



UPLIFT Newsletter

The United
Presbyterian Church
of Blairsville, PA

FEBRUARY 2018

I will always remember that June morning in 1982. I had moved into an apartment across the street from the Cherry Tree Presbyterian Church to which I had been called to serve. My books lined the shelves in the church office. My dish was well stocked with every stationary item you can image. It was 8:30 and I was officially starting my ministry. Everything was in place. I had completed my academic degrees, passed my national competency exams, fulfilled all my ordination requirements. My credentials were displayed on the wall. My business cards were in my pocket. The only thing I had left to do was answer one question – “What do I do now?”

That’s a question we often ask – what should I be doing to be true to my call? How and where should I be investing my life in the work of the Kingdom? Over 160 years ago, the United Presbyterian Church of North America identified six objectives God’s people should be about. We call them the Six Great Ends of the Church, and they still give focus and direction to our collective ministry. We do well to assess our work in their context. The great ends of the church are:

the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind.

Is the good news that Jesus Christ has saved us being shared within and outside our walls? Is the truth of who Jesus is being taught in our education programs? Is the message of God’s grace being proclaimed from our pulpit? Are we as a congregation spreading that word to our neighbors near and far? Are we as individuals making it known in our personal relationships?

the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God.

In response to the ways God has reached out to us, we reach out to others. As a congregation, we have been faithful vessels of grace. Each month hundreds receive food. Four weeks each year we supply a safe place to be called home, for those who have no other place to stay. Every month and a half we extend the hospitality of a home cooked meal to students. Each week our doors are open to be used by community groups who seek to do good, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, WIC program, Historical Society, tutoring.

the maintenance of divine worship.

We work with sister congregations in our community to provide places where people can come to join in praise to God. While to much of the world “faith” is a byword, we provide opportunities to express our thanks to the Lord who has given us life. To be sure, God can be glorified while walking in the woods, but as a people of faith we are called to gather in one voice to declare our love for him and to celebrate his love for us.

the preservation of the truth.

In a world where many feel truth is subjective, the church is called to uphold that which God establishes as true. Ours is a prophetic voice, naming that which is not of God as false and working to silence it. At the same time we make known that which is of God and call the world to repent and to return to it so that we are faithful to the Lord’s ways.

the promotion of social righteousness.

The Bible never teaches that everyone should have as much as everyone else. Some are blessed more than others. What the Bible does teach is that everyone should have what they need to be safe, to be loved, to be sheltered, to be given opportunities to enjoy basic human rights. Having

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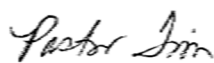
been blessed, we are called to be a blessing to others. As a church, we guide society to live by godly principles, like justice, peace and freedom. We stand for those who are alone, we speak for those who are silenced, we lift up those who have been put down.

the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.

As the church, we are called to live out our lives as a reflection of God's Kingdom – offering a glimpse of heaven to a tired, worn world. As the Holy Spirit fills the church, our witness to the Holy can be seen by others. As a people of faith, we are noticeably different. Our vision of what God holds for us is one of hope. While in this world, we are not of this world. Through the way we live, the world is assured that what will be is better than what is.

These are some of the things we are to be about as the church. As a congregation we have been faithful to our call, yet we must be careful lest we become complacent. May we continue to be open to those new ministries to which we are being called, and may we respond by giving our all as we have been given God's all.....

In Christ's love,



March Newsletter

Articles to be published in the March edition of the UPLIFT newsletter are due to the church office by Thursday, February 15th. Please call the office with any questions or concerns.

Scripture Texts for Worship

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

Sunday, February 4

Isaiah 40:21-31

Mark 1:29-39

Sunday, February 11

II Corinthians 4:3-6

Mark 9:2-9

Ash Wednesday, February 14

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

II Corinthians 5:20-6:10

Sunday, February 18

I Peter 3:18-22

Mark 1:9-15

Sunday, February 25

Romans 4:13-25

Mark 8:31-38

Sunday, March 4

Exodus 20:1-17

John 2:13-22

Ash Wednesday

We will gather for worship at 7:00 p.m. on Ash Wednesday, February 14th. There will be the imposition of ashes for those who wish to receive them and the Lord's Supper will be celebrated.

Lenten Devotionals

This year's Lent devotional booklet is entitled, "Practicing LOVE." Practicing love for Lent can deepen your faith in times of difficulty just as much as in times of great joy. Join us in practicing love at home so that it can spill out into a world longing for God's love. Devotionals will be available for you to pick up at the back of the sanctuary Sunday, February 11th.

Worship Assistants

February 4

Liturgist: Mary Anzelone

Acolyte: Brylea Borbonus

Flowers: Steve & Joan Moran

Ushers: Brent & Tammy Ritchie

Janet Schreiber

Naomi Sigafos

Projector: Alex Kirkland

Audio: Andrew Baker

February 11—Scout Sunday

Liturgist: Bonni Dunlap

Acolyte: Willow Weimer

Flowers: Bonni Dunlap

Ushers: Boy Scout Troop 4

Projector: Shakira McKinney

Audio: Jaison McKinney

February 14—Ash Wednesday

Liturgist: Bobbi Monroe

February 18

Liturgist: Dennis Gould

Flowers: Nancy Boone

Ushers: Bonni Dunlap, Tom Smith

Doug Clayton, Pat Swope

Projector: Blake Tonkin

Audio: Elizabeth Bruner

February 25—Communion

Liturgist: Rick Shoemaker

Flowers: Sue Harvey

Ushers: Todd & Stacy Faulk

Projector: Shakira McKinney

Audio: Jaison McKinney

Offering Counters

Tom & Janet Smith

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. 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 4th during morning worship. One hundred percent of these gifts will be sent to the ICCAP Food Bank. Please prayerfully consider your gift.

Consider Taking Part

The Session Committees for 2018 are looking for interested members to be active participants. Chairs for the committees were determined at the January Session meeting. Please review the committees and responsibilities of the committees and consider serving.

Worship – Worship services, sacraments, music, funerals, weddings—Elaine Jellison, chair

Mission – Benevolences, special offerings, global & local missions and missionaries—Joan Moran, chair

Christian Education – Sunday school programs, curriculum, adult education, youth work, leadership education—Kim McKinney, chair

Finance – Finances, special funds, and annual budget—Rick Shoemaker, chair

Stewardship – Stewardship education and programs, challenges the congregation in its faithful use of the many different resources entrusted to our care - Rick Shoemaker, chair

Property & Maintenance – Construction, maintenance, repairs, housekeeping, safety, security, yard work, inventory—Bob Cosharek, chair

Congregational Fellowship – Suppers, Dinner Theater, picnics, outings, trips, camping—Joan Moran and Elaine Jellison, co-chairs

Evangelism – New member recruitment and assimilation, outreach, publicity—Kim McKinney, chair

2018 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 2018, that amount is \$31.30 per member on the active roll. That breaks down to: General Assembly—\$7.73, Synod—\$2.30, and Presbytery—\$21.27. 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 January newsletter 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.

Annual Meeting of the Congregation

On Sunday, January 28th following worship, we held our Annual Congregational Meeting in Fellowship Hall. A light lunch was enjoyed by all. Thank you to those who prepared and served the food. The work of the church during 2017 was reviewed and the 2018 Nominating Committee was elected. Reports distributed at this meeting are available at the back of the sanctuary for those who were unable to attend.

WyoTech Luncheon

A WyoTech Luncheon is planned for Tuesday, February 20th at 11:00 a.m. The luncheons are an outreach ministry of the Mission Committee and friends. If you would like to help with the luncheon, please see Pastor Monroe or Joan Moran.

Dates to Remember for the Season of Lent and Easter

February 14

Ash Wednesday Worship, 7:00 pm

Wednesdays

Lenten Lunches, 12:00 pm

March 7

We host Lenten Lunch, 12:00 pm

March 24

Easter Eggstravaganza, 10:00 am

March 25

Palm Sunday

March 29

Maundy Thursday

Worship & Communion, 7:00 pm

March 30

Community Good Friday

Abundant Grace Church, 7:00 pm

April 1

Early Easter Worship

Easter Breakfast

Easter Worship, 11:00 am



Community Lenten Mid-week Services

The Blairsville Area Ministerium will offer community Lenten services followed by a light lunch. Beginning Ash Wednesday, February 14th, a service will be held at 12:00 noon followed by a light lunch. The schedule is as follows:

February 14	Black Lick United Methodist Church.....	Rev. Ryan Kobert
February 21	Hebron Lutheran Church.....	Rev. John Buchmann
February 28	C&MA Church	Rev. Brett Dinger
March 7	United Presbyterian Church	Rev. Rusty McClurg
March 14	First United Methodist Church.....	Rev. Steve Bugay
March 21	Hopewell Methodist Church.....	Rev. Harold Hicks
March 28	SS Simon & Jude Church	Rev. Tim Monroe
Good Friday	Abundant Grace Church	Rev. Cory Braatz
March 30—7:00 p.m.		

Torrance Hospital Donations

Through out the year the deacons will be collecting items for either Torrance State Hospital patients or for the Pathway Homeless Shelter in Black Lick. During the months of February and March the Deacons will be collecting the following items for Torrance State Hospital patients: gently used or new suitcases, body wash, and men's and women's deodorant. You may leave the items in the box in the back of the sanctuary marked for Torrance State Hospital. Please watch your bulletins and newsletters for updates throughout the year.

Hometown Hero Banner Program

The American Legion Auxiliary Unit #407 sponsors the veterans' appreciation project, the Veteran's Banner Project. Through this endeavor, full-color banners honoring our Hometown Heroes are erected on utility poles on many of the borough's streets and even extending along Old Route 22 into Burrell Township. Space is available for hundreds of banners, each showcasing an individual's photograph, branch of service, and era of service for a veteran or active duty service member. Each banner has a sponsor to cover the \$150.00 cost. Most sponsorships come from individuals or families. A maintenance fund has been established to cover replacement costs. For more information, contact Marge Patz for the auxiliary at 724-459-5679 or David Chaek at 724-459-0292.

Compassion Update

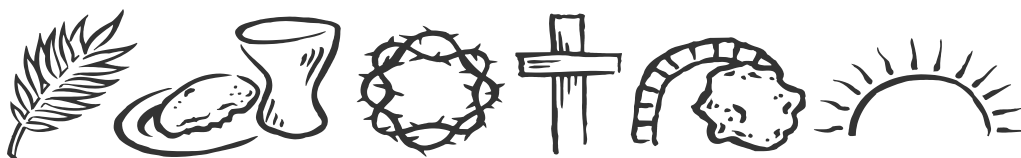
Dear Friends,

I first of all greet you in the name of our Lord Christ. Me and my family we are all fine thanking God. Thanks a lot for praying for me, I went to school well. I studied well was not sick promoted from senior one to senior two. I am concluding by wishing you God's peace in all what you do. Happy New Year 2018.

Samuel Mutabazi
Rwanda

Did You Know?

- ◆ That the Independent Presbyterian Reformed Church in Cuba baptized over 75 people in 2016, 59 of them infants, and has close to 10,000 members?
- ◆ That there are 18 Presbyterian Churches in Syria, led by eight brave pastors?
- ◆ That Egypt is home to the largest Protestant presence in all of the Middle East, with over half million Presbyterians?
- ◆ That a third of the Presbyterian pastors in Rwanda are women?
- ◆ That the Top Ten List of the hardest places in the world to be a Christian include North Korea, Somalia, Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Sudan, Iran, Pakistan, Eritrea and Nigeria?



We will celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion Ash Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. and Sunday, February 25th at 11:00 a.m. during worship. Please take time to prepare to receive and share the sacrament.



“Human beings need an authentic community where we truly belong: where we can celebrate and where we can cry; where we can be challenged to be our very best and where we can be forgiven when we have been our very worst.

We need a community where we can be welcomed and accepted, no matter who we are, where we’ve been, or what we’ve done, but where we can grow in our relationship with God and with one another.

We need a community where humility is genuine, radical life change is expected, spiritual growth and transformation is celebrated, and prayer and worship are central.

We need to be part of a community that is not about us except to help us to be our best as we love, serve, and influence the world around us.

The Body of Christ—the Church—is intended to be this community, but for many of us, the contemporary “church” that we experience is tired, stressed, embattled, and afraid; a place of confusion, conflict, and fragmentation; a poor imitation of the broken world around it.

That world is broken. Apart from God, human beings will continuously find new ways to isolate, manipulate, fragment, and abuse other human beings and the world God created. Followers of Jesus are commissioned and empowered to live differently—to be limitless in our generosity, outrageous in our compassion; faithful to Christ and accountable to one another in the use of our resources, our influence, and our sexuality; joyful, hopeful, and confident in our identity as God’s beloved children irrespective of our circumstances.

The Fellowship Community is committed to rebuilding the community human beings need within the Body of Christ. We are a network of churches and leaders called together to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ by growing in Christ’s likeness, living by God’s Word, and joining in God’s mission to the world. We are apprentices of Jesus, beginning in the PC(USA) and reaching out in every direction, irrespective of denominations and labels, to welcome, challenge, befriend, and embrace anyone who seeks to grow in joyful obedience to our Redeemer and service to the world he is redeeming.

The Fellowship is not a club or an agency—it is not

designed to rescue institutions or advocate ideologies. The goal of the Fellowship is to create and sustain a movement within the Church that will replicate itself in a thousand different locations and give contemporary disciples the community we so desperately need.”

You may have noticed the Fellowship Community logo on the cover of your newsletter. Our session invited a representative from the Fellowship Community to come and share information with us on July 2, 2015. The gathering was open to our congregation and other Presbyterian congregations in the area. Following that evening, session decided to become members of the Community.



VALENTINE CARD-MAKING

Saturday, February 10, 2018

10:00 AM-12:00 PM

Fellowship Hall

Ages: 3 years— 6th grade

Five different cards will be available to make or create your own with the supplies.

Our 4th-6th grade youth group will be serving the church by helping the younger children make their cards.

Please RSVP to Jen Borbonus or Heidi Weimer.

VALENTINE CARD-MAKING

NAME _____

Age _____

Phone Number _____

Parent or Guardian _____

**If we missed your birthday or anniversary, please contact the church office. We would like to include all of our church family on the birthday and anniversary lists.*

Food Bank

The food bank is held at our church the first Tuesday of each month. Food items are distributed between the hours of 12:00 and 1:00. Proof of residence is needed when signing-up for the first time. The food bank is sponsored by ICCAP.

Mission Moment—Update from Kay Day

Greetings from Rwanda. As we move into the second month of this New Year, God's grace is at work answering prayers. My colleague Juvenal Rwamunyana, who serves as a lecturer and the chaplain for the Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences (PIASS) and as president of Kigali Presbytery, has been praying for three years for the opportunity to do his PhD studies in pastoral counseling. The doors seemed closed. In August 2017 he was accepted at a university in Kenya, but without the money to support him. He searched for that support but it was not forthcoming and he had to write to the university and ask for a delay of admission. He prayed and more diligently sought finances. I have been supporting him in prayer for this pursuit. Last week, he knocked on my gate after we had both finished our teaching for the day. He seemed nervous. When I asked what I could do for him, he smiled shyly and said he had news about his studies. A partner from Europe who had been approached about funding his studies had agreed. There were two great points of rejoicing. This partner has only funded programs and projects, never individuals, and yet they had agreed to fund his studies. This is even more amazing, realizing that Juvenal is 53. Most benefactors want to invest in younger candidates who have longer to use their education. But God has made the way for this 53-year-old man to be funded by a group that has only sponsored projects. We praised God! But there were some challenges. He would have to leave within the week to begin his studies and needed to make arrangements for all of his responsibilities at PIASS and with the presbytery. The presbytery was not a problem since he has a capable vice president to assist him. But PIASS presented hurdles. He could rearrange his teaching schedule to complete all his courses before he left and after he returned in May, but he needed to find a substitute as chaplain. That was why he came to see me. He asked if I would take the responsibilities as acting chaplain in his absence. As we talked, it was clear that the timing would work. He would be back from his first term of studies in late May and could resume his role while I was in the States from late June to the end of September. He will have to leave in late August to resume his studies, but classes will be in recess until the beginning of October, so there is not much to do for that month we will both be out of the country, so I was able to say yes. Two days later, I was presented to the students and faculty as the acting chaplain and that afternoon Juvenal left, to travel to Kenya the next day. So I am responsible for all the campus worship services, overseeing the choirs and doing pastoral counseling. This small role on my part enables Juvenal to accept God's answer. We rejoice that our God is an answering God! I pray that you are experiencing God's answers to your deepest needs and desires. One of my prayers is for the time I will have in the States this summer. I have heard from several of you about visiting your churches. My deep desire is to thank as many as possible of you in person for your support and to share what God is doing through that support for God's work in Rwanda. I look forward to hearing from you as I set plans.

Yours in Christ,
Kay