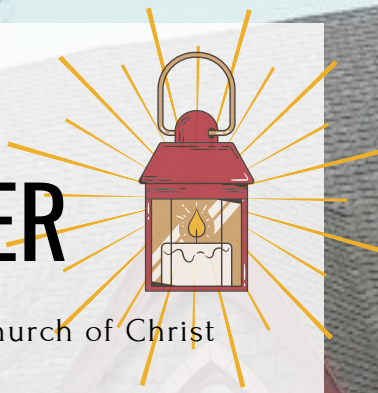


# THE LAMPLIGHTER

Official Newsletter of Trinity United Church of Christ



## Good Words for Great Souls

BY REV. DAVID DOWNER

One of my favorite winter pastimes is watching the birds at our feeders. Since snow covered the ground several weeks ago, the birds have been especially numerous. The “early-birds” come right after sunrise, and they dart and dive about arguing over the perches on the tube feeder. This year we’ve had a flock of house finches that dominate the feeders at various times of the day. Other species that come regularly include goldfinches, tufted titmouses (and yes, that’s the proper term for plural titmouse but I had to look it up!), chickadees, dark-eyed juncos, cardinals, doves, an occasional blue jay, nuthatches, white-throated sparrows, and of course downy, hairy, and red-bellied woodpeckers. We even have a Carolina wren that makes an appearance some days, and I wonder, “Why aren’t you in Carolina where it’s likely much warmer?” Last spring, we had another type of visitor to our feeders. I heard a crash one night and looked out to see a large bear on our deck feasting on the sunflower seeds I typically put out. That provided us with the information we needed about when to take down the feeders in the springtime.

Living in Centre Hall, and now in Penns Valley, have been such a blessing. These last few years, so much of which we’ve spent in isolation, have provided opportunities to reconnect with the natural world around us. It’s given me a greater appreciation for the incredible diversity and beauty of God’s creation. Psalm 36 was a part of our lectionary recently, and I shared these verses in our worship service that Sunday:

5 Your steadfast love, O Lord, extends to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds.

6 Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your judgments are like the great deep; you save humans and animals alike, O Lord. 7 How precious is your steadfast love, O God! All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings.

I find comfort in imagining eternity not just for humankind, but other living creatures as well. Jesus reminds us that even the sparrows are precious in God’s sight, and not one of them will fall without God’s knowing.



## FEBRUARY ASSISTANTS

ALTAR FLOWERS: TAMMY BESEKER  
ALTAR GUILD: DOROTHY STRICKLER  
CAREGIVER: BEVERLY GUYER  
OIL IN CANDLES: BEVERLY GUYER  
SALT LIAISON: DAVE KING  
HEAD USHER: MICHAEL FRAZIER  
ALTERNATE USHER: BROOKS MEYERS

## THIS MONTH'S SCRIPTURES


FEBRUARY 6: ISAIAH 6:1-8  
LUKE 5:1-11  
FEBRUARY 13: JERAMIAH 17:5-10  
LUKE 6:17-26  
FEBRUARY 20: GENESIS 45:3-11, 15  
LUKE 6:27-38  
FEBRUARY 27: EXODUS 34:29-35  
LUKE 9:28-36

## JANUARY'S YOUTUBE WORSHIP SERVICE LINKS

SUNDAY, JANUARY 2:  
[HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/VBWECIHXBWC](https://youtu.be/vbwecihxbwc)  
SUNDAY, JANUARY 9:  
[HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/5UI5YLXKAXY](https://youtu.be/5UI5YLXKAXY)  
SUNDAY, JANUARY 16:  
[HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/ATKHFZ9TVPO](https://youtu.be/atkhfz9tvpo)  
SUNDAY, JANUARY 30:  
[HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/YASUADTXVOI](https://youtu.be/yasuadtxvoi)



# Announcements, Events, & Updates

- February 2, Groundhog Day
- February 6, Fifth Sunday after Epiphany,
- February 6, Virtual Worship Service
- February 12, Valentine's Day 
- February 13, Sixth Sunday after Epiphany
- February 13, Return to in-person Services
- February 15, Consistory meeting
- February 20, Seventh Sunday after Epiphany
- February 26, Diaper Depot distribution
- February 27, Transfiguration
- February 28, MOPS Meeting

## Penns Valley Diaper Depot

The next monthly distribution is planned for February 26. Contributions of diapers or checks will always be accepted!

## A Valentine Poem

*God's Valentine gift of love to us. Was not a bunch of flowers:  
 It wasn't candy, or a book. To while away the hours.  
 His gift was to become a man. So He could freely give  
 His sacrificial love for us. So you and I could live.  
 He gave us sweet salvation, and Instruction, good and true-  
 To love our friends and enemies And love our Savior, too.  
 So as we give our Valentines. Let's thank our Lord and King;  
 The reason we have love to give Is that He gave everything.*

By Joanna Fuchs

# February Birthdays

- 1 J. Henry Garbrick
- 3 John Statham
- 5 Christopher Balsley
- 6 Victoria Bressler
- Lisa Campbell
- 8 Cassandra King,  
George Moellenbrock, Jr.,  
David Nicholas
- 9 Josephine McNitt,  
Ryan Riegel
- 10 Cole Parker
- 12 Larry Strickler
- 13 Robert Reed
- 14 Fallon Stover-McNulty
- 15 Jason Bonawitz,  
Chloe Dilliard,  
Cleo Matter,  
Colby Stover
- 19 Andrew Boob
- 23 Rodney Barner
- 24 Carole Smith
- 25 Deborah Riegel
- 28 Lauren Boob,  
Colby Miller

# February Anniversaries

- 3 Michael and Kilee Dyke-Vogt
- 16 Charles and Christine Patschke
- 24 Charles and Beverly Guyer
- 28 Samuel and Helen Delaney

# From The Congregation

## My Life as a Major League Baseball Scout

By: Rick Arnold



When I was five years old, my grandfather took me to the park next to his house and taught me how to play catch. I remember it like yesterday, “move your feet” and “keep your elbow up” were his words of wisdom. I fell in love with baseball that day, and I’ve never wanted to do anything else.

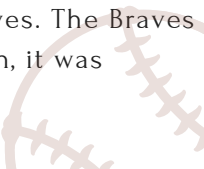
When I was eight years old, my father got very sick and had to go into the hospital for cancer surgery and treatment. My mother taught me and my brother and sister how to pray and ask God to help my father get better. My dad became permanently disabled, but he lived many years after that, and we all thanked God for that.

I have been blessed to be able to be in baseball my whole life, and I thank God for that. When they wouldn’t let me play anymore, I was asked if I might be interested in becoming a baseball scout. At that time I had never even dreamed of having a job like that, but as things worked out, I spent 37 years as a full-time Major League Baseball scout.

There are basically two types of scouts; amateur and professional. Amateur scouts are what most people think of when they imagine baseball scouts. Older guys smoking cigars and using a radar gun at the high school or college ballparks. When I first started in my career, I met and became close friends with many of those types of men. Clint Eastwood played that character in the movie “Trouble With The Curve”. Back in 1981 I became the youngest full-time scout in professional baseball. I was hired to be an amateur scout in Southern California. It’s the amateur scouts job to find the best possible talent in his territory and recommend them to his organization to be drafted. I wasn’t one of the old cigar smoking scouts, but those are the men I learned the craft from. I spent the first 18 years of my career doing amateur scouting going to all sorts of high schools and colleges throughout the western third of the United States. In those days, the scout would get to negotiate the player’s first year contract. The most rewarding thing I ever got to do was to get the player to sign at a figure the player was happy with, as was my organization. Walking out of a young man’s home with a signed contract in my briefcase was a real thrill. I signed many ball players, not all of them made it to the big leagues, but 18 of the ones I signed made it all the way to “the show”. Two of those kids are still in the big leagues today; Howie Clark is the hitting coach for the Chicago White Sox, and Torrey Lovullo is the major league manager of the Arizona Diamondbacks. All through the 1980’s I worked for the Detroit Tigers, then in the 1990’s I moved on to the Baltimore Orioles.

In 1998 I had the opportunity to go to work for the Commissioner of Baseball and join the staff of the Major League Scouting Bureau. The reports created by that staff went to all 30 of the major league teams. This is when I started doing professional scouting. This is a different job in that the scouts evaluate professional players, both major and minor league, to find players their organization should try to acquire. This job is when I began to travel. For the next twenty years I averaged over 200 nights a year in a hotel. I used to pray for those youngsters that I signed as an amateur scout, but now I prayed for MY safety and that of my family when I was away so often. When you are on the road, alone, there are many temptations and I credit Him for keeping from them. I have seen baseball games in all 50 states. I’ve been to every country in Latin America that plays baseball. I have always enjoyed the challenge of traveling to new places, and there were many challenges. For example, the first time I went to the Dominican Republic, I was alone, spoke no Spanish, and had no idea how I was going to get around the country to cover the games. The story of my first day in the D.R. is too long to detail here, but when I finally made it back to my hotel I literally got down on my knees and thanked God that I had made it with His help.

When the Scouting Bureau was eliminated because of budget costs, I went to work for the Atlanta Braves. The Braves were just beginning a “rebuilding” of the organization, and while the big league team didn’t win very often, it was exciting to help build what became a World Series winner this past fall.



I often say I'm the luckiest guy you know, but inside I know I'm the most blessed man I know. To live in a beautiful area like Penns Valley, to be a part of a congregation that truly cares about one another, and to have a loving family could only be blessings from God. I retired from professional baseball three years ago, but just recently I was offered a job to be Director of Scouting for an independent scouting and development company. As I "un-retire" to accept this job I look forward to this new and exciting challenge. Once again the Lord has blessed me with another opportunity in the game that I learned to love at that park when I was just five years old.



# RECORDS AND REPORTS

## SUMMARY OF 18 JANUARY CONSISTORY MEETING

**Treasurer's Report:** The total general funds income for December was \$17,159.25. The total general funds expense for December was \$10,652.29. **Pastor's Report:** Pastor Dave spent time planning the Christmas Eve service, performed a baptism and distributed and delivered food. **Previous Business:** The internet is now connected and working well. Strong signal in the sanctuary; The annual Congregation Meeting was held on December 5th. The 2022 Budget and Slate of Nominees were approved; The committee discussed two possibilities for new ministries using the parsonage, as short-term housing for Afghan refugees, and as emergency housing for families who have lost their homes due to fire destruction. **New Business:** Pastor Dave's employment contract includes a sabbatical of three months with full pay after each five full years of service. Pastor Dave has met this requirement and would like to take a sabbatical from June 13, 2022 to September 12, 2022. The board along with Pastor Dave will work to find replacement(s) clergy for the three month period.

### IN OUR PRAYERS...



- |                           |                   |                        |
|---------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Lance Arney               | *Trudy Furner     | *Marian Smith          |
| Zoey Bair                 | Charles O'Hara    | Marieta Smith          |
| Lorren & Carol Brown      | *Mary Hardy       | Colin & Jaci Tucker    |
| Larry Corl                | Deb Loskamp       | Debbie Walker          |
| Buddy Cowher              | *Josephine McNitt | Jere Wiley             |
| *Marie Crater             | Diane Matter      | Ennis Wagner           |
| Erin, Austin, Conner Derr | Paige Musser-Gray | Ann Williams           |
| Cathy and Roy Dunkle      | Rycen Musser      | *Faye Winkelblech      |
| *Jean Dunklebarger        | Malcolm Obiri     | Duane and Wilma Yarger |
| Kelly Eicher              | Claire Porter     | Silas                  |
| Gracie Eisenhower         | Shirley Rogers    |                        |