



# UPLIFT Newsletter

The United  
Presbyterian Church  
of Blairsville, PA

MARCH 2021

A pastor was laid up in the hospital for a week recovering from some surgery. As the candy-striper delivered the mail he was pleased to find a get well card from the ladies group of the church. They all signed the card and one even added a note. "Pastor, we want you to know we prayed for you. We took a vote to do it, and it passed ten to nine."

Prayer is a powerful force in our spiritual journey. Before coming to Blairsville I served a parish of six congregations in the northern part of the county. The position I held was considered a mission post. Each year the denomination published a resource called the Mission Yearbook of Prayer and Study. Each day listed mission projects not only in the United States, but around the world. Every year my name appeared on a specific day as a focus of prayer for me and the work in which I was investing my energies. When the day came, for a 24 hour period I could literally feel the power of prayers being raised for my ministry. While such support was encouraging, it was also humbling in the knowledge that I was not alone in my service.

In John 17 we find the longest recorded prayer of Jesus in any of the Gospels. We call it Jesus' High Priestly Prayer. In it, Jesus prays for the protection of his people as he fulfills what the Father calls him to do. He anticipates our needs and asks that we be cared for until his return. As our high priest, Jesus offers himself a sacrifice for our sin. Jesus restores our relationship with the Father. And as he is raised from the dead and ascends into heaven, seated on the right hand of the Father, there he is making continual intercession for us. "Consequently he is able for all time to save those who approach God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25). So what do the Father and Son talk about for eternity? Truth be known, my human mind can't begin to comprehend the conversation, but one thing I know for certain is that you and I are topics they share.

Jesus, the risen, ascended and glorified Lord intercedes for us. That means he intervenes for us as we approach the throne of grace. By the power of the Holy Spirit, he hears our prayers, he searches our hearts and he makes known that which fills our souls. That is why we do not hesitate to take all things to the Lord in prayer. That is why we pray all things in Jesus' name. There is nothing so great that God cannot understand it and there is nothing so small that it is too insignificant for God to care. I Peter 5:7 assures us, "Cast all your anxieties on him, for he cares for you."

While we are able to pray for ourselves (and that is not a selfish thing to do) we are also welcomed to pray for those around us. It is more than a welcome, it is a spiritual obligation to pray for those around us. As a spiritual discipline our prayers of intercession are to be ordered lest in our spontaneity some are overlooked. In your newsletter we've included a guide for your daily prayer each morning and evening. It is intended to focus your conversation with God and to unite the voices and hearts of God's people. While this guide is not intended to be all inclusive, it gives us general direction in expressing our gratitude and seeking the fulness of grace.

If you practice the discipline of daily scripture reading, you may want to keep this guide in your Bible. If there is a certain place you sit to pray and meditate you may want to keep a copy there. If you eat a meal as a family, you may want to use this guide as you give thanks for your meal. If you spend intentional time with God before you close your eyes in sleep, keep this on your night stand. As you realize concerns not expressed on the printed page, add them. As individuals and their needs weigh heavy on your heart, write them down.

Lenten disciplines grow to become daily habits and habits of righteousness enrich our relationship with God and consequently with each other. I assure you that you are in my prayers and I ask that you keep me in yours.....

In Christ's Love,

*Pastor Jim*

## Scripture Texts for Worship

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

### Sunday, March 7

Exodus 20:1-17  
John 2:13-22

### Sunday, March 14

John 3:14-21  
Ephesians 2:1-10

### Sunday, March 21

Jeremiah 31:31-34  
John 12:20-33

### Sunday, March 28-Palm Sunday

Philippians 2:5-11  
Mark 11:1-11

### Maudy Thursday, April 1

Exodus 12:1-14  
John 13:1-17, 31-35

### Easter Day, April 4

Isaiah 25:6-9  
John 20:1-18  
Mark 16:1-8

*We will celebrate the  
Sacrament of Holy Communion  
Sunday, March 14th  
during 11:00 a.m. worship and  
Maudy Thursday, April 1st  
during 7:00 p.m. worship.  
Please take time to prepare to  
receive and share  
the sacrament.*

## Change Your Clocks!

Daylight Saving Time begins  
Sunday, March 14th.  
Be sure to change your  
clocks. We spring forward!

## Worship Assistants

### March 7

Liturgist: Mary Anzelone  
Streaming: Olivia Eckenroad  
Proj/Audio: Kristi Eckenroad &  
Dennis Gould

### March 14

Liturgist: Jean Heberling  
Flowers: Pam & Denny Irwin  
Streaming: Chase Stuchal  
Proj/Audio: Austin Baker &  
Cole Stuchal

### March 21

Liturgist: Lon Ferguson  
Flowers: Rick & Willa Shoemaker  
Streaming: John Bruner  
Proj/Audio: Elizabeth &  
Abigail Bruner

### March 28

Liturgist: Rick Shoemaker  
Flowers: Greg & Marlene Shirley  
Streaming: Mark Borbonus  
Proj/Audio: Eli & Brylea Borbonus

### Offering Counters

Bob & Charlotte Cosharek

## Dates to Remember for the Season of Lent and Easter

### Sunday, March 28

Palm Sunday

### Thursday, April 1

Maudy Thursday  
Worship & Communion, 7:00 pm

### Friday, April 2

Community Good Friday Worship  
Cancelled this year

### Sunday, April 4

Early Easter Worship, 8:30 am  
Live Streamed and In House  
Easter Day Worship, 11:00 am  
In House Only

## 3rd Annual Community Lenten Devotional

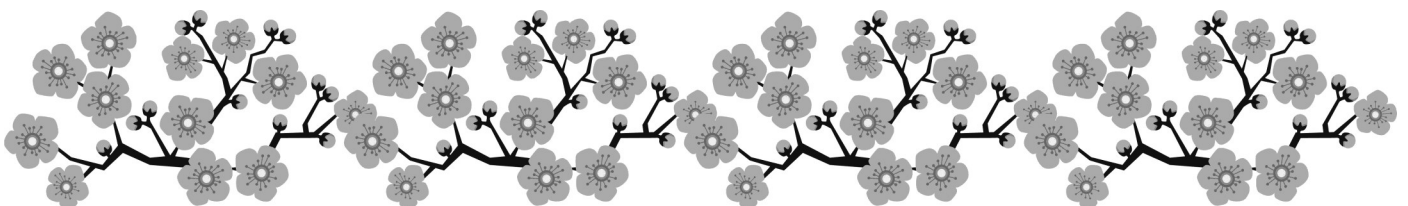
The Blairsville Area Ministerium has put together a 2021 Community Lenten Devotional. Many copies have been published and are available to you. If you would like a digital copy sent to you via email, please contact the church office, 724-459-7991. We would like to thank those who volunteered to write devotions from our congregation. Also, a special thank you to Kathy Bella for submitting artwork for the cover. It truly is a community endeavor and appreciated by so many.

## Souper Bowl of Caring Offering

We received our Souper Bowl of Caring Offering Sunday, February 7th during morning worship. This year we received \$1,195. One hundred percent of these gifts were sent to ICCAP in support of the Food Bank. Thank you to all who supported the offering.

## OGHS Offering

We will receive the One Great Hour of Sharing offering Sunday, March 28th during the worship hour. These gifts will aid with food for the hungry, aid and shelter for those overcoming catastrophe and conflict, and to resource communities working to end poverty and oppression. To help with remembering this offering during Lent, giving calendars were included in last month's newsletter. The calendar can be used as a tool to help provide information as well as opportunities to add to your OGHS offering.





## 2021 Flower Chart

The 2021 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.

## Coats for Kids Continue

Coats for Kids continue to be available to children and teens in the community. Please contact Janet Smith should you become aware of a need. Last year, 36 coats were distributed to kids in the area. Thank you to all those who have contributed to the coat program.

## April Newsletter

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

## Food for Family Thought

1. What is one subject in school which, when you began taking it, you thought you'd dislike but instead have come to love?  
\*\*Stop and consider how being a parent has expanded your capacity to love. When you were young and single, you probably never thought you would delight in a little creature whose diapers you'd have to change. But that swiftly changes when you first hold your child in your arms.
2. Kids: In your opinion, what is the most important thing your parents have taught you to this point?  
Adults: In your opinion, what is the most important thing your kids have taught you to this point?  
\*\*Odds are you learned about right and wrong through life experience rather than lectures. Seek out experiential opportunities that convey your values to your child—by helping others together, by watching how you talk about those who are less fortunate, by treating all people you encounter with respect.

## Bible Study

Wednesday morning Bible Study meets at 10:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. We ask that masks be worn throughout our time together, if possible. Please respect the space of others when choosing your seat. Pastor Monroe uses the sound system so as to be heard clearly. For those who would like to participate from home, we are set up to offer Bible Study via Zoom. If you are interested, please call the church office for more details.

## Chancel Choir

The Chancel Choir gathers for rehearsal each Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. Safety measures are followed while meeting. If you are interested in joining the choir or if you have questions, please contact Cindy Borbonus. We also invite those who would like to share their musical gifts during worship to contact Cindy for more information.

## Thank You from Rwanda

Dear Friends of Blairsville Church,  
Many greetings for you!

We thank you so much for the gift of \$500 given for us from you at the end of the year 2020. That support is very important for our Congregation because it will help us in the works of construction of the kitchen at the Gitarama parish that is useful for the church.

May God bless you all and have a happy New Year 2021!

Yours faithfully,

Pastor Alphonse Ndererehe

Gitarama Parish

## When I say good morning I mean to say:

**G**-od

**O**-ffers us His

**O**-utstanding

**D**-evotion to

**M**-ake us

**O**-bedient and

**R**-eady for a

**N**-ew day with Him.

**I**-nspire others, please and

**N**-ever forget

**G**-od loves you!

Have a blessed day!

## At Home Worship Resources

In the past year, we have tried to send on by email faith building resources to use at home. The Presbyterian Outlook has been faithfully making at home resources available, "Faith Formation at Home" and "Christian Education at Home." The first resource is focused more on family worship. The second is to assist parents in teaching Bible lessons to their children. The Christian Education Committee of our church has also invested in "Children's Bulletins." Each week, along with the "Christian Education at Home" resource, Children's Bulletins are sent via email for the children of our church. They include activities that reinforce the message of that Sunday. If you are interested in receiving either or all of these resources, "Faith Formation at Home" or "Christian Education at Home" and the Children's Bulletins, please contact the church office at 724-459-7991 to be added to the email list. If email is not an option, a paper copy can be mailed to you.

## As We Gather

Because of the nature of this pandemic we understand the responsible caution being taken in returning to in person worship services. The best time for you to return is when you feel healthy and safe in social situations. It is impossible to guarantee safety, but be assured we are doing everything in our power to maintain a clean and safe environment. If you are in the building and notice anything that brings you concern, please let the pastor or church office know so the issue can be addressed.

## Stewardship Works

Your faithful acts of stewardship have been appreciated, especially over the last year. Our expenses continue whether the sanctuary is filled or empty. Because of your generosity we have been able to retain staff, meet bills and assist those in need. We thank you for your faithfulness.

## Maundy Thursday

On Thursday, April 1st at 7:00 p.m. we will gather for a Maundy Thursday Worship Service and the Lord's Supper will be celebrated. Safety guidelines will be followed as we gather.



**"I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer."**

Luke 22:15, NIV