



UPLIFT Newsletter

The United
Presbyterian Church
of Blairsville, PA

JANUARY 2019

With the end of one year and the beginning of another we become reflective about what was and what we hope will be. It's a natural time to examine where we are in life and to re-establish priorities as we set the course for the time to come. Many resolve to make positive changes in their daily routine as they seek to become a "better person." But the process of becoming better is not so much found in what we do as it is in the relationships in which we are invested, because therein we discover the why of our choices. Becoming a fuller person requires one to be involved with those who are around me. No matter how independent I think I am, I am who I am in part because of who you are as my neighbor. We are connected to each other, that is why Paul likens the church to a body. "For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another." (Romans 12:4-5)

Because we are one in Christ, we are sensitive to each other. We are mindful of each other's needs, we care about each other's interests, we work for each other's safety, we take seriously each other's hopes and dreams. But most important, we bring each other before God in prayer. As Jesus ascended into heaven to take his place at the right hand of the Father, we are told that he intercedes for us there. Jesus speaks to the Father on our behalf. That is why we end our prayers with the words, "in Jesus' name we ask it." To intercede for each other is a beautiful act of love—showing our genuine concern for each other while growing in our care for each other.

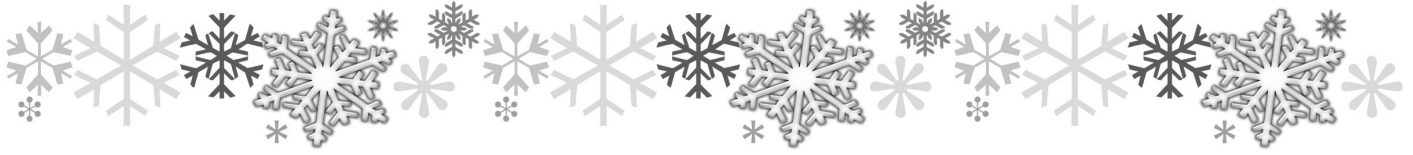
The Bible calls us to four basic types of prayer. We remember them using the acronym ACTS. In our Adoration we tell God how much we love him, declaring the honor of his holiness, praising the glory of who he is. Therein we acknowledge the relationship in light of his greatness. In our Confession we tell God that we have failed him. To be sure, God knows that without us telling him, but we confess our sin so that he knows that we recognize where we have fallen short. Therein we acknowledge the relationship in light of our error and his perfection. In our Thanksgiving we express our gratitude for all that God has chosen to give us. As I often say, God without us is still God, while we without God are nothing. Any goodness we enjoy is a gift from God's hand. Therein we acknowledge the relationship in light of God's grace, his giving to us the goodness we do not deserve—and God's mercy, his withholding of the punishment we do deserve. In our supplications, we ask God to supply that which we need, for ourselves and for each other. Because all blessings flow from God, we come in humility and ask of him in the knowledge and assurance that he cares for us. Therein we acknowledge the relationship in light of our need and our confidence that he cares.

Included in this month's newsletter is a prayer guide that may help to focus your prayers to God. The guide serves "to keep our hearts and minds" on the same page as we "raise our prayer with one voice." The guide also serves to remind us of some blessings and concerns we have not considered. As Paul writes to young Timothy he counsels, "First of all, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings be made for everyone...so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. This is right and is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." (1 Timothy 2:1-4)

*Take time to be holy, speak oft with your Lord;
abide in him always, and feed on his Word.
Make friends of God's children; help those who are weak;
forgetting in nothing his blessings to seek.....*

In Christ's love,

Pastor Jim



Scripture Texts for Worship

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

Sunday, January 6

Isaiah 60:1-6
Matthew 2:1-12

Sunday, January 13

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22
Isaiah 43:1-7

Sunday, January 20

Isaiah 62:1-5
John 2:1-11

Saturday, January 27

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10
Luke 4:14-21

Sunday, February 3

Jeremiah 1:4-10
I Corinthians 13:1-13

Unity Sunday

On Sunday, January 20th at 3:00 p.m., the community is invited to gather at the C&MA Church in Blairsville for a service of love for Christ and Community. This will be a service of prayer, scripture and local choirs will share music. Let's raise a joyous noise to the Lord, together. This service of Christian Unity is sponsored by the Blairsville Ministerium.

February Newsletter

Articles to be published in the February edition of the UP-LIFT newsletter are due to the church office by Tuesday, January 15th. Please call the office with any questions or concerns.

Worship Assistants

January 6

Liturgist: Mary Anzelone
Flowers: The Moran Family
Ushers: Brent & Tammy Ritchie
John & Mary Hileman

Projector: Alex Kirkland

Audio: Andrew Baker

January 13—Communion

Liturgist: Terry Brown
Flowers: The Clayton Family
Ushers: The Baker Family
Projector: Kayla Moran
Audio: Olivia Eckenroad

January 20

Flowers: Cindy Borbonus
Ushers: Barb & Terry Brown, Jean Heberling, Nancy Campbell

Projector: Blake Tonkin

Audio: Elizabeth Bruner

January 27

Liturgist: Dennis Gould
Ushers: Doug & Andrea Clayton
Dennis Gould, Pat Swope

Projector: Shakira McKinney

Audio: Jaison McKinney

Offering Counters

Tom & Janet Smith

2019 Communion Dates

January 13—Baptism of Our Lord

*March 6—Ash Wednesday

March 31—Lent

*April 18—Maundy Thursday

June 9—Pentecost

August 4

September 8

October 6—World Wide Communion

November 24—Christ the King Sunday

*December 24—Christmas Eve

(* evening services)

Year End Information

A **Congregational Meeting** has been scheduled for Sunday, January 27, 2019 immediately following worship. A light lunch will be served. Then, we will look at the year 2018 in review and look forward to the 2019 New Year. Our Nominating Committee for 2019 will also be elected. We hope you will make plans to attend.

CPR Training Scheduled

CPR training has been scheduled by our Deacons for Saturday, January 19th. The time is yet to be decided. Please contact the church office if you are interested in attending.

Year End Reports

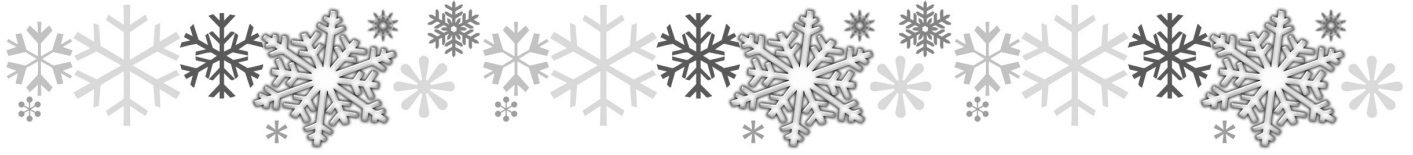
Committee chairs and treasurers are asked to submit a report to include in the annual report for the Congregational Meeting. Please have your report to the church office by Sunday, January 20th. If you have any questions or need information from the office, contact Jill during office hours.

Year End Giving 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.

Offering Envelopes

2019 Offering Envelopes are available for pick-up in the back of the sanctuary. Please look for your name as some numbers have changed. If you would like a box of envelopes or we missed you, please contact the church office.



2019 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 2019, that amount is \$32.52 per member on the active roll. That breaks down to: General Assembly—\$8.95, 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. A letter explaining your options with regards to your per capita is included in this newsletter. If you have questions, please contact the church office or see Pastor Monroe. We want to honor your intentions for your gifts to the work of the church.

Worship Assistants

- The Worship Committee is always looking for those willing to serve as liturgists on Sunday mornings. Perhaps you or another member of your family is interested in assisting with worship. Please see Elaine Jellison or contact the church office.
- The Deacons are always looking for those willing to serve as ushers on Sunday mornings. If you would be willing to greet parishioners as they arrive and hand them a bulletin, then pass the plates during the offering, we would love to hear from you. A sign-up sheet is available in the back of the sanctuary.
- The Worship Committee continues to seek volunteers to be trained on the sound system and projector to substitute when regular techs are not available. Please contact Elaine Jellison if you are interested.

To the Session and Congregation,
Thank you for your many kindnesses at Christmas and throughout the year. It is a blessing to be able to minister in the church in our various ways. We look forward to a blessed and happy New Year in 2019!

Cindy, Marilyn, Sandy, Peg, and Jill

*We will celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion Sunday, January 13th during the 11:00 a.m. worship service.
Please take time to prepare to receive and share the sacrament.*

Cookie Walk Update

The annual Cookie Walk was held Saturday, December 15th from 8:00—10:00 a.m. Many from the congregation donated cookies to be sold to the public for Christmas gift giving and holiday get-togethers. We collected a total of \$443.75 for the Pathway Homeless Shelter in Black Lick. Thank you to all who organized, set-up, baked, worked and cleaned-up for the event.

Souper Bowl of Caring 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 3rd during morning worship. One hundred percent of these gifts will be sent to ICCAP in support of the Food Bank.

Confirmation Classes

Beginning in mid-March we will be holding Confirmation Classes for young people interested in learning more about their faith and considering membership in the church. Classes will be Sundays from 12:00-2:00 p.m. A light lunch will be served. Classes will be held about 8—10 weeks. More details will be coming.

Bible Study

Wednesday mornings at 10:00 a.m., a group gathers for Bible study in the Fellowship Hall. The focus is on the book of Ephesians and Pastor Monroe is the leader. The group is open to all who would like to attend.

2019 Flower Chart

The Flower Chart has been posted in the hallway outside the church office. Take time to sign-up for your choice of dates. Flower arrangements are \$20 each and checks can be made payable to the: Board of Deacons.

Our Elders and Deacons

We thank Rose Lewis for her faithful service on the Session. She has been instrumental in helping to set a vision as we move forward.

We rejoice as Mary Anzelone, Doug Clayton, Bob Cosharek and Kim McKinney are installed to the Sessional Class of 2021.

We welcome back and rejoice as Erica Ash, Susie Cotti, Jean Heberling and Marilyn Neal are installed to the Diaconal Class of 2021.

Many Thanks

On behalf of the congregation, the Worship Committee would like to thank all those who made our Christmas season a wonderful celebration! Special thanks goes to our Chancel Choir, Cantata Choir, Bell Choir and the Brass Group for sharing their musical gifts. We would also like to thank all those who served their church as liturgists, acolytes, advent readers, ushers and communion servers, as well as, our audio and projection techs. We would also like to thank the deacons for organizing the decorations through the year. It is a blessing to be part of the body of Christ!

Nominating Committee

The work of the Nominating Committee is some of the most important in the life of the church. Those serving have the responsibility to bring before the congregation the names of members who will potentially serve as elders and deacons.

Members of this committee should have:

- * An understanding of the nature, ministry and mission of the church
- * An awareness of the spiritual nature of the offices of elder and deacon
- * A knowledge of the impending challenges before the church
- * A familiarity with the members of the congregation and the potential gifts and abilities they bring to service
- * A spirit of prayer as they approach this work

If you, or someone you know would do well at the discernment of nominations, and would like to be considered for service on this committee, please write the name and place it in the offering plate or drop it off to the church office by January 20th.

The Session

Class of 2019

Bonni Dunlap
Ron Hood
Elaine Jellison
Rick Shoemaker

Class of 2020

Dennis Gould
Joan Moran
Pat Swope

Class of 2021

Mary Anzelone
Doug Clayton
Bob Cosharek
Kim McKinney

Board of Deacons

Class of 2019

Jen Borbonus
Ken Doak
Tom Holby
Beverly Lindsey
Bobbi Monroe

Class of 2020

Andrea Clayton
Mary Hileman
Steve Moran
Judy Trimble

Class of 2021

Erica Ash
Susie Cotti
Jean Heberling
Marilyn Neal

Please encourage the leaders of our church through your thoughts and prayers in the New Year.



Consider Taking Part

The Session Committees for 2019 are looking for interested members to be active participants. Chairs for the committees will be 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

Mission – Benevolences, special offerings, global & local mission and missionaries

Christian Education – Sunday school programs, curriculum, adult education, youth work, leadership education

Finance – Finances, special funds, and annual budget

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

Property & Maintenance – Construction, maintenance, repairs, housekeeping, safety, security, yard work, inventory

Congregational Fellowship – Suppers, Dinner Theater, picnics, outings, trips, camping

Evangelism – New member recruitment and assimilation, outreach, publicity

A Community Devotional

Each Advent and Lenten Season you are offered a devotional guide to use each day as you seek to sense God's presence in a deeper way. Typically we order devotionals that are commercially produced and distributed nationally. This year we are trying something a bit more local, a bit more personal. We have taken the lectionary Gospel reading for each day of Lent and are asking folks from the community to prepare a devotional message that relates to that portion of scripture. Each devotion will list the assigned scripture lesson, a devotional message of about 400 words, and a one or two sentence prayer. You can sign your name, or remain anonymous. All submissions will be gathered by February 4th and will be compiled into booklet form, duplicated, then distributed to area churches for use during the Lenten Season (which begins on Ash Wednesday, March 6).

Our congregation has been assigned 6 texts:

- John 2:1-12—taken
- John 2:13-22—taken
- John 2:23-3:15
- John 3:16-21
- John 3:22-36
- John 4:1-26

We need volunteers to write devotional thoughts for the last four texts. If you feel led to share with your brothers and sisters in Blairsville, please let Pastor Monroe know of your willingness as soon as possible. Congregations taking responsibility for other weeks will be—United Methodist congregations, C&MA, Hebron Lutheran, St. Peter's Episcopal and Sts. Simon & Jude. What a wonderful way for the Christians of Blairsville to share Christ as one.

I asked God, "Why are you taking me through troubled waters?" and He said, "Because your enemies can't swim."

