



UPLIFT Newsletter

The United
Presbyterian Church
of Blairsville, PA

JANUARY 2016

George brought his boss home for dinner. As he helped his wife in the kitchen, he entrusted his employer to his five year old son in the living room. As they sat there, the silence became a bit awkward. George, Jr. then spoke up, "So, my Dad says you're a self-made man." The boss sat up with pride and replied—"Why, yes I am." George asked, "If you're a self made man, then why did you make yourself the way you are?"

There is that part of us that likes to think we've arrived where we are in our success as a result of our own doing. But truth be known, the only reason we've scored a run is because we've been born on third base. Think about the advantages you've had to get you where you are. Maybe you were born into a healthy family where you learned what it meant to be safe and cared for. Maybe you had the benefits of a good education. Maybe you were fortunate to have mentors who taught by good example and gave you opportunities to get a foot up in the world. Maybe you have skills and abilities that are above average. Maybe you found yourself at the right place at the right time. Maybe you have a strong work ethic that drives you. There are hundreds of "maybes" that come into play in our lives, but none of them are of our own making.

We are who we are and we have what we have because we've been blessed by God. He is the giver of every good and perfect gift. To be sure the words "good" and "success" are relative terms seen in the context of God's perspective and the world's point of view. There are those who own virtually nothing yet who know themselves to be among the most blessed because they see themselves enveloped in the goodness of the Lord. You see its not the size of the gift that has value, it is the realization of the love which the gift has been given that makes it a treasure.

A basic tenet of our faith is found in Psalm 24, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness there of, the world and all that dwells in it." There is nothing about us that is self made. Every good thing we enjoy in life is God made and God given. Yes, we work hard and achieve earthly successes—but it is only by God's initiative and grace that we persevere. God gave us the resources, the tools, the knowledge, the energy, the opportunities to succeed. Therefore the fruits of our life really belong to him—our family, our service, our worship, our work.

At every turn, God takes the initiative in us. Our duty is to respond in an appropriate manner, in a way that points back to him and gives him the praise. We are stewards of the mysteries of God, handling the things of God with great care. And at the same time, we are stewards of the blessings of God called to use those things entrusted to our care in the right way. That reality raises some questions about discipleship. Am I using my time in a way that pleases God? Am I using my resources to further the work of Christ's kingdom? Am I being to others who Jesus has been to me? Having received grace, am I being gracious? Having been forgiven am I willing to forgive others? Having been loved with all my imperfections, am I willing to love and accept those who are not perfect? By the way I live my life, can the world see that I have been created in the image of God—and does that reflection brighten the darkness of the world?

As you begin this New Year, take stock of the ways you've been blessed. Take an inventory of those things that have been entrusted to your care. And then seek God's guidance as to how you can share them faithfully by being a blessing to others.....

In Christ's love,

Pastor Jim



Worship Assistants

January 3

Liturgist: Mary Anzelone
Ushers: Doug Clayton, Dennis Gould,
Tom Smith, Pat Swope
Projector: Jonathan Clayton
Audio: Alex Baker

January 10

Liturgist: Brent Ritchie
Projector: Shakira McKinney
Audio: Jaison McKinney

January 17

Liturgist: Tom Smith
Flowers: Cindy Borbonus
Projector: Kayla Moran
Audio: Tyler Moran

January 24

Liturgist: Dennis Gould
Minister: Roger Petersen
Projector: Blake Tonkin
Audio: Mitchell Tonkin

January 31

Liturgist: Gene Artman
Minister: Ron Libengood
Projector: Jonathan Clayton
Audio: Alex Baker

Offering Counters

Bob and Diane Hanna

In Memorium

Ralph B. Housholder

Born—

May 22, 1933

Entered the Church

Triumphant—

December 15, 2015

Scripture Texts for Worship

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

Sunday, January 3

Jeremiah 31:7-14

Ephesians 1:3-14

Sunday, January 10

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

Isaiah 43:1-7

Sunday, January 17

Isaiah 62:1-5

John 2:1-11

Sunday, January 24

Guest minister

Sunday, January 31

Guest minister

Sunday, February 7

II Corinthians 3:12-4:2

Luke 9:28-43

Newsletter

Articles for the February edition of the UPLIFT newsletter should be to the office by Friday, January 15th.

Annual Meeting of the Congregation

On Sunday, February 7th following worship, we will hold our Annual Congregational Meeting in Fellowship Hall. A light lunch will be provided. The work of the church during 2015 will be reviewed and the 2016 Nominating Committee will be elected. If you have any items to be discussed, please let Pastor Monroe know by Sunday, January 17th so that they can be reviewed by the Session before the meeting.

2016 Per Capita Update

Per Capita, literally “per head”, is the amount requested from each member to cover the administrative expenses of the General Assembly, Synod and Presbytery. For 2016, that amount is \$28.20 per member on the active roll. That breaks down to: General Assembly—\$7.12, Synod—\$2.30, and Presbytery—\$18.78. The Session has taken action to withhold all per capita to General Assembly with the exception of contributions given with specific designation to it. Per Capita sent to support Synod and Presbytery is NOT used to support the General Assembly. For this reason, the session sees that those funds are paid unless you request that your share not be. Your box of offering envelopes included a letter explaining your options with regards to your per capita. If you have questions or need a copy of the letter, please contact the church office or see Pastor Monroe. We want to honor your intentions for your gifts to the work of the church.



January 2016

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS AND HAPPENINGS



HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM CHRISTIAN EDUCATION!

We had a wonderful year in 2015, our church is very supportive of all of our efforts in the Christian Education program. We are praying that 2016 will be just as rewarding.

- **There will NOT be a Christian Education Meeting in January. We will begin again on Tuesday, February 9 at 6:00 PM. Anyone who is interested in our Christian Education Program is welcomed and encouraged to attend our meetings.**
- **We will be starting a Confirmation Class beginning in Mid to Late March. More information will be forthcoming in the February's UPLIFT.**
- **We have a full line up of Children's Programming coming this year. We hope that all children will participate beginning with:**

COME JOIN THE FUN AT:

WHEN~~~~FEBRUARY 13, 2016



"WINTERFEST 2016"

From 1:00 to 3:00 PM



We will have a lot of fun for all! We will have some crafts, hear a story, and hopefully build a snowman out doors so bring your outside clothes if it snows. We will have hot chocolate and other good things going on that day.



QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS? contact Deb Lint

WINTERFEST 2016 FEBRUARY 13 FROM 1 TO 3 PM

NAME _____ AGE _____

PARENTS _____ PHONE # _____

Please register by February 6

Place this form in the collection plate or drop it off in the church office.



Oh the Fun...Game Night

Have you been wandering aimlessly in the *Trivial Pursuit* of a fun evening and don't have a *Clue* what to do? Has the weather made it impossible to *Go Fish*? Well, the *Buzzword* on the street is that on **Friday, January 15th at 6:00 PM**, the Fellowship Committee has a *Monopoly* on an activity for you that will *Boggle* your mind. We don't want to *Twister* arm, but we know that you'll be *Sorry* if you miss out on the *Oodles* of fun that night. Once the games begin, there may be an *Outburst* or two, but that's just part of the fun. There's something for everyone, including all you *Old Maids* out there. So come one and all, friends included, and bring your favorite snack to share and a game, if you would like to. Drinks will be provided and games will be available. Who knows, by the end of the evening, you may become the numero *Uno* of board games!

To the Session and Congregation,
It is a blessing for us to be able to minister in our various ways in the church. Thank you for your kindness at Christmas and throughout the year. We look forward to a blessed and happy New Year in 2016!

The Staff,
Cindy, Marilyn, Sandy
Peg, and Jill

The Session

Class of 2016
Elaine Jellison
Deb Lint
Tom Smith
Pat Swope

Class of 2017
Gene Artman
Becky Bence
Dennis Gould
Nancy Hartmann

Class of 2018
Doug Clayton
Bob Cosharek
Rose Lewis
Kim McKinney

Board of Deacons

Class of 2016
Ken Doak
Ruie Gressley
Bobbi Monroe
Lori Smith
Judy Trimble

Class of 2017
Mary Anzelone
Andrea Clayton
Joan Moran
Naomi Sigafos
Paul Soltesz

Class of 2018
Erica Ash
Susie Cotti
Jean Heberling
Marilyn Neal

Financial Workshops

A financial literacy collaboration is making available to the community several financial workshops. All workshops will be held in the small conference room in the PA Careerlink building at 300 Indian Springs Road, Indiana from 8:45 AM to 12:15 PM. Topics will include:

- * Wants vs. Needs
- * Tracking Spending Habits
- * Preparing a Budget
- * Living Within Your Needs
- * Saving Money & Debt Repayment

The workshops are being offered free of charge.

Dates of the workshops are: January 13, February 10, March 9, and April 13. Contact FLCindco@gmail.com or call Family Promise at 724-464-5220 for more information. You must pre-register by calling Family Promise.

APPRISE Program

APPRISE is a free health insurance counseling program designed to help all Pennsylvanians with Medicare. Counselors are specially trained staff and volunteers who can answer your questions about Medicare and provide you with objective, easy-to-understand information about Medicare. They can also help with: Medicare Prescription Drug Plans (Part D), Medicare Advantage Plans, Medicare Supplemental Insurance (Medigap), Medicaid, Long-Term Care Insurance, Screening and applying for financial assistance program, and fraud & abuse. You can reach the APPRISE Program by calling 1-800-442-8016.

Vaccinations

The Dept. of Health will offer free or low cost vaccinations to those uninsured or underinsured at the Blairsville Community Center from 9:45-11:15 AM, January 20th, February 17th, March 16th and April 20th. Please call the Dept. of Health to schedule an appointment 724-357-2995.

2015 Year End Reports

Committee chairs and treasurers are asked to write a report to include in the annual report for the Congregational Meeting to be held Sunday, February 7th following worship. Please have your report to the church office by Sunday, January 31st. If you have any questions or need information from the office, contact Jill during office hours at 724-459-7991 or email at upchurch@r-church.com.

2015 Year End Financial Statements

Financial statements of your giving will be mailed to each household mid to late January. If you would like your statement earlier, contact the church office.

2016 Flower Chart

The Flower Chart for 2016 has been posted in the hallway outside the office. Take time today to sign-up for your choice of dates. Flowers are placed on the organ during worship and can be taken home with you following the service. Flower arrangements are \$20 each and checks can be made payable to the: Board of Deacons.

2016 Offering Envelopes

Offering envelopes for the New Year are in the back of the sanctuary for you to pick up. Please look for your name as some of the numbers have changed. If you do not have envelopes and would like a set, please contact Jill in the church office at 724-459-7991 or see Pastor Monroe.

Family Promise News

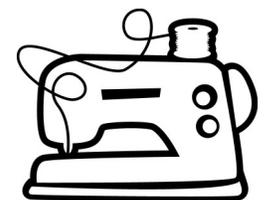
In 2016 we will again be a host site for the Family Promise Program of Indiana County. We are scheduled to host families the weeks of: **January 3-10, May 15-22, August 21-28 and October 30-November 6.** Family Promise works with local churches and is a program that helps homeless families. The program provides a safe place to stay and helps families work on a plan to move forward. If you would like to volunteer to help during our host weeks, please contact Gene Artman or Pastor Monroe.

Thank You Church Leaders

We thank Nancy Boone, Linda George, Tom Holby, Beverly Lindsey and Kim McKinney for their faithful service as deacons and we thank Bonni Dunlap, Irving Lindsey and Rick Shoemaker for their leadership as elders.

Quilt...Hand-made by the Grannies

The Grannies are always very busy working on projects for others. They fund their endeavors by making available some of their projects to purchase. The most recent project is a quilt, on display at the back of the sanctuary. They are taking bids for the quilt as a silent auction. If you are interested, please take time to place your offer in the container. The proceeds will benefit future projects of the group which in turn will help someone in need. The bidding will soon come to an end so if you're interested, please be sure to get your offer in soon.



2016 Communion Dates

January 10—Baptism of the Lord
February 10—Ash Wednesday
March 6—Sunday
May 15—Pentecost
June—tbd
September 11—Sunday
October 2—Worldwide communion
November 20—Christ the King Sunday
December 24—Christmas Eve

Souper Bowl Offering

Since 1990, young people have been leading the charge and inspiring others to collect dollars and food around the time of the BIG Game. The money and food collected then is given, 100%, to a local charity. More than \$110 million has been collected, changing the nation's largest weekend of football into the largest weekend of caring. We will receive our Souper Bowl of Caring Offering Sunday, February 7th during morning worship. One hundred percent of these gifts will be sent to the ICCAP Food Bank.

Minute for Mission—Presbytery of Charleston-Atlantic

The Rev. Alonza Washington was in the middle of Vacation Bible School at Wallingford Presbyterian Church in Charleston, South Carolina, when he heard about the shooting at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church just down the street. Three men and six women were gunned down while attending a prayer meeting. A 21-year-old white man, Dylann Storm Roof, was later arrested. For Washington, the shooting was personal. "I knew the pastor, Rev. Clementa Pinckney, very well. We were good friends and colleagues," said Washington. "I've worshipped at Emanuel, preached there and our congregation has family there."

Washington knows all too well how to respond to crises in a community. The pastor serves as part of the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance National Response Team. The team is called upon in times of natural and human-caused disasters. Like many Charleston ministers, Washington was at Emanuel the next morning to pray with and minister to family members and others who gathered at a prayer vigil to remember the nine victims. The pastor said there was an overflowing crowd of clergy, elected officials and others speaking out against gun violence and the need for whites, blacks, poor and wealthy to speak with one voice. "What really echoed to me is that despite this evil act, God is going to raise us up and help us stand together," Washington said. "Our legislature has not done a good job of raising the consciousness toward gun violence. The legislators attending the vigil say we are going to have to change that."

Despite the knowledge that it was likely a "hate crime," Washington said he has already seen many signs that give him reason for hope, including a young white mother bringing her daughter to leave flowers at a memorial outside the church building. "To see a young mother talking to her child about what has happened gives me great hope that despite the tragedy, we can heal," he said. "It's going to take our young people, both white and black, to join together in love and unity." PC(USA) leaders offered a prayer saying "...we pray for an end to the continued racial unrest and violence that permeates the United States and the world, and ask you (God) to guide us to work earnestly for change." "My hope is God will use this incident to encourage the church to stand up and draw people together", Washington said. There must be peace and justice, and we must seek to live in the right relationship with God and one another."

Rick Jones

Compassion News

Dear United Presbyterian Sunday School,

Hello beloved sponsor! How are you doing? My family and I are all doing well. Currently we are in the rainy season. We are sowing different crops and we hope that we will have a good harvest.

In school I am doing well. There is no problem. Please keep on praying for me, I will be praying for you too.

May God's protection be upon you!

Thank you,
Samuel Mutabazi
Rwanda

