



UPLIFT Newsletter

The United
Presbyterian Church
of Blairsville, PA

APRIL 2019

Most of you are old enough to remember Art Linkletter's "Kids Say the Darndest Things." Well, I've also found that sometimes kids say the wisest things. In Confirmation Class, students were asked how they would describe the Bible to someone who knew nothing about the Christian faith. One young man commented, "The Bible is the diary of the Triune God." What marvelous insight he has, wise beyond his years. Scripture tells us the ways God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit has been and is active in the world, indeed throughout the universe.

We hope you have been using the Community Lenten Devotional. Many have expressed their gratitude for the daily testimonies of how God has been active in their lives. In many ways, the Devotional is like a travel log of their faith journey as they share both the foundation of their faith and the new things God has done along the way. While my story of God's activity may be different than yours, there are many things that are similar. Together, through these forty days of Lent, we make our way through the wilderness. It's a time to examine our lives, what we've done well, where we have strayed, who we've been and who we are becoming. Anytime we make a journey, we are changed, almost always for the better. Wrestling with our questions, facing our fears, redefining our goals, examining our motives are all a part of growing up. As a family of faith we can be open with each other, honest and vulnerable, trusting that we will uphold each other as we move through the darkness toward the dawn of a new day.

Through the course of the month, I'm in conversation with a number of pastors and congregations. We share many of the same concerns: attendance in worship has dropped, changes in society try to make their way into the church, priorities in peoples' lives are different than they once were, finances are more and more of a challenge, the needs of the community knock harder at the door.

I often say, *The Christian church in which I serve today is very different than the church into which I was ordained 37 years ago.* Its easy to become negative about the way things are, disappointed that they're not like they used to be. But then I come to terms with the reality that even though the world is in a constant flux of change, even though the church faces new challenges daily, God is still the same, yesterday, today and tomorrow. It's not my church, it's God's church. While I commit my life to service, it is Jesus Christ who is the head, the church's Lord and Savior.

Paul writes, "If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation. The old has passed away, behold the new has come." There comes a time when part of us may die, as through the Lord of Resurrection something new is born with in us. There are times when we must let go of what was to be free to grasp what will be. Now mind you, I am in no way implying that we turn our backs on the way things have been. Our heritage, our tradition has in great part defined who we are. But I am also mindful that its through our wrestling, through our challenges that God does a new thing in our midst. It is through the darkness that we come to the morning light. It is through the cross that we come to the glory of Easter Day. It is in those moments that we lament, "It's over" that we should ask expectantly, "What's next for us, Lord?"

Come Easter Day, many of the challenges I face will still be there, and life's realities will be the same. But the good news is that I (and you) will be different. The struggles of life in this world will still weigh heavy, but being found in the Risen Christ we will be strengthened in the power of hope. We are not defined by who we no longer are, we are defined by who we have become. Jesus said, "I have told you these things, so that in me you will have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But fear not! I have overcome the world." (John 16:33) May your Lenten journey stretch you and remold you.....

In Christ's love,



Scripture Texts for Worship

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

Sunday, April 7

Philippians 3:4b-14
John 12:1-8

Palm Sunday, April 14

Philippians 2:5-11
Luke 19:28-40

Easter Day, April 21

Isaiah 65:17-25
Luke 24:1-12

Sunday, April 28

Revelation 1:4-8
Acts 5:27-32

Sunday, May 5

Revelation 5:11-14
Acts 9:1-6 (7-20)

Community Lenten Lunch Schedule

On Wednesdays at 12:00 noon throughout Lent community churches will host worship followed by a light lunch.

April 3—Hopewell United Methodist Church, Rev. Joe Baird

April 10—Hebron Lutheran Church, Hebron Representative

April 17—Sts. Simon & Jude Church, Rev. Cory Braatz

April 19—Good Friday-7:00 p.m, Second Baptist Church, Rev. John Buchmann

Worship Assistants

April 7

Liturgist: Mary Anzelone
Flowers: Alice Santoro
Ushers: Kristi & Hannah Eckenroad
Steve Moran, Bonni Dunlap

Projector: Kayla Moran

Audio: Olivia Eckenroad

April 14—Palm Sunday

Liturgist: Jean Heberling
Flowers: Ron & Kim McKinney
Projector: Blake Tonkin
Audio: Elizabeth Bruner

April 21—Easter Day—11:00 am

Liturgist: Rick Shoemaker
Easter Flowers
Ushers: Steve, Joan & Kayla Moran
Projector: Shakira McKinney
Audio: Jaison McKinney

April 28

Liturgist: Lon Ferguson
Flowers: Tom & Janet Smith
Projector: Alex Kirkland
Audio: Andrew Baker

Offering Counters

Jean Heberling and Gene Artman

LENT

Dates to Remember for the Season of Lent and Easter

Wednesdays

Lenten Lunches, 12:00 pm

Sunday, April 14

Palm Sunday

Maundy Thursday, April 18

Seder, 6:00 pm

Good Friday, April 19

Community Worship

Second Baptist Church, 7:00 pm

Sunday, April 21

Early Easter Worship, 8:30 am

Easter Breakfast, 9:30 am

Easter Day Worship, 11:00 am

May Newsletter

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

Prayer Chain

Our Prayer Chain is coordinated by the Adult Sunday School Class. Please call the church office if you have a request or know of a need for prayer.

One Great Hour of Sharing

The One Great Hour of Sharing offering is received during the season of Lent. Presbyterians worldwide join in sharing God’s love with neighbors-in-need around the world by providing relief from natural disasters, food for the hungry, and support for the poor and oppressed. Gifts to the offering currently support projects in over 100 countries. The One Great Hour of Sharing offering will be received during worship on Palm Sunday, April 14th. Please prayerfully consider your gifts. Banks and giving calendars are available in the back of the sanctuary as a resource for those who would like to use them. IF WE ALL DO A LITTLE, IT ADDS UP TO A LOT!



Seder Meal

A traditional Jewish Passover meal that celebrates God’s deliverance from bondage. Each food served helps to tell the story.

Maundy Thursday, April 18
Fellowship Hall
6:00 PM

Following the meal we will continue as we celebrate the Lord’s Supper, remembering how Christ completes the act of salvation in our lives.

Please let us know if you plan to attend.

Maundy Thursday Seder Meal

Name _____

Number attending _____

_____ I would like to help set-up Wednesday, April 17 at 6:00 p.m.

_____ I would like to help clean-up following the Seder.

Easter Flowers

The Board of Deacons is offering Easter flowers of your choice to be placed in the sanctuary on Easter Day. Use this order form to place your request and to let us know how you wish your dedication to appear in the bulletin. Please return this form to the church office by **Sunday, April 7th**.

Payment with the order is appreciated.
 Checks can be made payable to the
 “Board of Deacons”

NAME: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

FLOWER	COST	ORDER	TOTAL
Lilies	\$8.00/ea.	_____	\$ _____
Mums	\$8.00/ea.	_____	\$ _____
Tulips	\$6.50/ea.	_____	\$ _____
Hyacinths	\$6.50/ea.	_____	\$ _____
Total			\$ _____

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

Mission Moment-April 2019-Letter from Kay Day

I pray that this Lenten season has drawn you closer to Christ. It has for me in an unusual way. -From March 11 to 22 I helped to host a peace study group with Carl Horton from the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program of PCUSA, with participants from 11 states, South Sudan, Kenya, Zambia and Rwanda. Pastors and lay persons in this international gathering met with church leaders in Rwanda, visited genocide memorial sites, spoke with peace building groups and bought handcrafts made by reconciliation groups who are also building self-sustainable lives. The international flavor of this group brought a richness of understanding, especially considering the ongoing conflict in South Sudan, to Bible studies and discussions of forgiveness and reconciliation. There were many powerful moments of insight and moments of struggle with the reality of human pain.

Most of the locations we visited and folks we met with were not new to me but there are always new things to learn. That was the case when we visited a memorial site near Lake Kivu. We had planned to go to the site in Kibuye, by the lake, but it is under renovation and so the vice mayor of Kibuye took us an hour's drive away to another site. I had not been there before, and as a leader was a bit uncomfortable going to the unknown but was willing to trust our Rwandan host. It proved to be one of the most significant sites I have visited. Bisesero is high in the mountains on a rough dirt road. It commemorates the resistance of some 40,000 Tutsi who fought against the Interahamwe militia for over a month in May 1994, using spears and stones to hold off the killers. Only 1,500 survived to continue hiding in the hills until the genocide ended on July 4, 1994.

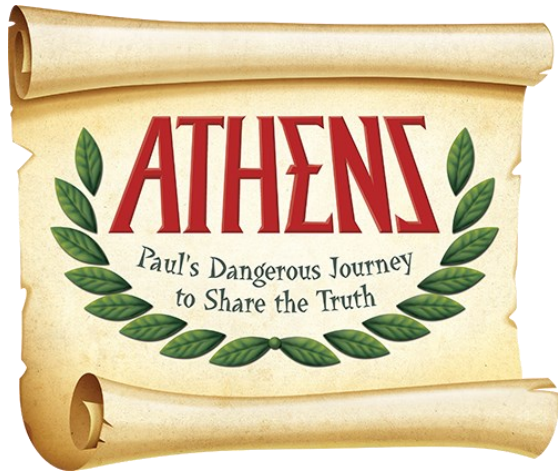


Spears to represent the resistance at Bisesero Memorial

The memorial is not in a single building but is comprised of several buildings climbing up the side of the mountain. The path from building to building becomes narrower as one climbs, illustrating the dwindling numbers and intense struggle of the resisters. The various buildings hold the remains of many of those who died in the resistance. The last section of steps are just rocks piled on one another, with some sticking up, recalling the stone throwing battle at the end of the fight. As I climbed the mountain path, I could feel the struggle to move forward and could imagine the feelings of the Tutsi who were being pursued. As I climbed the path, I couldn't help but think of Jesus' climb to Golgotha and the pain he endured for our salvation. That is part of any Lenten journey, but it has taken on fresh meaning for me after walking the path of the resisters of Bisesero. The only salvation for many on that walk was the balm of heaven. Those Tutsi were fighting for their very lives, while Jesus was struggling for my life and redemption. I was not a part of either of these struggles, but both have impact on my life as I serve my Lord in this place of pain and memory. This symbolic memorial marks resistance, not something one hears a great deal about when the genocide is discussed. This gave a new perspective for consideration, but as Christians, we are familiar with resistance to evil and wrong. That is part of our faith walk and a point of reflection during Lent. It was for me this month.

This Peace study tour was timely as Rwanda approaches the 25th anniversary of the genocide with commemorations that will begin on April 7. Our discussions were reflective of many that are ongoing in the country as we wrestled with deep issues of forgiveness and reconciliation. These are issues that cut across all cultures. You were with me in these discussions, since I am here because of you and your sacrifice and commitment to me and the ministry here in Rwanda. Thank you for your prayer support and for your financial support. Together we are working on forgiveness and restoring life in many ways. May this Lenten season open the way to a blessed Easter for each of us.

Yours in Christ, Kay Day



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2019

JUNE 17—21

Light Meal - 5:30 PM

Program Begins—6:00 PM

Closing—8:15 PM

VBS CELEBRATION

Sunday, June 23, 2019 at 10:00 AM

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED

Please complete this form and drop it in the offering plate or contact the church office.

Name _____

Phone # _____

Area of Interest: (please circle all that apply)

Kitchen

Security

Teaching

Crafts

Group Guide

Recreation

Opening/Closing

Music

Drinking From My Saucer

I've never made a fortune, and it's probably too late now.
But I don't worry about that much, I'm happy anyhow.

And as I go along life's way, I'm reaping better than I sowed.
I'm drinking from my saucer, "Cause my cup has overflowed."

Haven't got a lot of riches, and sometimes the going's tough,
But I've got loving ones all around me, and that makes me rich enough.

I thank God for his blessings, and the mercies He's bestowed.
I'm drinking from my saucer, "Cause my cup has overflowed."

I remember times when things went wrong, my faith wore somewhat thin.
But all at once the dark clouds broke, and the sun peeped thru again.

So Lord, help me not to gripe, about the tough rows I have hoed.
I'm drinking from my saucer, "Cause my cup has overflowed."

If God gives me strength and courage when the way grows steep and rough,
I'll not ask for other blessings, I'm already blessed enough.

And may I never be too busy to help others bear their loads,
Then I'll keep drinking from my saucer, "Cause my cup has overflowed."

Easter Musical

The Elderton Presbyterian Church will present:

“Bow the Knee”

a dramatic musical for Easter. The performances are scheduled for Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 12, 13 and 14th at 7:00 p.m. The church is located at 115 N. Main Street, Elderton. A free will offering will be received and light refreshments will be served following the musical. All are invited!

Maundy Thursday Seder & Communion

We will join together and share a Seder Meal Maundy Thursday, April 18th at 6:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Following the meal we will continue as we celebrate the Lord’s Supper. We ask that you use the form in this newsletter to let us know if you plan to attend. Also note, we are looking for volunteers to help set-up Wednesday, April 17th at 6:00 p.m. and those to stay after the Seder to help clean-up. Please note on the form if you are willing to help.

“The rich and the poor have this in common, the
Lord is the maker of them all (Proverbs 22:2).