



UPLIFT Newsletter

The United
Presbyterian Church
of Blairsville, PA

MAY 2018

As you receive this letter we are still in the season of Easter. Just as there are twelve days of Christmas, there are forty days of Easter. In Acts 1:3, Luke tells us, "After his suffering Jesus presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God." Those who saw Jesus on the cross and then a week later saw him walking the streets— "convincing proof" would be an understatement. John probably tells us more about those post resurrection appearances than any one. As he concludes his gospel account, he testifies, "There are also many other things that Jesus did; if every one of them were written down, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written." Who can add the number of lives that have been touched as witness tells another, who tells another, who tells another, and one generation tells the next, who tells the next.....and so we hear the good news.

Paul's encounter with the risen Christ comes on the road to Damascus. In I Corinthians 15, he tells us that Jesus was seen by over 500 people, many of whom were still alive when he was. They say you can't keep a good man down, and the resurrection is proof of that. Those forty days were truly a blessing to the ones who experienced them personally, and for the faith that was fostered—a faith that is a part of the foundation on which we build.

But as Jesus was raised from the dead, it was not the Father's intention for the Son to stay in the world forever. Jesus was clear throughout his earthly sojourn that this was not his home, and that just as he was sent by the Father, so he would return to him. On the fortieth day Jesus instructs the disciples about the responsibilities of being his followers. They were called and promised power to do the work of ministry—to be witnesses to the truth of who Jesus is, to go and make disciples who will also follow, to baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit welcoming others into the household of faith, and teaching what it means to be obedient to the commands of faithfulness. That is our commission to service to this day.

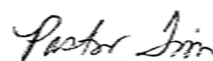
As Jesus spoke these words he was taken in a cloud, right before the eyes of those gathered. Two "men in white robes", angels I suspect, assured them that just as Jesus had been taken up in a cloud, so we would see him coming down from heaven some day. And so we say, "He ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from thence he shall come to judge the quick (the living) and the dead." The catechism teaches that there are three benefits afforded us in Jesus' ascension: First, we now have an advocate in the presence of our Father in heaven—a direct connection to the Father. Secondly, just as we are a part of Jesus and he is a part of us by our abiding, now a part of us is in heaven. And thirdly, since Jesus is in heaven, we are able to receive the fruit of the promise he made around the table (John 14) about the impending Counselor, Comforter who would be sent to us.

After he was taken up, the disciples remembered that he told them to go to the room upstairs, the upper room, their gathering place of sorts—and once there, to wait. They weren't sure what they were waiting for, but they knew they trusted it was something, someone good. I sometimes think about that period of waiting. The Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit were together in heaven while in faith the believers waited patiently. The chair once occupied by the Risen Lord was empty. The words of the Risen Lord were but an echo in their hearts. The promise made by the Risen Lord was yet to be fulfilled. Was there a sense of abandonment, a sense of doubt revived, an anticipation of fear mixed with wonder, a complete surrender to whatever would be? There they waited remembering the promise, "I will not leave you desolate, orphaned."

One day, two days, five days, eight days, and on the tenth day it happened. From heaven, suddenly came the rush of a mighty wind. It filled the house where they were gathered. Tongues, as of fire, appeared among them resting on each one of them. And they began to speak in other languages. The Holy Spirit had arrived, yet another promise had been fulfilled, and God was again in the midst of his people, binding them, binding us together.

This merry, merry month of May is truly a time of celebration as we experience Easter, the Ascension and Pentecost. Sense the hand of God and the rhythm of God's abiding presence in your midst and rejoice in the ways God moves us together in the fulfillment of his marvelous promises.....

In Christ's love,



Scripture Texts for Worship

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

Sunday, May 6

I John 5:1-6
John 15:9-17

Sunday, May 13

I John 5:9-13
John 17:6-19

Sunday, May 20

John 15:26-27
16:4-15
Acts 2:1-22

Sunday, May 27

Isaiah 6:1-8
Romans 8:12-17

Sunday, June 3

Mark 2:23-3:6
II Corinthians 4:5-12

June-July Newsletter

Articles to be published in the combined June-July edition of the UPLIFT newsletter are due to the church office by Tuesday, May 15th. Please call the office with any questions or concerns.

Prayer Chain

The prayer chain is coordinated by the Adult Sunday School Class. If you have a prayer request or know of someone's need for prayer, please contact Nancy Campbell or the church office. Prayer requests are kept in confidence unless permission is given to share.

Final Luncheon

The final WyoTech Luncheon will be served Tuesday, May 8th at 11:00 a.m. The school is scheduled to close mid-June. Thank you to all who have been a part of this ministry through the years.

Worship Assistants

May 6

Liturgist: Mary Anzelone
Flowers: The Reeves Family
Tom & Janet Smith
Ushers: Rick & Willa Shoemaker
Elaine Jellison, Dennis Gould

Projector: Kayla Moran

Audio: Tyler Moran

May 13—Mother's Day

Liturgist: Jean Heberling
Flowers: The Moran Family
Projector: Blake Tonkin
Audio: Elizabeth Bruner

May 20—Communion

Liturgist: Connie Bruner
Projector: Shakira McKinney
Audio: Jaison McKinney

May 27

Liturgist: Todd Faulk
Projector: Alex Kirkland
Audio: Andrew Baker

Offering Counters

Pat & Janeen Swope



OGHS Update

The One Great Hour of Sharing Offering was received during Palm Sunday worship, March 25th. We received a total of \$1,065.08 to be sent to assist Presbyterian Hunger Programs, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and the Self-Development of People. Thank you to all who supported the offering.

Blanket Offering

The Blanket Offering will be received Mother's Day, May 13th during worship. Gifts are 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.

Summer Schedule

As summer approaches, our Sunday School year comes to a close. The last day of classes will be Sunday, May 20th. During worship that Sunday, we will recognize our Sunday School teachers. Our worship service will continue at 11:00 a.m. through Sunday, May 27th. Beginning Sunday, June 3rd, our summer schedule will begin and worship will be held at 10:00 a.m. Sunday School classes and 11:00 worship time will return in the Fall.

Guest Musicians

Our chancel choir will take a break for the summer months. Beginning in June, we will have special music during worship. If you or someone you know would like to share a musical talent during worship, please see Cindy Borbonus or contact the church office.

Mandated Reporter Training

Mandated Reporter training is being offered. Grace Presbyterian Church in Kittanning will hold training Wednesday, May 23rd from 6:00-9:00 p.m. This 3-hour workshop will provide you with the required training in a format that will make sense to your situation as a church elder, deacon, volunteer, teacher or pastor. Those completing the workshop will receive a certificate. This training is required every 5 years and is eligible for Act 31, Act 48 (Act 126) credits. There is no cost for the training, sponsored by the Kiskiminetas Presbytery. For more information or to register, please contact Carol Mock at the presbytery office at 724-783-7196 or email her at carolm@kiskipby.org.



Graduate Recognition

The Christian Ed Committee is looking for the names of upcoming graduates from high school or schools of higher learning. It has been our tradition to recognize the accomplishments of our young people during worship. Sunday, June 10th at 10:00 a.m. is scheduled as Graduate Recognition Sunday. Please submit names of graduates to the church office or see Kim McKinney.

Communion

We will celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion Sunday, May 20th during the 11:00 a.m. worship service. Please take time to prepare to receive and share the sacrament.

Home Communion

If you are not able to come to Sunday morning worship and would like to receive communion in your home, please call the church office and arrangements can be made for the sacrament to be shared with you.

Gene Artman recently attended a special training for elders to serve communion. The training was held for elders in the presbytery so if an ordained minister is not available, the sacrament can still be shared.



"I expect to pass through this world but once. Any good therefore that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any fellow creature, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

-Quaker saying



Vacation Bible School 2018

VBS is only a month away. The fun is scheduled for the week of June 11-15. If you love to have fun, work with kids & learn new and exciting things, we want you!

Volunteers are needed in many areas. All those interested in helping this year are asked to contact the church office or see Cindy Borbonus. No experience is necessary!

For the safety of our children, the policy of our church is that those working with children are required to have their clearances. For more information, contact the church office.

Family and friends are cordially invited to attend a
Baccalaureate Service for the Class of 2018

Wednesday, May 16, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

Hosted by Hopewell United Methodist Church

This special graduation service is sponsored by the Blairsville Area Ministerium and presented by the Class of 2018.

This is a cap and gown event.

Compassion News

Dear Friends,

I your child Hagenimana Vestine greet you in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. I am happy to send to you this letter to tell you my news. I thank you for your prayers, we are doing well and we thank God for His protection. We do always pray for you in Jesus name. Praise the Lord. We are in rainy season, the weather is cold, we are harvesting maize and weeding sorghum and growing beans. In which season are you? Is the weather cold like here? I request you to send me a photo of your children. My family greets you. I wish you God's peace and God's blessings. Thank you so much.

Yours,

Hagenimana Vestine from Rwanda

May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Early Warning Signs of Mental Illness in Older Adults

According to the World Health Organization, 15% of adults age 60 and over suffer from a mental disorder. While most have good mental health, many older adults are at risk of developing mental health disorders. Prompt recognition and treatment of mental health issues in older adults is essential. Unfortunately, many people confuse symptoms of mental illness with normal signs of aging. Being aware of some of the warning signs of mental illness can help to make detection easier for loved ones and caregivers. Here are some early warning signs to watch out for:

- ◇ Memory Issues/Confusion—persistent forgetfulness, inability to manage finances, disoriented, problems concentrating, repeatedly asking the same question.
- ◇ Changes in Personal Care—Noticeable changes in appearance, problems maintaining hygiene, not dressing appropriately for the weather.
- ◇ Social Withdrawal—Loss of interest in activities, leaving home less often, not answering phone calls.
- ◇ Mood Changes—Feelings of sadness, worthlessness, hopelessness, guilt, excessive worry, feeling flat or emotionless, irritability, aggression.
- ◇ Changes in Thoughts and Behaviors—Obsessive thinking, disordered thoughts, paranoia, thoughts of hurting self or others, compulsive behavior, substance use/abuse, engaging in high-risk activities, bizarre behaviors.
- ◇ Changes in Sleep Pattern—Unexplained fatigue, energy loss, sleeping too much, insomnia.
- ◇ Changes in Appetite/Weight—Poor appetite, increased appetite, significant weight gain or loss.

If you know of an older adult who is experiencing symptoms of an acute psychiatric illness, please seek professional help. Services are available at local hospitals. In case of an emergency, please call 911 or the Crisis Hotline at 877-333-2470.



Teacher Appreciation

Thank you to all the Sunday School teachers for another great year! Sunday, May 20, 2018 will be Teacher Appreciation Sunday and also, the last day of Sunday School classes. After the summer break, we will resume classes in the Fall.

**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.*