

## FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Parishioners,

Imagine you heard on the radio that Santa Claus would be at the Mall, but this year he has a surprise: he's going to tell you how to have the best Christmas ever. So you rush to hear the great secret. Finally, your turn comes and Santa says: "*Listen – if you want a really beautiful Christmas, get out of this place as fast as possible. Go home, put up a tree, build a fire, gather your loved ones in your arms and start to sing!*"

Isn't that what this Sunday's scriptures are saying? The prophet Zephaniah says, "*Shout for joy, O daughter Zion! Sing joyfully, O Israel. Be glad and exalt with all your heart.*" In reality, the prophet had little to sing about. Jerusalem was drifting more and more into pagan lifestyles. The people were shutting God out of their hearts. But Zephaniah saw a deeper reality: God had not deserted his people. He reminds them not to be discouraged, that the Lord is in their midst.

It's the same with St. Paul in this Sunday's second reading. Remember, he's writing this from prison. He says, "*Rejoice in the Lord always!*" even though in prison he knows that the Lord is right there even in his prison cell.

Don't we too easily let our 'Christmas Spirit' depend too much on external circumstances: the way the economy is going, how other people are treating us, and then we forget the awesome truth: The Lord God is in our midst, loving us, blessing us, asking us to just trust in Him. Maybe Santa was right. Go home, gather your loved ones together and sing. Maybe with all the clutter of our self-centeredness cleared away, with all the inner turmoil quieted down, the Lord will be there right in our midst just as the scriptures promised.

Yours in Christ,  
Father Dave

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## CANDLE INTENTIONS

**B.V.M** – IMO Vincent J. Schultz by Doris Schultz

**St. Joseph** – IMO Vincent J. Schultz by Doris Schultz

**Tabernacle** – IMO Max Golod by Marilyn Golod

**Sanctuary Candles**

1&2. IMO John H. Hohman by Kathleen Hohman

3. IMO George Hahner Sr. by Hahner Family

4. Special Intention

**Guardian Angels**

1&2. IMO Robert Lotz by Rita Lotz

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## WEEKLY COLLECTION

**December 6th:** \$ 6,404.75; **Dues:** \$1,522.00

*We thank our parishioners for their sacrificial giving*

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*Let us pray for all physicians and healers that they may fulfill their obligations to patients with a sense of the sacredness and dignity of human life.*

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## MASS INTENTIONS

**Monday – December 14 – 9:00 a.m.**

**EVE GRAPSY** (Guers Family)

**Tuesday – December 15 – 9:00 a.m.**

**GEORGE HAHNER SR.** (Hahner Family)

**Wednesday – December 16 – 9:00 a.m.**

**ROSE PONTICIAN** (Al Hauptly)

**Thursday – December 17 – 9:00 a.m.**

**ELIZABETH KETNER** (Sarah Donohue)

**Friday – December 18 – 9:00 a.m.**

**ROBERT LOTZ** (Rita Lotz)

**Saturday – December 19 – 5:00 p.m.**

**JOHN & MARGARET KASINECZ**

(Kasinecz Family)

**Sunday – December 20 – 8:15 a.m.**

**R.J. POST** (Sheri Post)

**Sunday – December 20 – 10:30 a.m.**

**ALEX KRISTON** (Joan & Ray Grapsy)

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## SCHEDULE

### FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

**5:00 p.m. – Saturday – December 19th**

**Reader:** Mary Ann Schweikert

**Euch.Min.:** Bill Schweikert, Katie Zwiebel

**Servers:** Emily Witmier, Michael Fetterolf

**Cantor:** Mary Bound

**8:15 a.m. – Sunday – December 20th**

**Reader:** Mary Hahner

**Euch.Min.:** Ray Petrilla, Bill Elison, Pat Lombel

**Servers:** Jake McClure, Emilie Baker, Sarah Lombel

**Cantor:** Karen Glunz

**10:30 a.m. – Sunday – November 20th**

**Reader:** Frank Murphy

**Euch.Min.:** Mary Jean Morgalis, Phil Markovich,  
Kathy Vivic

**Servers:** Megan Ryan, Maecada Herring,

Mary Beth Rissinger

**Cantor:** Dave Derbes

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## PRAY FOR OUR SICK / DECEASED



We remember in prayer those who are ill. We commend to our Divine Lord all of our aged people and those residing in nursing homes. Sick: *Tina Dixon, Margie Glunz, Carolyn & Charles Foster, Maryann Wychunas, Edward Wychunas, Matthew Mazakas, John Woznicki, Faye Cuchara, Scott Rhoades, Ben Roeder, Joseph Lenick.*

**Deceased:** *Emily Sidler*

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## YOUTH ENVELOPES – 2010

Youth envelopes for next year can be found in the center pews of church. Please be sure to pick yours up when at Mass. Thank you.

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## QUESTION OF THE WEEK

When you ask "What should we do?"  
How does Jesus respond?

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### READINGS

#### Third Sunday of Advent (Dec. 12/13)

**Reading I:** Zephaniah 3:14-18a

**Reading II:** Philippians 4:4-7

**Gospel:** Luke 3:10-18

#### Fourth Sunday of Advent (Dec. 19/20)

**Reading I:** Micah 5:1-4a

**Reading II:** Hebrews 10:5-10

**Gospel:** Luke 1:39-45

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## BAPTIZED IN CHRIST

We celebrated last weekend the glorious baptism day of **Quincy Michael Deichert-Allen**. He has become a new creation in Christ in the waters of Holy Baptism and is now joined to us by the gifts of faith, hope and charity. Warmly welcome him into our parish family.



## ATTENTION

All **Readers, Servers, and Eucharistic Ministers** ... you help is needed ... please let us know your plans for **January** and **February** so that we can get started on the schedule for those months. **Please call Father Dave by Monday, December 14th** to let him know when you are **NOT** available during these months. We appreciate your cooperation. Thank you.

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## CHRISTMAS BASKETS

Our parish is collecting food items for Christmas. Please help us reach out to the needy in our area.

Items Needed:

Stuffing Mix	Canned Fruit
Broth	Packaged Cookies
Coffee/Tea (instant)	Jelly
Hot Chocolate	Hot Cereal packages
Apple Sauce	Canned Sweet Potatoes
Peanut Butter	Beef Stew
Soups	Spaghetti
Spaghetti Sauce	Macaroni & Cheese

If anyone wishes to donate a **Canned Ham** for this collection, please call the Rectory 622-5470 **before December 18<sup>th</sup>**.

Kindly place your donations in the baskets at the rear and side entrances of the church. Thank you.

*If you are a parishioner and experiencing hardship at this time of the year and would like a food basket for Christmas, please call the Rectory. All information will be kept confidential.*

## ADVENT

**Advent: Who is Waiting for Whom?**

**"Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled!"**

**We need not wait for God. God is always present... it is GOD who waits for US...**

**.. to notice**

..... waits for us to notice that we are indeed created by God. We are born with unique gifts and qualities as well as deficiencies and lack of qualities, God only sees our goodness, and waits for us to notice too.

..... waits for us to notice the myriad ways in which God is with us, always. We know the Creator in the beauty and amazing capacities of creation, both earth and human. We know the Creator when we experience love. We know the Creator when we cannot explain or understand mystery.

..... waits for us to notice when we observe people acting in the image of God: in covenant with one another, both those known and unknown, both those alike and those very different.

..... waits for us to notice the emptiness in our hearts that can only be filled by God's own Self.

..... in the season of Advent, as Christmas approaches, God waits for us to notice the wonder and innocence of little children. How God must long for us grownups to be more like them, without guile.

It is true that in Advent we wait; but really, it is God who waits for us. May we savor and revel in that reality.

Sallie Latkovich, CSJ

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## "ADVENT EVENSONG OF LIGHT"

St. John's is holding an ***"Advent Evensong of Light"*** on **Wednesday, December 16, 2009 at 7 PM.**

Please plan to come to celebrate Advent together as a parish family. Refreshments will be served after the service in Longinus Hall.

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## RECTORY OPEN HOUSE

All are welcome to stop by the Rectory on **Sunday, December 13th from 2 to 5 p.m.** or during office hours on weekdays.

## THANK YOU

A special thank you to **Nancy (Brahler) Newton & Mary Beth Brahler** for sharing their decorating talents with us. They very beautifully decorated the rectory for the holidays.

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**CHURCH DECORATING:** All are welcome to help decorate our church for Christmas. Please join us **Monday, December 21st at 7 p.m.**

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## CHRISTMAS PAGEANT CHILDREN'S CHOIR



All children in grades 1 through 6 are welcome to join the Children's Choir and Pageant for the 6:00 p.m. Mass on Christmas Eve. (Smaller children are also welcome to participate -- ages 5 and older)

The rehearsals for the choir and the pageant are scheduled on the same evening so that the children may participate in both if they choose to do so.

If you are interested, please call **Pat Lombel** at the **Rectory 622-5470** or **Sandy Clauser 622-4603** for more information. This is a wonderful way to be able to bring the story of Jesus' birth alive to the parish community during that Mass.



### Rehearsals

**Wednesday, December 16 – 5:30 p.m.**

**Pageant rehearsal followed by Choir**

**Tuesday, December 22 – 5:30 p.m.**

**(light supper) followed by**

**Dress Rehearsal for Pageant and Choir**

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## CHRISTMAS WAFERS "OPLATKI"

**What are Oplatki?** For centuries on Christmas Eve, families in Poland, Lithuania, the Czech and Slav Republics have practiced a beautiful tradition. It is the breaking and sharing of the Oplatek – Christmas Wafer. Oplatek taken from the Latin word oblatum, meaning Sacred Bread, has been the symbol of Christianity and Jesus Christ our bread of life since the Last Supper.

The host or hostess leads in a special prayer and distributes an oplatek to the participants. Each person breaks off a piece of the other's oplatek and continues until they have exchanged good wishes and blessings with everyone. **Oplatki are available at the Rectory.**

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## CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS

Eighth grade parishioners attending Catholic, public or private elementary or middle school are invited to apply for a one-year \$1,000 scholarship to attend one of the eight Catholic high schools of the Diocese of Allentown. Scholarships will be awarded on the basis of academic achievement, involvement in extracurricular activities, service to school, parish and community, and pastor, principal and teacher recommendations. Application forms are available at the parish office, school office or through the parish religious education program. **Completed applications must be submitted to the student's school by January 8, 2010**

## CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE 2009

### CHRISTMAS EVE MASSES

Thursday, December 24

4:00 p.m.

6:00 p.m. (Children's Mass)

10:00 p.m.

(German & English Carols at 9:30 p.m.)

### CHRISTMAS DAY MASS

Friday, December 25 -- 10:00 a.m. only

### THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH

Saturday, December 26 – 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 27 – 8:15 & 10:30 a.m.

### SOLEMNITY OF MARY

Thursday, December 31 – 5:00 p.m.

Friday, January 1 – 10:00 a.m. only

### SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturday, December 19: 4:00 to 4:45 p.m.

Monday, December 21: 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, December 22: 7:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, December 23: 7:00 to 7:30 p.m.

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## GOING TO CONFESSION



The Church designates this Advent Season of preparation as an important time to receive the sacrament of Penance also known as the Sacrament of Reconciliation. In this sacrament, we examine our life and we seek forgiveness for those things, those actions that keep us from letting the Lord more deeply in our heart.

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### *Need a Mass Card?*

There are Sisters of St. Joseph Mass Cards available in the rectory for various occasions including Perpetual and Annual Memorial cards, Sympathy, Thank You, sacraments: Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation, Wedding, Anniversary and Birthday etc. The cost is \$1.50; Perpetual Memorials are \$5.00.

**Novena Christmas Cards** are now available in the back of church after all Masses or at the Rectory during the week ... \$1.50 each.

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## GERTRUDE HAWK CANDY SALE

Orders can be picked up in Longinus Hall after all Masses next weekend ... **December 19/20.**

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## MAKE SOMEONE HAPPY

In addition to the Giving Tree Gifts, perhaps you'd like to send a Christmas greeting to our parishioners in nursing homes. Here's a list and their addresses:

### Rest Haven

401 University Drive, Sch.Haven, Pa. 17972  
Rita Downey

### Schuylkill Center

1000 Schuylkill Manor Road, Pottsville, Pa. 17901  
Kathleen Christ, Margaret Olliviere, Mary Steffan,  
Theresa Scott

### Seton Manor

1000 Seton Drive, Orwigsburg, Pa. 17901  
Ethel Dinger

### York Terrace

2401 W. Market St., Pottsville, Pa. 17901  
William Ash

## FAMILY MATTERS

**Families with Chronically Ill Children.** We lift up in prayer those families with chronically ill children. May they be nurtured and supported in their love and care of their children. Our parish will continue to hold all of you up in prayer.

*You pray for my family & I'll pray for yours.*

## ROSARY FOR LIFE

**When:** Sunday, December 27th  
(and every fourth Sunday of the month)

**Time:** 9:15 a.m.

**Where:** here at St. John's Church

**Who:** All are welcome from all churches

**Why:** because every 23 seconds a baby is aborted

**Contact:** Andrew Kubick 399-5102 or  
email [prayerforlife122@yahoo.com](mailto:prayerforlife122@yahoo.com)

## FREE CAREGIVING SESSIONS

PinnacleHealth Homecare & Hospice is offering an ongoing opportunity to network with other caregivers, learn about area resources, and take a welcomed "break" from your daily care-giving role. The free sessions will be held on the **First Monday of every month** from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the Lazy Dog Bistro Coffeehouse, 18 E. Sunbury St. in Minersville. If you would like more information, contact Lori Rossochacy at 628-2290 or 800-222-5236.

## RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS

**Religious face rising costs.** Data submitted to the National Religious Retirement Office reveals that the average annual cost of care for women and men religious age 70 and over has more than doubled since 1989. Current statistics put this figure at \$35,077 per person annually, with skilled care reaching nearly \$55,000. Your donation to the Retirement Fun for Religious provides critical support to religious institutes in meeting the escalating costs of elder care. Please pray for all religious and give generously to today's second collection. [www.retiredreligious.org](http://www.retiredreligious.org)

**FAMILY PERSPECTIVE: Unemployed and Underemployed** ... They are too often disappointed, frustrated and angry. They are the unemployed and underemployed members of our family, our neighbors, and our faithful parishioners. We pray for all our under and unemployed and ask God's guidance and direction for these family members, parishioners and struggling neighbors.

### Looking for a Christian Men's Group?

#### Searching for a Group of Like-Minded Men?

**Bridge Builders Men's Fellowship** may be the group for you! Meetings begin at 7 p.m. and last approximately one hour followed by a time of refreshments and fellowship.

Please consider joining our group. As the song says, "Come just as you are". **For more information call Bob Hahner 622-0223.**

**Our next meeting is scheduled for**

**Thursday, December 17th-7 p.m.**

**at First United Methodist Church, Port Carbon**

## gEnEsiS 1 Update (Youth Group)

### Christmas Dinner & Show Volunteers

(sponsored by the Alethia Club @ PAHS)

**Who?** Anyone in 6th-12th grade & adult helpers

**What?** Actors or Actresses, Servers, Kitchen Helpers, and Cooks

**Where & When?** At Foursquare Gospel on **December 19 @ 5:30pm**

### Christmas Ice Skating Party & Soup Kitchen

**Who?** Anyone in 6th-12th grade & adult helpers

**What?** Ice Skating @ Reading Bodyzone followed by Soup Kitchen volunteering

**Where & When?** **Wednesday, December 30<sup>th</sup>**, Meet in St. John's Parking Lot 10 a.m.; Soup Kitchen @ 4pm

**RSVP** by Sunday, December 20th

For more information, if you need a ride, or to sign-up for any event above, e-mail Rachael at [genesis1yg@aim.com](mailto:genesis1yg@aim.com) or call 570-581-6109.

## Responses at Parish Retreat ....

### What is right about your relationship with God?

- He is an important part of my day, he is a personal friend and companion.
- I feel his presence in my life on a moment to moment basis. My life is empty without Him. God has brought unbelievable people in my life who have touched me along the way.
- I feel closer everyday, daily I give thanks. I place more things in His time and place.
- I believe I'm honest with my prayer.
- It used to be that I was always trying to get God's approval, now I believe that God love me just as I am. I love being in His presence. I recognize when I am not walking with Him much sooner.
- I am more open to letting God guide me. I see Him more and more everyday in all aspect of life.
- Peaceful serenity. Before making decisions, I stop and think if the decision is what God would want me to do. Without God my life would be meaningless.
- I try to pray everyday. I give him my problems and joys.
- Besides the normal times of prayer, I feel more open to his voice, more willing to listen, more willing to follow.
- I believe that God is my Creator, Jesus my friend. God is my ultimate goal.

## ST. JOHN'S REMEMBERS

So many have been part of the lives of those who have served our Parish Family as Pastor or Pastoral Assistant. During this Holiday Season, please remember the following:

Rev. Frederick Sattler  
St. Ursula Rectory  
1300 Broadway  
Fountain Hill, Pa.18015

Rev. Donald Henry  
2506 Gulf Gate Drive  
Sarasota, Fla. 34231

Sister Judith Baldino  
2405 Gulf Gate Drive  
Sarasota, Fla. 34231

Sister Barbara Jean Wojnicki  
1814 Egyptian Way  
P.O. Box 530-959  
Grand Prairie, TX 75053

## MUSICIANS NEEDED FOR CHRISTMAS EVE MASS



Now is the time for us to know if you would like to play your brass, woodwind or percussive musical instrument with the combined choirs for the 10 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass. There are two or three rehearsals required. We welcome middle and high school age musicians (and older) who are comfortable playing in a band-type setting. Please contact Davis Derbes at 622-8804 or [daderbes@yahoo.com](mailto:daderbes@yahoo.com) for more information.

## RENEWING THE EARTH

"A just and sustainable society and world are not an optional ideal, but a moral and practical necessity. Without justice, a sustainable economy will be beyond reach. Without an ecologically responsible world economy, justice will be unachievable." (*U.S. Catholic Bishop, Renewing the Earth*).

*Let us greet Him with a song of praise, joyfully sing out our psalms.*  
Psalm 95:2

## OUTREACH PROGRAM REACH OUT and TOUCH SOMEONE

Call Margie Glunz 622-3067

Volunteers are needed!

Call us if you need us.



**YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

## CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE

Gift certificates for Giant, Waymart, and Weis Food stores are available at the rectory. Please call 622-5470 for more information. What a great gift-giving idea !!!

## Gift Cards to Benefit St. John's

Mark & Tina Seiger are selling Ribbon Gift Cards for the holidays to benefit St. John's. You can visit the site and order on-line at [mseiger.ordermygift.com](http://mseiger.ordermygift.com) or call 622-3558 for more information. Your purchase will financially help our parish.

*Everyday I will bless You; I will praise Your name forever.*  
Psalm 145:2

## ADVENT PRAYER

O  
Come  
Emmanuel.  
Come into our  
world and bring your  
peace. Come into our lives  
and grant us your favor. Come  
into our homes with your love  
stay with us, Lord Jesus throughout  
these days of Advent. Be with us wherever  
we go be with us in whatever we do. Prepare us  
for your birth. May your birth enlarge our hearts.  
May we prepare a place for you there. Jesus make room  
within our hearts for others. May your birth awaken us  
to the good news. Jesus make us worthy of you, O Lord  
Emmanuel  
God-With-Us  
Come

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## FROM OUR PARISH NURSE

... Janet Daubert

**Eating fish may reduce the risk of age-related macular degeneration (AMD)**, a leading cause of blindness, suggests a recent study from Tufts University. After analyzing the dietary intake of omega-3 fats in the nearly 3,000 people who took part in the Age Related Eye Disease Study, researchers found that those who ate the most of these marine fats had a reduced risk of advanced AMD. Some earlier studies found that people who regularly eat fish are less likely to develop AMD than those who consume little or no fish.

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**MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER:** *"The peace of God that surpasses all understanding ..."* (Philippians 4) is peace, love, and joy – what you really want for Christmas? A Marriage Encounter will help keep the spirit of the season in your heart all year long. The next weekend is February 12-14 in Bethlehem. Call 1-800-787-7679 or go online at [www.wwme-nepa.org](http://www.wwme-nepa.org) for information.

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**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED** ... The Schuylkill County **Meals on Wheels** Program needs **YOU**. Please help the senior citizens in the Pottsville area remain in their homes by helping to prepare or delivering a hot, nutritious meal at noontime on Mondays, Wednesday, or Fridays. For more information please call: Meals on Wheels 570-624-3023 or 1-800-621-6325.

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## NEIGHBORING EVENTS

**CHRISTMAS CARD PROJECT** The Broad Mt. Chapter 159th Engineer Combat Battalion Veterans WWII will conduct this project for our active duty service men and women for the 2009 Christmas season. Please send the names and addresses of any active duty person to the following address ASAP so they can be sent a Christmas card from "home". Thank you for supporting our troops Russell Ruch, 709 N. 7th St., Pottsville, Pa. 17901

**WREATHS FOR SALE** Nativity High School Green & Gold Booster Club is sponsoring this Christmas fundraiser of selling Fraser Fir Christmas Wreaths with Velvet Bow ... \$20.00 each .. 12" wreath (22-24" outside diameter). Wreaths can be picked up at Pioneer Evergreen Farms 366-2619 between November 27th and December 24th. For more information contact 640-8945 or 527-0520.

**BREAKFAST** sponsored by the Holy Name Society of St. Patrick's Parish on **Sunday, December 20<sup>th</sup>** from 8 to 12:30 at the parish center. Menu includes eggs, bacon, ham, sausage, homefries, pancakes, coffee, juice, dessert. Adults \$5.00; Children under 12 \$3.00; take-outs available.

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## SPONSOR OF THE WEEK

We appreciate advertisers who support St. John's by advertising in our bulletin. Please patronize their business and let them know you saw their ad in our bulletin.

### **Why Advertise in a Church Bulletin?**

- ^ It's inexpensive Advertising
  - ^ It's Effective in Catching New Neighbors' Attention
  - ^ It's Advertising Concentrated in Your Own Neighborhood
  - ^ It Develops Good Community Relationships
  - ^ It's Good For Developing Loyal Customers
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*Thou hast fixed all the bounds of the earth: Thou hast made summer and winter.*

Psalm 74:17

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