swimming will include a fun-filled visit to a local water park. Activities will also include rock climbing or high ropes and evening worship at the Nitefest amphitheater. Housing for the week will be in the upper cabins. If you like wet, you'll like this summer's new Aquatic Adventure. For a brochure and application contact the camp office or e-mail us at info@krislund.org.

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**NEW: Women's Retreat, April 22-24**

Women of all ages and backgrounds are invited to join us for a time of spiritual renewal, newfound friendships, and laughter. Spend an unforgettable spring weekend at Krislund with 60 other women relaxing, hearing a stimulating speaker, eating Carol's homemade meals, and attending unique and fun seminars. Additional housing will be available at the nearby Comfort Inn in Lamar. Information and applications will be arriving at churches in January. Contact Jacki Rearick, Program Director, for a copy of the weekend schedule and speaker information (814.422.8552, or jackirearick@krislund.org).

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**Summer Staff Recruiting Begins / Do You Know A Candidate?**

The '05 staff application packets are ready for willing summer staff candidates. Counselors, kitchen and maintenance crews, lifeguard, and adventure team positions are available. Persons for most positions must be high school graduates and all applicants must desire to serve God and love others. For more information, contact the office at info@krislund.org.

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**Summer Camp Questions? Come to a Krislund Kamporee**

Regional Camp information meetings will begin in February: listings in the next Korner.

## BOOK NOOK

*Submitted by Joy Kaufmann,  
General Presbyter*

The Purpose Driven Life by Rick Warren spent many weeks on the "New York Times" bestseller list. Written in 40 chapters and dealing with five "life purposes", Pastor Warren addresses some of the basic questions of every human life.

While he doesn't match Reformed theology in every detail, we live in an time when the culture around us does not support even the most basic Christian beliefs. Thus Warren's book speaks to the hunger of our age. Issues like "What on earth am I here for?" and "You were planned for God's pleasure" make for focused daily readings. (Helpful hint: don't read this book all at one sitting. I tried to and found it a tough slog. One chapter a day is much more digestible!) If you absorb the message of this book, you will be convinced that God loves you, has a purpose for your life, and wants you to discover the true joy of serving God all your days.

*Rev. Kaufmann may be reached at  
gnrlpres@atlanticbbn.net*

## Rev. Judd McConnell will lead Enrichment Event

*Submitted by Alice Meloy, Chair, Leadership Umbrella Team*

Hildegard of Bingen speaks of the Holy Spirit as one who keeps us watered, green and growing, bearing fruit and rejoicing. For those who wish to become instruments in the "greening and fruitfulness" process, an event is scheduled for Saturday, January 22nd at 3:00 following Presbytery.

Dr. Judd McConnell will lead an enrichment event on the dynamics of hospitality, an important element in church growth. The instructions to be hospitable are contained in Scripture, but unfortunately we have not, perhaps, analyzed its spiritual importance in the process of witnessing to the love and compassion of Jesus Christ.

In this workshop, Dr. McConnell will review the basic ideas of Henri J.M. Nouwen's concept of hospitality and explore the necessary ingredients in a very practical way. Hugh B. Berry's booklet, "Being A Welcoming Congregation" will also be used with several practical inventories highlighting your individual churches. In the words of Dr. McConnell, "The methods that will be used in this workshop will be presentation of information, discussion, hands-on experiences, brain-storming and small groups. We are indeed fortunate to have Judd as our leader.

If you or members of your congregation plan to attend, please call the Presbytery Office or Alice Meloy (717-349-2685) on or before January 18th so we have adequate handouts.

"A good job—well done" goes to the Orbisonia and Mount Union Churches who joined with the Lutheran Church to present a Concert to honor the Shepherds. They surpassed their goal and raised \$175 to send, not only sheep, but also a flock of chickens to a family through Heifer Project International.

## Retired Clergy Group Meeting

*Submitted by Lee McCardle, Coordinator*

Our Retired Clergy Group will meet Tuesday, January 11, 2005 at 11:30 a.m. in the Perkins Restaurant on South Atherton Street, State College. All retired clergy are invited to join us in a room reserved for us. We each order from the menu, and we each pay for our own meals. Our agenda is simple; share what's going on in our lives, the good, the bad, the ugly, and the humorous!

Some of us are still active in part-time ministry, while others of us are exploring what it means to be fully retired in a purpose-driven church/society. Still others of us come to share our faith journey and/or to form deeper friendships. As one retiree said, "The older I get, the more precious are the friends I make along life's way."

This group self-started 6 months ago in a private home as a result of the expressed needs of a few retirees. It has since met in restaurants in the State College area. At present, most of us are honorably retired clergy from Huntingdon Presbytery. I invite you to come and join us, and share in the wisdom and wit of our retired clergy. It will do your heart good!

If you wish to receive our monthly meeting notices via email, please send your request to Rev. McCardle at leemccardle@adelphia.net .

## New Emails at Krislund Camp

Steve Cort  
stevecort@krislund.org  
Sharon Rishel  
sharonrishel@krislund.org  
Jacki Rearick  
jackirearick@krislund.org  
Kent Rishel  
kentrishel@krislund.org  
General Information  
info@krislund.org

## Taxtalk

*Submitted by Liz Armstrong, Presbytery Treasurer*

On December 9, 2004, the Board of Pensions held a teleconference called "Tax Tips for Ministers and Churches". Tax expert Richard R. Hammar answered tax questions. Below are the highlights from that talk. Any questions should be referred to your tax advisor. You can listen to this taped teleconference by logging on to [www.pensions.org/library/publications/multimedia/taxtips/index.htm](http://www.pensions.org/library/publications/multimedia/taxtips/index.htm)

The new American Jobs Creation Act will change how you handle car donations to churches and how to take sales tax deductions. The IRS has not posted their regulations on these yet. There will be an IRS Publication 600 coming out explaining the sales tax deduction which has to be on Schedule A.

The IRS has extended the \$1,000 child tax credit for this year along with the marriage penalty relief and others. If you or your spouse is a teacher, you can claim \$250 in qualified expenses (Things that you were not reimbursed for that are classroom expenses.)

Your church can lose its nonprofit status for failing to report the following church paid expenses:

- using a church credit card for personal use i.e. clothing, or travel for family
- using church property for personal use
- car allowance that is not substantiated and not reported on W2—example: church agrees to pay car expenses at rate of \$5,000 per year. You get paid that amount without giving anything other than a monthly bill (not itemized). If the church does not report this as income, you will get a penalty. If the church reports this as income, no problem.

In each case, you must report the benefit value as taxable income on the W2 form regardless of the amount.

Christmas gifts: There is no threshold for gifts. Any gift of cash or gift certificate must be reported as taxable income, no matter how small. Gifts of material things do not need to be reported (such as fruit baskets or turkeys, for example).

Churches cannot allow telephone companies to install a cell phone antenna in the church bell tower without reporting the income as taxable.

Business expenses under the accountable reimbursement arrangement are not taxable only to the extent accounted for. The expenses must be substantiated with amount, date and reason. Any excess must be returned to the church within 120 days. The reimbursements are not reported on W2. If the expenses are reimbursed under the non-accountable arrangement (the worst way), they must all be reported in Box 1 of the W2 and you may not be able to deduct the expenses.

The mileage rate for 2005 will be .405 cents a mile. Keep a journal to substantiate.

If you own a home, you don't pay Federal taxes on the housing allowance as long as it is not greater than the fair market value and it is used for the mortgage, repairs, taxes, utilities, appliance or maintenance. If you are in a manse, the housing allowance can not exceed the rental value of the manse or it must be reported on the 1040.

There is a retirement 403B plan for ministers. You must work at least 20 hours a week. This is fully deductible and the income is tax deferred. Call 1-800-343-0860 for details.

There is a tax consultant available at the Board to help with specific questions. To talk to a Employee Assistant Program "Response" person, call 1-800-455-5129.

The Tax Guide for Ministers and Churches will be mailed to you in mid January. The Federal Reporting Requirements for Churches can be downloaded in January by logging in to [www.pensions.org](http://www.pensions.org).

In general, you must pay state and local taxes on the housing allowance.

Common mistakes in filing taxes:

- reporting social security as an employee instead of self employed
- reporting income tax as self employed – most ministers are employees for income tax purposes
- failure to report special gifts like for retirement
- failure to report personal use of church provided car
- forgetting to adjust line 30 of the Form 1040 for half of the SECA
- forgetting to report housing for social security and medicare
- inadequate records
- excluding housing as income
- failure to report forgiven debt

*Liz Armstrong may be reached at [treasurer1@atlanticbbn.net](mailto:treasurer1@atlanticbbn.net)*

## Presbytery Calendar

<p>Jan. 4     1:00 pm Regular Council meeting Presbytery Office</p> <p>Jan. 6     1:00 pm Committee On Ministry Presbytery Office</p> <p>Jan. 8     9:00 am Interviewing CLP's Presbytery Office 9:00 am-3:00 pm Small Church Assessment at Belleville Church</p> <p>Jan. 11    11:00 am Investment Subcommittee Presbytery Office 1:30 pm Administrative Umbrella Team at Presbytery Office 5:30 pm Joint Camp &amp; Conference Committee Krislund Camp</p> <p>Jan. 13    Noon "717 Clergy Cluster" McVeytown Church</p> <p>Jan. 17    Office Closed-Martin Luther King, Jr. Day</p> <p>Jan. 19    9:30 am Presbytery Staff Meeting 1:00 pm Ministry to Congregations sub-committee at Presbytery Office</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Jan. 20</p> <p>Noon Northwest Clergy Cluster Dubois Church</p> <p>Jan. 22    9:30 am Presbytery Meeting State College Church</p> <p>Jan. 30    2-5:00 pm Church Officer Training See locations on Page 5</p> <p>Feb. 5     Snow date for Church Officer training</p> <p>Feb. 7     10:00 am Leadership Umbrella Team</p> <p>Feb. 8     5:30 pm Joint Camp and Conference Committee at Krislund</p> <p>Feb. 10    Noon "717 Clergy Cluster" at McVeytown Church</p> <p>Feb. 16    9:30 am Presbytery Staff Meeting</p> <p>Feb. 17    Noon Northwest Clergy Cluster</p> <p>Feb. 18-19 Annual Committee On Ministry Retreat at Krislund Camp</p> <p>Feb. 21    Office Closed for Presidents' Day</p> <p>Feb. 23-25 Executive Presbyters' Forum</p>
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**Traditions....***continued from page 5 ...* together and publish them in a form ( yet to be determined ) for everyone to enjoy. Who knows ? THIS might become a tradition ! Please send your thoughts, stories, and comments to;  
*Jim Steiner, Director of Development, Presbyterian Homes, P.O. Box 595, Hollidaysburg, PA 16648. E.mail : jsteiner@presbyhome.com .*



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 Presbytery of Huntingdon  
 323 Main Street Box 99  
 Bellwood PA 16617

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## OFFICER TRAINING

*Submitted by Alice Meloy, Chair  
Leadership Umbrella Team*

Circle the date Sunday, January 30th, 2:00 - 5:00 PM., and pray for blue skies, clear roads and sparkling snow only in the fields, please. Training for elders, deacons and trustees will be offered. The course will include becoming acquainted with both use and application of the Book of Order. A valuable part of the training session is sharing concerns, challenges, and encouraging events.

Training will take place in clusters for the convenience of those who hold office.

### **Cluster 1: Philipsburg. Leader Joy Kaufmann**

DuBois, Clearfield, Pine Grove Bethel, Glen Richey, Irvona, Coalport, Snow Shoe, Osceola Mills, Houtzdale, Madera, Winburne, Kylertown, Curwensville, Philipsburg, Fruit Hill

### **Cluster 2: Pine Grove Mills. Leader: Carl Campbell**

Milesburg, Lemont, State College, Bellefonte, Upper Spruce Creek, Bald Eagle

### **Cluster 3: Belleville. Leaders: Sam Strohm and Geoff Huish**

McVeytown, Lewistown, Allensville, Highland Park, Westminster Parish, Reedsville, Petersburg, Huntingdon, Orbisonia, Mt. Union, Alexandria, Mapleton, Bethany Parish, McAlevy's Fort

### **Cluster 4: Hollidaysburg. Leader: Doug Friant**

Tyrone, Bellwood, Juniata, Lower Spruce Creek, Sinking Valley, Altoona First, Altoona Third, Broad Avenue, Ward Avenue, Birmingham, Bedford

If you are in doubt concerning weather conditions, call the host church since Huntingdon Presbytery experiences great variety from one valley to the next. Snow Date is February 5th, 9:00 - 12:00.

*Rev. Meloy may be reached at ammrem75@innernet.net*

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Linda Vance, (lindaleevance@aol.com) 814-632-3804  
Spence Hauenstein (spencerw@charter.net) 814-742-8207  
Jim Davis-Petersburg-(jimandbarbara621@aol.com) 814-669-4519  
Peggy Kendall (pkendall@penn.com) 814-238-7875  
Bill Conway (4conways@adelphia.net) 814-342-5930  
Jake Wagner (jacobew@acsworld.com) 814-717-543-5726  
Sara Guy (sguy@penswoods.net) 814-236-2658  
Nancy Kraybill ) 814-944-3141  
Janet Brallier (presby12@penswoods.net) 814-652-2925  
Jane Illingworth (jti14@innernet.net) 814-259-3136  
Bob Himes (blkpatch@acsworld.com) 717-667-9673  
Chuck Hayes (chayes@clearnet.net) 814-378-8162  
Alice Meloy (alicemeloy@innernet.net) 717-349-2685  
Mary Frances Jaymes (mfjaymes@yahoo.com) 814-259-3256  
Jean Haynes, (jeaness@verizon.net) 814-387-6753  
Submission deadline is the 3rd Monday each month for the following month's publication.

## TRADITIONAL THINKING

*Submitted by Jim Steiner  
Director of Development, Presbyterian Homes*

This is the time of year when you hear about traditions. Old traditions, more recent traditions, even the planning of new traditions !

The folks in and around the Presbyterian Homes tell of many different types of traditional holiday activities... how some traditions have changed or have been replaced over the years.

Sweet memories for me include the recollection of "tons of relatives" crowded around the big dinner table, maximum number of leaves inserted, annexing the living room, and sometimes overflowing to the card table in the sun porch usually reserved for the little ones.

We bobbed and weaved around Aunt Gladys to see the action in between mounded servings of "real" mashed potatoes and gravy. Nothing "instant" about those meals !

When the older generation gave in to post-dessert nap time, a pre-arranged football game down behind the chicken house kicked off at precisely 3:30, assuring that wet and muddy pint-sized Steelers-to-be would be cold and hungry come supper time.

Even though, now, we have families of our own, more in-laws, and traditions that suit our lifestyles, it's not quite the same. In such a mobile society, we're scattered all over the country and it's more difficult to schedule everyone at the same place at the same time.

Marriages, jobs, kids, health, age, and locations have altered the traditions to point where.....Wait a minute !.....

Could this be a common thread among many of us ? Doesn't some of this sound familiar ?

Sure, the details are different, but many of the stories shared with me are curiously similar. Perhaps the Christmas celebration and New Year's anticipation illustrate connections between us all, while everyone's story remains unique and personally meaningful.

One jolly resident laughingly suggested "Somebody ought to write a book !" Hm... and to quote my brother : "Now, there's a concept !"

Would you like to share a tradition or two ? While the thoughts are fresh, why not send me a description of your traditions, past or present, holiday or otherwise?

We'll try to put them *Continued on next page*