



UPLIFT Newsletter

The United
Presbyterian Church
of Blairsville, PA

AUGUST 2016

As I write, I'm sitting on a chair in the hallway of a hospital in Washington, DC waiting for Bobbi's father to be taken for surgery on his broken hip. Logistically, I'm within a mile of the White House, but I feel like a stranger in a strange land. The voices I hear range from Spanish to Arabic to Ethiopian to Hindi. The shades of skin are as varied as an Olympic Village. The wail of sirens makes me glad I'm where I am versus being outside. But I do not have the comfort of feeling safe, because I do not have the security of feeling in control. That sense is magnified all the more by the impending surgery with all its potential complications.

I'd rather have a bag of Milky Way bars than Forrest Gump's box of chocolates. With the Milky Ways you always know what you're going to get. Yet there is something to be said about not knowing, something to be said about not being in control of the situation, something to be gained by spending time in the mystery of the moment, something to be learned by just being, being held in the presence of God's hand and knowing that is enough.

As Elijah recoils in the cacophony on Mt. Horeb, he finds peace in the still small voice of God. As David ponders the uncertainties of living in the midst of nations rising and falling, he is comforted by the heavenly voice that says, "Be still and know that I am God." As Jesus is roused from sleep in the back of a boat that is being swamped by waves, he hears the cry's of helplessness, "Lord, save us, we're perishing." And with a word, he rebukes the wind and there was a dead calm that led to a living peace.

Those areas of life where we feel most vulnerable change as the years pass. What overwhelmed me in my youth doesn't phase me for a moment now. And what I once didn't give a second thought now consumes me as I think about tomorrow. I am constantly changing. The world is ever changing. Even the church, with all its frailties, is in a state of flux. I can relate all too well to David and Elijah and those disciples. Weeping Jeremiah laments, "He has made my teeth grind on gravel, and made me cower in ashes. My soul is bereft of peace and I have forgotten what happiness is...My soul continually thinks of it and is bowed down within me. But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope. The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end. They are new every morning, great is thy faithfulness." (Lamentations 3)

Moses asks God his name and God replies, "My names is Yahweh, I am that I am." There is power and comfort in that name, for it discloses and assures us of the nature of God. No matter where we are—"I am" is there. No matter how we are "I am" understands what we feel. No matter what we're facing, "I am" stands with us as a very present help in times of trouble, therefore we need not fear.

Bobbi's father came through his surgery, but as he was going into it, he was prepared for whatever outcome. In these uncertain times, be certain of this, where you are, God is. And where you are going, God is already there. Our circumstances will always be in a state of flux, but God's faithfulness never fails us. Whether on the mountaintop or lingering in the valley of the shadows, we walk by faith and not by sight, trusting the Holy One who holds us in life and death and resurrection hope. May you sense his presence and know his peace.....

In Christ's love,

Pastor Jim

Scripture Texts for Worship

The scripture texts for August are given for your study in preparation for Worship.

Sunday, August 7

Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16
Luke 12:32-40

Sunday, August 14

Hebrews 11:29-12:2
Luke 12:49-56

Sunday, August 21

Jeremiah 1:4-10
Luke 13:10-17

Sunday, August 28

Jeremiah 2:4-13
Luke 14:1, 7-14

Sunday, September 4

Jeremiah 18:1-11
Luke 14:25-33

Worship Schedule

Summer 10:00 am
Sundays, August 7—September 4

Regular 11:00 am
Sunday School 9:45 am

Begins Sunday, September 11

Choir News

The Choir Picnic will be held Sunday, August 28th at 1:30 pm at the Borbonus Farm. Choir members, present & past and anyone interested in joining the choir is invited to attend. Bring a dish to share, your bathing suit and towel. It will be a great day of fellowship. Our first rehearsal will be Wednesday, September 7th at 7:00 pm and we will begin singing during worship Sunday September 11th.

Newsletter

Articles for the September edition of the UPLIFT newsletter should be to the office by Monday, August 15th.

Worship Assistants

August 7

Liturgist: Jean Heberling
Acolyte: Brylea Borbonus
Music: Angela Lyons
Flowers: Naomi Sigafoes
Ushers: Judy Trimble, Paul Soltesz,
Rick & Willa Shoemaker
Projector: Blake Tonkin
Audio: Mitchell Tonkin

August 14

Liturgist: Mary Anzelone
Acolyte: Eli Borbonus
Music: Henry Foder
Ushers: Bonni Dunlap, Mary Anzelone
Projector: Jonathan Clayton
Audio: Alex Baker

Military Honor Roll

We have become aware of the need to update our member military Honor Roll located at the back of the sanctuary. If you served in the military, please check the Honor Roll to see if you have been included. If we missed you, please contact the church office at 724-459-7991 or upchurch@r-church.com.

Blanket Offering Update

On Mother's Day, May 8, 2016, we received our annual Blanket Offering which is sent to Church World Services to provide blankets nationally and globally to those in the midst of crisis. This year we received and sent \$1,000 which provided 100 blankets. Recently we received information about where some of the blankets are used.

Keeping families warm on the move...

Be the end of 2015, more than 815,000 refugees and migrants had passed through Serbia on their way to the European Union. Most of those entering Serbia stop at the registration center in Presevo, where, with your support, CWS and partners are providing critical supplies to those who are facing their darkest hours far from home.

Among these supplies are blankets. CWS shipped a 20-foot container to Serbia with blankets and kits, including baby blankets and both heavy and lightweight blankets. Because of your support, more families making that arduous trip have an extra bit of warmth and comfort.

August 21

Liturgist: Heather Hartmann
Acolyte: Olivia Eckenroad
Music: Betsy Holby
Flowers: Annabel Machak
Ushers: Naomi Sigafoes, Emma Riggi, Judy Trimble
Projector: Shakira McKinney
Audio: Jaison McKinney

August 28

Liturgist: Bobbi Monroe
Music: Adam Loucks
Flowers: Rick & Willa Shoemaker
Ushers: Ron & Kim McKinney,
Projector: Kayla Moran
Audio: Tyler Moran

Offering Counters

Joanne Torrance and Naomi Sigafoes

Special Offering

A Compassion offering will be received Sunday, August 14th during worship for the support of three children. They include: Vestine Hagenimana and Samuel Mutabazi from Rwanda, and Jeferson Morales from Colombia. During the Sunday school year, offerings through the Sunday school are used for compassion support, however during the summer months special offerings are received for this purpose.

Welcome Our Newest Members

The 2016 Confirmation Class was received on May 15, 2016. Eight young people joined our church family. We'll introduce some of them in this edition.

Harrison Gilligan has completed the 7th grade at Blairsville Middle School. He is the son of Leroy and Patti and brother to Sean. Harrison enjoys tossing the football, playing dodgeball and running. He has been involved in the church helping out with Vacation Bible School and the Thanksgiving Dinner. He would like to continue to work with Vacation Bible School.

Daniel Kukula is the son of Hank and Marilyn Kukula and brother to Joe and Amy. He completed 7th grade at Blairsville Middle School. Daniel enjoys musical theater, chorus, singing, outdoor activities like hunting and fishing. He has grown up in this church attending Sunday School and Vacation Bible School and has sang during worship. Daniel would like to help with the projector during worship and also sing in the future.

Cole Stuchal will be in the 6th grade at Blairsville Middle School. He is the son of Scott and Ann Stuchal and brother to Chase. Cole enjoys sports including baseball, wrestling and golf. You may have seen him around the church. He attends Sunday school and has been an acolyte.

Harvest Home Festival 2016

The Harvest Home Festival is held on Sunday each year at the Indiana County Fair. This year it will be Sunday, August 28th at 7:30 p.m. in the Grandstand. Miracle Mountain Ranch will be the presentation. It is a western-themed retreat center and summer camp that holds to high standards of excellence in facility, ministry and message. As a non-profit, non-denominational organization, they are home to one of America's largest Christian Summer Camp horse programs and offer many program activities, non-horse events, and a college-level School of Discipleship. Located in Spring Creek, PA they are approximately 40 miles SE of Erie and 23 miles W of Warren.

Compassion Kids News

Dear Friends,

I greet you wishing you are well. This time I want to tell you that I am not studying right now, but I want to validate on Saturdays in order to be able to continue my studies. Right now I help my mom with the house chores. Someday I would like to meet you and be good friends and someday study Italian with you. I want to tell you that I like soccer, and I also would like to learn more about soccer. I want to answer your question, in my daily life I help my mom with house chores. Yes, I have a sister, her name is Tania Morales and she is 14 years old and lives with me. I would like you would pray for my family's unity and my mom's that we will always be together. How is your family like? What language would you like to learn?

I want you to read 1 Timothy 4:12. I say goodbye in Jesus' name.

From,

Jefferson Morales From Colombia

Family Fun

Family Nature Palooza will be held Saturday, August 13th from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at Blue Spruce Park. The day will be filled with activities best suited for children ages 8-13, but all ages are welcome to enjoy. Cost for the day is \$5 per family pre-registered or \$7 per family day of the event. To register or for more information call 724-463-8200 x4218. Sponsored by the Children's Advisory Commission. Information will be available about joining 4-H, Scouts, Evergreen Boys & Girls Clubs, and CAC's Tweens & Teens group.

Financial Literacy Collaboration

Do you run out of money before you run out of month? The Financial Literacy Workshops can help. They are interactive and FREE. Below is the schedule.

August 10 5:45 pm—8:30 pm
ICCAP Office, 827 Water Street, Indiana

September 14..... 8:45 am—12:15 pm
PA Careerlink Bldg., 300 Indian Springs Rd, Indiana

October 12 8:45 am—12:15 pm
PA Careerlink Bldg., 300 Indian Springs Rd, Indiana

November 9 5:45 pm—8:30 pm
ICCAP Office, 827 Water Street, Indiana

December 14..... 12:45 pm—3:30 pm
PA Careerlink Bldg., 300 Indian Springs Rd, Indiana

For more information, contact FLCindco@gmail.com or call Family Promise at 724-464-5220.

Minute for Mission

Education Requires Sacrifice and a Passion for Learning

I'd seen Paul Sinette standing outside the gate when I left my house that morning. Paul Sinette works in my house, usually showing up about 9:30 each morning. She cooks, cleans house and generally makes my life better. She teaches me about the culture of Haiti by sharing her life with me. She tries hard to understand the American lifestyle that I often revert to, sometimes preferring French fries and macaroni and cheese to the

Creole meals of rice and beans, soups and natural juices. But mostly, through her devotion to her 10-year-old son, Carlins, she teaches me the value of an education in this impoverished country.

That morning, Paul Sinette seemed surprised to see me leaving so early. She grinned at me and said in Creole that she was waiting for the shoeshine guy to finish with the boots. She didn't have to tell me whose they were. She has a special grin she shares when anything has to do with Carlins. He's a tall boy, funny and studious with a touch of mischief. Paul Sinette tells me of his misadventures—crashing the secondhand bike she found for him for Christmas, trying to get out of his homework with funny stories and making excuses when his grades slipped one grading period. And then there's the morning that Paul Sinette came rushing into the house with a manila envelope. She pulled out Carlin's report card. ALL of his grades had gone up.

Still grinning, she carefully put the report card back into the envelope and tucked it into her purse. One afternoon when school dismissed early, Carlins came to the house to wait for his mom. While she finished working, he completed his homework.

The United Nations Development Program reports that Haitians who are 25 and older received on average only 4.9 years of education, and only 29% attended secondary school. According to World Bank statistics, even though as many as 90% of Haitian children are enrolled in school, less than 30% are at the age-appropriate grade level. And 80% of schools in Haiti are operated by private organizations, rather than the Haitian government. A good number of the private schools are sponsored in part by Presbyterian Church (USA) congregations. The parents I know in Haiti have a strong desire to send their children to school. They sacrifice to pay the tuition, and they will find the best schools they can afford. Paul Sinette stopped going to school when she was 10. She'd gotten sick, and by the time she recovered, her parents could no longer afford the fees. But her child will go to school. No matter the cost. No matter the sacrifice.

I caught myself glancing at Carlins' boots sitting in my kitchen most of that afternoon. They reminded me, again, of the work so many of us are doing here to improve the lives of Haitian people. And they reminded me, especially, of what the Haitian people are doing for themselves.

By Cindy Corell, Haitian mission co-worker

