



UPLIFT Newsletter

The United
Presbyterian Church
of Blairsville, PA

AUGUST 2021

George was in trouble. He forgot his wedding anniversary, and his wife was really angry. She told him, "Tomorrow morning, I expect to find a gift in the driveway—one that goes from zero to two hundred in six seconds. AND IT BETTER BE THERE!!" The next morning he got up early and left for work. When his wife woke up, she looked out the window and sure enough there was a medium sized gift wrapped box in the middle of the driveway. Confused, the wife put on her robe and ran out, picked up the box and brought it back to the house. She opened it to find a brand new bathroom scale. George has been missing since Friday.

There is a danger in failing to remember and celebrate relationship. There is a sadness in losing sight as to how we have come to be where we are—and more important who we are and even more important whose we are. In Isaiah 46:9 we read, "Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no one like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done saying, 'My purpose shall stand and I will fulfill my intention.'"

In September 2022, we will be celebrating the 200th anniversary of our congregation. Through the decades our denominational affiliations have changed, buildings have been raised and razed, the congregation has known mergers and separations. On the parlor wall is a photograph of the centennial celebration of the Presbyterian Church taken outside the west wall of the sanctuary. A crowd of worshipers posed in their Sunday finest to commemorate that special day. To my knowledge, none of the descendants in that picture are still a part of the life of the congregation, but who we are today as a Church is in part defined by who those people were. And who we are today is also the fruit of the congregations from whom our present membership has come. We are always in the process of becoming someone new, remembering where we have been while remaining open to where the Holy Spirit is leading us. There is always a part of us planting seeds and another part busy reaping the harvest. We are ever looking back remembering where we have been, yet looking ahead dreaming of where we're going. Peter speaks of the church as a building constructed of living stones with Christ being the cornerstone, the prophets and apostles being the foundation and each generation building on top of what has been laid before them. But as we build on what has been, we are sensitive to what we will offer to the generations to come.

They say the best time to plant a tree is twenty years ago, but if that wasn't done, plant one today. Guides suggest planning for a church anniversary should begin four years before the celebration. While a few folks have done some preliminary work, there is still much more to be done to commemorate our 200 years of ministry in this community. Some may simply want a special worship service to mark the day while some envision activities throughout the year.

The Session is not in a position to do all the work involved, nor does the Session have a broad enough perspective to understand what the life of this congregation means to you. We will need the input of each of you; ideas from successful celebrations you've been a part of, creative suggestions to making the past come alive and planting seeds for the future, fun ways to rediscover how we have come to this place and where we are being led in faithfulness to our call.

At its August meeting the Session will again discuss some initial ideas about the bicentennial. It is my hope that a group from the larger congregation will be formed to plan and lead us forward. If you are interested in being a part of such a group, please let the church office (724-459-7991) know of your willingness or speak with the pastor.

Deuteronomy 4:9, "Take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things your eyes have seen nor let them slip from your mind all the days of your life: make them known....."

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Jim

Scripture Texts for Worship

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

Sunday, August 1

II Samuel 11:26-12:13a
Ephesians 4:1-16

Sunday, August 8

John 6:35, 41-51
Ephesians 4:25-5:2

Sunday, August 15

Proverbs 9:1-6
John 6:51-58

Sunday, August 22

Ephesians 6:10-20
John 6:56-69

Sunday, August 29

Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9
James 1:17-27

Sunday, September 5

James 2:1-10 (11-13) 14-17
Mark 7:24-37

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, 724-459-7991.

Thank You

A big thank you to all those who faithfully operate the audio and digital equipment each week. They make sure our service is online for those at home. We thank Jonathan and Doug Clayton for their time and efforts in getting our equipment setup and running.

Worship Assistants

August 1

Liturgist: Mary Gorslene
Flowers: The Harvey Family
Special Music: The Blairsville Brass
Special Music: Angie Neal
Streaming: Olivia Eckenroad
Proj/Audio: Kristi Eckenroad,
Dennis Gould
Ushers: Pat & Janeen Swope

August 8

Liturgist: Bobbi Monroe
Flowers: Marilyn Neal
Special Music: Pam Irwin
Streaming: Chase Stuchal
Proj/Audio: Austin Baker, Cole Stuchal
Ushers: Pat & Janeen Swope

August 15—Communion

Liturgist: Barb Brown
Flowers: Bill & Deb Lint
Special Music: Adam Loucks
Streaming: Mark Borbonus
Proj/Audio: Eli & Brylea Borbonus
Ushers: Pat & Janeen Swope

August 22

Flowers: Ed & Becky Bence
Flowers: Lee & Bunny Ednie
Special Music: Karen Kerin
Streaming: John Bruner
Proj/Audio: Elizabeth & Abigail
Bruner
Ushers: Pat & Janeen Swope

August 29

Flowers: Rick & Willa Shoemaker
Special Music: Organ & Piano Duet
Streaming: Olivia Eckenroad
Proj/Audio: Kristi Eckenroad, Dennis
Gould
Ushers: Pat & Janeen Swope

Offering Counters

Becky Bence and Elaine Jellison



OUR REGULAR SCHEDULE

begins Sunday, September 12th

The worship hour will begin at 11:00 a.m. and we will celebrate the Lord's Supper. Our plans for Sunday School and our choirs continue to be discussed due to the ongoing pandemic. Please watch your weekly bulletins for updates.

Bible Study to Begin

Each Wednesday morning at 10:00 a.m. beginning September 8th, we will gather in Fellowship Hall, and by ZOOM for Bible Study. Our study will focus on the gospel of John. As we gather, we will follow CDC guidelines. Please call the church office with any questions or concerns.

Board of Deacons

After a break for the summer months, our Board of Deacons will begin gathering for monthly meetings starting in September. The next meeting will be held Tuesday, September 7th at 6:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.

Christian Education Committee

The Christian Ed Committee will meet Tuesday, August 3rd at 6:00 p.m. in the parlor to discuss plans for fall programming. Please keep the members in prayer as they consider the pandemic information, parent thoughts and what's best for the church. Decisions are not made lightly and the welfare of our teachers and children is priority.

We will celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion Sunday, August 15th during the 10:00 a.m. worship service. Please take time to prepare to receive and share the sacrament.

Backpack Giveaway

The United Methodist Women of Blairsville First United Methodist Church are sponsoring a backpack distribution for the children of the community. The event will be held on Tuesday, August 17th from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. or all the backpacks are gone. School supplies will be included in the backpack and include pencils, crayons, pens, colored pencils, notebooks, calculators, erasers and other items for school. Distribution will be in Helman Hall. Please use the back doors located off the parking lot. For questions or more information, contact Dorinda Eckenroad.

Welcome to Blairsville

We welcome the Rev. John M. Smaligo as pastor of Hebron Lutheran Church. On Sunday, July 25th, Rev. Smaligo was installed as the new pastor at Hebron. Please keep them in your prayers as they begin this new phase of ministry together.

Food Bank

The ICCAP Food Bank distribution is held the second Tuesday of each month from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. When signing up for the first time, proof of residency in Blairsville borough is needed.

Chancel Choir Update

Our Chancel Choir will begin Wednesday rehearsals on September 8th at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. New voices are always welcome! If you are interested in singing in the choir, please see Cindy Borbonus.

Thank You for Your Stewardship

Thank you to those who have continued to financially support the church from home. We appreciate your faithfulness to the ministry of the church.

Elizabeth Bruner and A 4-H Day Camp Opportunity

We wanted to make everyone aware of an educational opportunity you may want to take advantage of to "kick-off" the start of a new school year! Our daughter, Elizabeth, has been a 13-year member of the Indiana County 4-H program and is culminating her 4-H career with her diamond project (equivalent to an eagle scout award), a 3-day, in person, Wildlife, Forestry, and Aquatics Day Camp at Blue Spruce Park on the outskirts of Indiana, PA, August 17-19 from 8 am - 4 pm for kids ages 8-12 (as of January 1). Cost is \$120.00 per camper unless the child is already enrolled in the 4-H program - the cost for current 4-H members is \$80. Each day will have special guest speakers, hands-on activities, crafts, snacks, and more! Some of the fun things she has planned are making plaster casts of animal tracks, building bluebird boxes as a community service project for the park, creating fish print t-shirts, nature journaling, learning the basics of fly fishing with the local Trout Unlimited chapter, water quality testing by making an edible aquifer, exploring for macroinvertebrates in the stream, and speakers from the fish and boat commission, game commission, and SO MUCH MORE!!! If anyone has questions please let us know!!

Connie Bruner

A flier is posted on the bulletin board at each entryway with cost and registration information.



How Well Do You Know Your Bible? BIBLE TRIVIA

1. True or False: The Bible is the most popular book ever written. (by copies sold)
2. How many lepers did Jesus heal?
3. How many books in the Old Testament?
4. What was Peter and Andrew doing when Jesus called them to follow him?
5. What problem did Bartimaeus have that Jesus fixed?

Answers will be shared in the August 15th bulletin and next newsletter

BIBLE TRIVIA ANSWERS FROM JUNE-JULY

1. To whom did David say, "I have sinned against the Lord?"
Answer: Nathan, found in II Samuel 12:13
2. Who does the Bible describe as, "In all Israel there was not a man so highly praised for his handsome appearance"?"
Answer: Absalom, found in II Samuel 14:25
3. How many of David's mighty men broke through the Philistine line to get David a drink from the well of Bethlehem?
Answer: three, found in II Samuel 23:16

Food for Family Thought—

Question: If you had to award a gold medal to someone other than your parent (or child), to whom would you give it and for what reason?

Thought: Telling stories of people in your life who exemplify the virtues that matter most to you is an effective way to communicate those virtues to your child. Think of someone in your life who manifested courage, generosity, or honesty, and tell your child a story about the person that conveys your admiration and respect.

Question: What is one seemingly impossible goal that you would like to see the world achieve during your lifetime?

Thought: Encourage your child to act according to the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. That will foster an awareness of their solidarity as one big, human family. Jesus longs for the time when we recognize that we are all one, just as Jesus and the Father are one.

Question: If you could add any one thing to your home to make it truly spectacular-something that would amaze everyone who visited you-what would you add?

Thought: My one friend's house was fancy and filled with toys, but we never played there. Another friend's house was simple, but we crowded into his living room daily with his many siblings and parents who lit up with joy when we entered their home. How welcoming do you make your home? Is there more that you can do?

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