A large, stylized graphic of a stained glass window, featuring a central yellow section with radiating lines and a blue section on the right, all enclosed in a grey border.

The United
Presbyterian Church
of Blairsville, PA

JUNE/JULY 2017

UPLIFT Newsletter

I don't know many people who are not touched by the beauty of stained glass windows. It stirs my soul when, in the midst of singing a hymn, the clouds move aside allowing the sun's rays to shine through them filling the sanctuary with color. But their function is not merely aesthetic. They tell the story of our Christian faith. Centuries ago, in the great cathedrals of the world, windows depicted scenes from the Bible. While most people could not read, studying the details in the glass helped them to remember the wonders of God's hand in the lives of his people.

Above the balcony, facing Walnut Street are three windows that are particularly meaningful to me. While above my head you see the suspended Celtic cross, above your heads I see reminders of how we interact daily with the risen and ascended Christ. If you look at the back cover of our most recent pictorial directory, you will see what I see each Lord's Day. They are also central to our website.

On the left, there is the depiction of a harp—not just any harp, King David's harp. It reminds us of the importance of worship. When David was a boy, he played and sang as he watched over his flock. No doubt he was mindful of how God shepherds us, his people—guarding, guiding, gathering. Whenever an evil spirit would torment King Saul, David would be summoned to play, and Saul would be relieved and the evil spirit would depart (I Samuel 16:23). Music and praise are gifts that draw us from ourselves and move us into the peace and assurance of God's presence. As Israel was held captive in Babylon, the songs played on the harp reminded them of their beloved Jerusalem and they gained hope. In the vision of heaven, John sees the twenty-four elders holding harps as they sing their new song, "You, O Lord are worthy...". Our word "worship" comes from the Old English "worth-ship". God alone is worthy of our praise.

The center window depicts a lamp, the ancient style of lamp that contains oil. In his Psalm, David writes, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." (Psalm 119:105) God's Word to us guides us through the maze of life, telling us when to turn where. In studying it, we gain wisdom and in that wisdom we are able to discern truth. Our God does not hide himself wrapped in complete mystery. Quite the opposite—he discloses himself, makes himself known to us through scripture. While we will never fully understand God in this world, he opens himself to us in Jesus and in the guidance of the Holy Spirit. He is here, and through the eyes of faith we can see and come to a deeper knowledge of him.

To the right is a window that depicts a palm tree. It reminds us of the prophetess Deborah who used to sit under the palm in the hill country of Ephraim where the people would come to her for judgement. (Judges 4:5) The palm tree reminds us of justice, of knowing what is right and what is wrong—of knowing what pleases God and what repulses him. As a people of faith we are called to work for justice wherever we are, taking a stand where God's truth stands. That means speaking truth where many have settled for lies. It means being a voice for those who have long been silenced. It means upholding the standards of God's kingdom in a world that seeks only standards that benefit themselves. It means calling out sin and naming it for what it is, and then working to loose its grip on those it threatens.

We worship, we learn, we serve, and in so doing we fulfill our calling of bringing glory to God. It is for such work that we were created. It is by such work that we make Christ known. It is through such work that our days find purpose. The old catechism asks— "what is the chief end of man?" The answer, "to glory God and enjoy him forever."

In Christ's love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pastor Jim".

Pastor Jim



Scripture Texts for Worship

The scripture texts for June and July are given for your study in preparation for Worship.

Sunday, June 4

John 7:37-39

Acts 2:1-21

Sunday, June 11

Genesis 1:1-2, 4

Matthew 28:16-20

Sunday, June 18

Matthew 9:35-10:8-23

Romans 5:1-8

Sunday, June 25

Romans 6:1-11

Matthew 10:24-39

Sunday, July 2

Romans 6:12-23

Genesis 22:1-14

Sunday, July 9

Romans 7:15-25

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Sunday, July 16

Romans 8:1-11

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Sunday, July 23

Romans 8:12-25

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Sunday, July 30

Romans 8:26-39

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

Sunday, August 6

Romans 9:1-5

Matthew 14:13-21

Worship Assistants

June 4

Flowers: The Petersen's

Projector: Kayla Moran

Audio: Tyler Moran

June 11

Flowers: Joe & Elaine Jellison

Projector: Blake Tonkin

Audio: Mitchell Tonkin

June 18—Father's Day

Flowers: Mary Anzelone

Projector: Jonathan Clayton

Audio: Alex Baker

June 25

Flowers: Kay Barnhart

Projector: Shakira McKinney

Audio: Jaison McKinney

Offering Counters

Bob & Charlotte Cosharek

July 2

Flowers: The Reeves Family

Projector: Kayla Moran

Audio: Tyler Moran

July 9

Flowers: Pat & Janeen Swope

Projector: Blake Tonkin

Audio: Mitchell Tonkin

July 16

Flowers: Linda George

Projector: Jonathan Clayton

Audio: Alex Baker

July 23

Flowers: Ed Bence

Projector: Shakira McKinney

Audio: Jaison McKinney

July 30

Flowers: Sue Harvey & family

Projector: Shakira McKinney

Audio: Jaison McKinney

Our Summer Schedule Begins

Sunday, June 4 Worship—10:00 AM

Sunday school classes and Chancel Choir will be in recess and will resume again in the Fall. Our Regular church schedule runs from the first Sunday after Labor Day in September until the Sunday before Memorial Day in May.

Blanket Offering Update

The Blanket Offering was received Sunday, May 14th during worship. Gifts were sent to Church World Service to supply blankets to those in need. Each blanket costs only \$10, but can be a vital resource for someone needing a little support, warmth and encouragement. We received a total of \$924.00 this year. Thank you to all who supported the



Vacation Bible School

"Water All Around the World" vbs will be held the week of June 19-23. Each evening will begin with an optional light meal at 5:30 p.m. followed by the opening at 6:00 p.m. Kids will enjoy Bible stories, cool crafts, fun games and lots more! Please use the registration form insert to register your children or grandchildren. If you have questions, please call the church office.

August Newsletter

Articles to be published in the August edition of the UPLIFT newsletter are due to the church office by Sunday, July 16th. Please have all information to the church office by this date. Call the office with any questions or concerns.

Graduate Recognition Sunday

Our church tradition has been to recognize the efforts and accomplishments of our children and young adults, especially at graduation time. Graduate recognition will be Sunday, June 4th during the morning worship service at 10:00 a.m. We hope you will join us.

This year our graduates include:

High School:

Alex Baker
Sarah Carrozza
Jonathan Clayton
Joseph Faulk
Zachary Hartmann
Abby Lewis
Kacie Schultz
Andrew Stipcak
Mitchell Tonkin

Higher Education:

Shane Boone
Matthew Cyphert
Anthony Faulk
Janelle Hood
Mike Watson

Shelocta Spirit 5K Run/ Walk

The Shelocta Community Presbyterian Church will host a 5K Run/Walk Saturday, September 23rd at 10:00 a.m. For more information, see the flier on the bulletin board.

Food Bank

The food bank is held at our church the first Tuesday of each month. However, the date for July distribution has been changed because it falls on July 4th, Independence Day. July's distribution will be moved to Wednesday, July 5th. 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.

Save Your Coupons

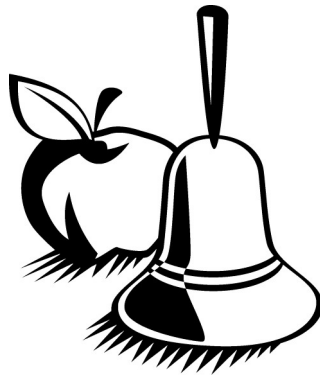
Coupons for veterans are being collected. Please save manufacturer's coupons only. The program allows up to one month expired. If possible, please cut coupons and separate into food and non-food bundles. There is a box at the back of the sanctuary to place the coupons in marked Coupons for Veterans. If you have any questions, please see Erica Ash or Ellen Williams.

Ebenezer Festival

Ebenezer Presbyterian Church will hold their Strawberry Festival Saturday, June 10th from 4:00-7:00 p.m. The day will include a used book sale, basket raffle, and lots of food and fellowship. Ebenezer is located in Lewisville, PA.

Back to School Bash

The Indiana County Back to School Bash will be held Saturday, August 19th from 9:00 am—12:30 pm in downtown Indiana Church Street. Income restrictions apply. For more information or to register, call 724-463-8036.



Minute for Mission—Kay Day, Rwanda

Kay Day is thrilled to share her gift of teaching with future pastors preparing for service in Rwanda. “God has given me gifts to teach,” Kay says. “I taught English for 20 years at the high school and college levels and then God called me to teach his Word through ordained ministry, to make his Word come alive to his people.” Out of a sense of gratitude for this gift and a desire to obey God’s calling, Kay accepted her assignment in Rwanda. “I am humbled that my small gifts can help to build his kingdom in Rwanda as the people there are strengthened to rebuild their country.” Kay hopes that her teaching and that of her faculty colleagues will help the country’s continued efforts to recover from the genocide. “The goal is to equip individuals to contribute to the reconciliation, mutual respect, and societal development in Rwanda,” she says. Kay served under Presbyterian mission appointment in Malawi from 2009 to 2013. Kay’s role in Rwanda includes facilitating partnerships between congregations and presbyteries in the United States and their counterparts in Rwanda. “Since the Presbyterian Church of Rwanda is eager to further develop partnerships, and I bring experience in partnership development from my work in Malawi, I’m trusting God to use that experience for the growth of partnerships between congregations in Rwanda and PC(USA) congregations.” In her ministry Kay says a verse that “sings in my heart” is Micah 6:8: “He has shown you, O mortal, what is good and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” Kay says, “I want to do that before God in Rwanda.”

Kay holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Geneva College in Beaver Falls, PA, a Master of Divinity from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, and a master’s in English from Duquesne University, Pittsburgh. Our mission committee recently chose the ministry of Kay Day as our third global mission to support through the budget.