



UPLIFT Newsletter

The United
Presbyterian Church
of Blairsville, PA

JANUARY 2020

There are two ways to greet the new day. Some say, “Good morning, God” and others say, “Good God, morning.” How we start the day usually determines the direction it goes. I’ve found that for the most part you only get out of something what you put into it. Smear a little limburger cheese on your upper lip and it will seem like the whole world stinks. On the other hand, take God at his Word and you’ll begin to recognize all sorts of new possibilities. An attitude grounded in a relationship makes all the difference.

As a couple drove home from church, the husband grumbled, “I didn’t get anything out of that service,” to which the wife replied, “well what did you bring to it?” There is a big difference between “going to church” and “coming to worship.” The first holds an expectation of receiving, while the second focuses on an opportunity of giving thanks and praise. The first asks—“What’s in it for me?” The second seeks, “How can I more deeply experience God?”

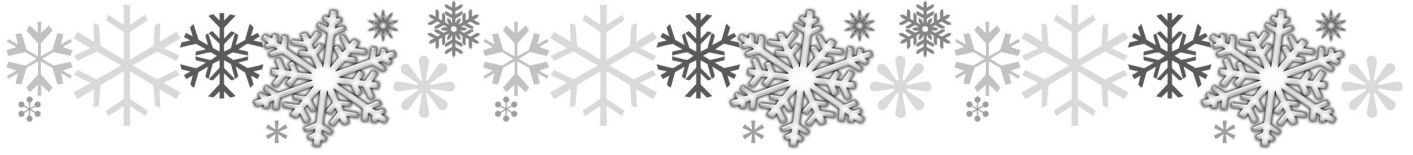
Scripture is clear that at every turn, God has taken the initiative in coming to us. God knows that we, in our fallen state, can never work our way into his favor. We can’t do enough to make God want us. Quite the opposite, in spite of our sin and waywardness, God still loves us and wants us. In mercy, God sees beyond who we have been and in grace loves us into who he wants us to be. God acts and we, in turn, respond. And the joy of the dance we call life is to follow God’s lead.

So, what are some things to keep in mind as we consider our dance with God into 2020? How is it our worship can have integrity in that it is true to who we are and more important who God is. As Jesus says, “God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24).

- Know that the Holy Spirit is God abiding in you, and it is only through the Spirit that your prayers are taken to the Father and the Father’s word is delivered to you. Jesus, the Son, intercedes for us while the Spirit is the presence of God abiding in us every hour of every day. Acknowledge the Spirit’s presence and be open to its leading.
- As you approach God, do so in genuine humility. We, without God, are nothing—but God without us is still God. All that we enjoy is a gift from God, a gift given not because we’re owed rather given in grace. Come to God in a spirit of thanks, grateful for the blessings showered on us.
- Come to God in a spirit of truth. We know what we have done that displeases the Lord. Frankly, we’re not aware of everything. But we come realizing that we’re sinners. That sin is a wall that hinders our relationship with God and others. That is why our service of worship begins with confessing our sin and asking to be forgiven. If we are serious about that, God “tears down the wall of sin and restores the relationship. Until we confess and acknowledge our sin against God and others, we cannot truly worship because we’re trying to live a lie. In the assurance of pardon, we are set free from the past and open to a deeper relationship with God and others.
- Worship is not a passive act. If you come only as a spectator, you’re wasting your time. Some sit down, cross their arms, close their minds and say, “Okay preacher, choir and organist—entertain me. Make me experience something I’ve never felt before.” Again, if you don’t get anything out of worship—chances are you have not approached worship in a proper frame of heart and mind. Worship is about growing in the relationship, being open to the movement of the Spirit.
- Our time on Sunday morning is guided by God’s Word. The scripture lessons are told you in advance. Read them early in the week, meditate on them, pray with them, talk about them so that as you enter the sanctuary, you’re not hearing them for the first time. The lessons for the month are listed in the newsletter.
- Come with a desire to be touched in a new way by the Spirit. God’s desire is for us to recognize fresh opportunities in our relationships, with Him and with those around us. Instead of daring to be changed, be open and expectant that you will be changed in a positive way. God speaks and touches the heart in many ways—sometimes its in a hymn or anthem, sometimes in the words of a prayer, sometimes in the handshake of peace, sometimes in seeing folks together—and every now and then God touches us in the sermon. If we come in a Spirit of expectancy, we will never be disappointed, because we will have seen God in some new way.
- Remember that worship is not limited to what we do within the walls of the sanctuary. Worship is how we respond to God’s touch wherever we are—at home, at work, with friends and strangers alike. As God welcomes us into this new year, so too may we welcome a deeper awareness and appreciation of his presence...

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 5

John 1:(1-9) 10-18
Ephesians 1:3-14

Sunday, January 12

Isaiah 42:1-9
Matthew 3:13-17

Sunday, January 19

Isaiah 49:1-7
John 1:29-42

Saturday, January 26

Isaiah 9:1-4
Matthew 4:12-23

Sunday, February 2

Matthew 5:1-12
Micah 6:1-8

Unity Sunday

On Sunday, January 19th at 3:00 p.m., the community is invited to gather in our sanctuary for a service of love for Christ and Community. This will be a service of prayer, scripture and local choirs and worship groups 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 Wednesday, January 15th. Please call the office with any questions or concerns.

Worship Assistants

January 5

Liturgist: Rick Shoemaker
Flowers: The Moran Family
Ushers: John & Mary Hileman
Bonni Dunlap, Alan Lowman

Projector: Alex Kirkland

Audio: Andrew Baker

January 12—Communion

Liturgist: Lon Ferguson
Ushers: Bob & Charlotte Cosharek
Pat Swope, Tom Smith

Projector: Kayla Moran

Audio: Olivia Eckenroad

January 19

Liturgist: Mary Anzelone
Flowers: Cindy Borbonus
Ushers: Gene & Chery Artman
Bill & Deb Lint

Projector: Shakira McKinney

Audio: Jaison McKinney

January 26

Liturgist: Dennis Gould
Ushers: Rick & Willa Shoemaker
Ed & Becky Bence

Projector: John Clark Bruner

Audio: Elizabeth Bruner

Offering Counters

Tom & Janet Smith

2020 Communion Dates

January 12—Baptism of Our Lord

*February 26—Ash Wednesday

March 8—Lent

*April 9—Maundy Thursday

May 31—Pentecost

July 19

September 13

October 4—World Wide Communion

November 22—Christ the King Sunday

*December 24—Christmas Eve

(* evening services)

2020 Per Capita Update

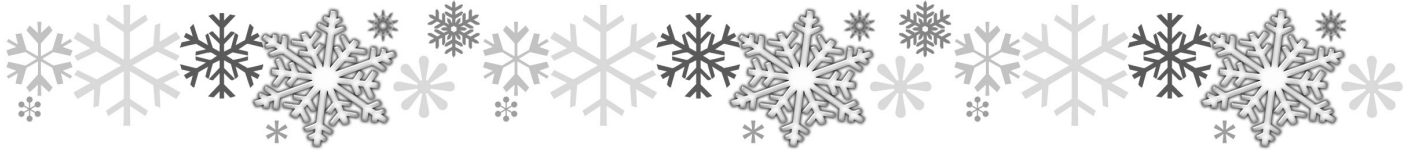
Per Capita, literally “per head”, is the amount requested from each member to cover the administrative expenses of the General Assembly, Synod and Presbytery. For 2020, that amount is \$33.62 per member on the active roll. That breaks down to: General Assembly—\$8.95, Synod—\$2.40, and Presbytery—22.27. 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.

Year End Information

A **Congregational Meeting** has been scheduled for Sunday, January 26, 2020 immediately following worship. A light lunch will be served. Then, we will look at the year 2019 in review and look forward to the 2020 New Year. Our Nominating Committee for 2020 will also be elected. We hope you will make plans to attend.

Offering Envelopes

2020 Offering Envelopes are available for pick-up in the back of the sanctuary. If you would like a box of envelopes or we missed you, please contact the church office.



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.

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 19th. If you have any questions or need information from the office, contact Jill during office hours.

2020 Flower Chart

The 2020 Flower Chart is hanging in the hallway outside the church office. If you would like to order flowers for Sunday worship, please use the chart to sign-up for your choice of date. Flowers are \$20/Sunday and checks can be made payable to the Board of Deacons. We hope that those ordering flowers through the deacons would take the arrangement following worship or pick them up at the church by the following Tuesday. Flowers that remain at the church after Tuesday will be shared with homebound members of the congregation. Please contact the church office with any questions or concerns.

Cookie Walk Update

The annual Cookie Walk was held Saturday, December 14th 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 \$375.00 for the Pathway Homeless Shelter in Black Lick. Thank you to all who organized, set-up, baked, worked and cleaned-up for the event.

To the Session and Congregation,
Thank you for your thoughtfulness to us this Christmas and throughout the year. It is a blessing for us to be able to minister to our church family. We look forward to a blessed and happy New Year in 2020!

Cindy, Marilyn, Jill, Sandy and Peg

Bible Study

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

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 Super Bowl 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 2nd during morning worship. One hundred percent of these gifts will be sent to ICCAP in support of the Food Bank.

Our Elders and Deacons

We thank Bonni Dunlap and Elaine Jellison for their faithful service on the Session. They have been instrumental in helping to set a vision as we move forward. We rejoice as Gene Artman, Lisa Hainaut, Bruce Highberger and Rick Shoemaker begin their ministry as the Sessional Class of 2022 and Jeff Lewis to the Sessional Class of 2020.

We thank Jen Borbonus, Ken Doak, Tom Holby, Beverly Lindsey and Bobbi Monroe for their faithful service as deacons. We rejoice as Jamie McKinney, Vicky Doty, Vicky Westley and Elizabeth Bruner begin their ministry as the Diaconal Class of 2022.

Property & Maintenance Concerns

If you notice something around the church property that needs repaired, please refer the matter to the church office. The secretary will forward the concern to the chair of the Property Committee. Please be very specific as to what the problem is, so that the issue can be handled. Thank you.

We will celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion Sunday, January 12th during the 11:00 a.m. worship service.

Please take time to prepare to receive and share the sacrament.

The Session

Class of 2020

Dennis Gould
Joan Moran
Pat Swope
Jeff Lewis

Class of 2021

Mary Anzelone
Doug Clayton
Bob Cosharek
Kim McKinney

Class of 2022

Gene Artman
Lisa Hainaut
Bruce Highberger
Rick Shoemaker

Board of Deacons

Class of 2020

Andrea Clayton
Mary Hileman
Steve Moran
Judy Trimble

Class of 2021

Erica Ash
Susie Cotti
Jean Heberling
Marilyn Neal

Class of 2022

Elizabeth Bruner
Jamie McKinney
Vicky Doty
Vicky Westley

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



Consider Taking Part

The Session Committees for 2020 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

Pastor Monroe and Bobbi thank everyone for your warm Christmas greetings and kindnesses!

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 19th.

How seldom do we weigh our neighbor with the same balance we use for ourselves.

Community Lenten Lunch Schedule

The Community Lenten worship services are held each Wednesday through the season of Lent and begin at 12:00 noon. Following the service a soup and sandwich lunch is served by the host church.

Feb. 26.....	Rev. Tim Monroe.....	Simon of Cyrene.....	Black Lick UMC
Mar. 4.....	Dawn Krishart.....	Pilate's wife.....	C&MA
Mar. 11.....	Rev. Joe Baird.....	Nicodemus.....	Hebron Lutheran
Mar. 18.....	Rev. Steve Bugay.....	Peter.....	United Presbyterian
Mar. 25.....	Rev. Rusty McClurg.....	Pilate.....	Hopewell UMC
Apr. 1.....	Sharon Kendall.....	Mary Magdalene.....	First UMC
Apr. 8.....	Susan O'Shaughnessy.....	Guards at the Tomb.....	SS Simon & Jude
GOOD FRIDAY			
Apr. 10.....	Rev. Harold Hicks.....	Thieves on the Cross.....	Crossroads

A Community Devotional

The Ministerium has decided to compile and publish another Community Lenten Devotional in 2020. This time there are several scriptures to choose from each day through Lent. Those who volunteer to submit a devotion will list the 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 1st and will be compiled into booklet form, duplicated, then distributed to area churches for use during the Lenten Season (which begins Ash Wednesday, February 26). Our congregation has been assigned 6 days. There are 5 texts per day. Please read through them and choose one for your focus:

MARCH 16

Psalm 80; Psalms 77, 79; Genesis 44:18-34;
I Corinthians 7:25-31; Mark 5:21-43

MARCH 17

Psalm 78:1-39; Psalm 78:40-72; Genesis 45:1-15;
I Corinthians 7:32-40; Mark 6:1-13

MARCH 18—Taken

MARCH 19

Psalms 42-43; Psalms 85-86; Genesis 46:1-7, 28-34;
I Corinthians 9:1-15; Mark 6:30-46

MARCH 20—Taken

MARCH 21

Psalms 87, 90; Psalm 136; Genesis 47:27-48:7;
I Corinthians 10:1-13; Mark 7:1-23

Volunteers are needed to write devotional thoughts for the days not taken above. 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.