

# UPLIFT Newsletter

The United  
Presbyterian Church  
of Blairsville, PA

APRIL 2022

About four weeks ago, polished stones embossed with a cross were made available to you. I hope you selected one to your liking from the baskets in the sanctuary and have been carrying it with you through the Lenten Season. Sometimes inanimate objects point to important life lessons. The Bible contains over ninety references to stones, stones that mark boundaries, stones that serve as monuments, stones that lie in ruin, stones that serve as a foundation, stones that bedeck priestly breastplates, stones that adorn royal crowns, stones that slay dangerous enemies, stones that honor cherished relationships, stones that are meant to be unmovable, stones that crumble with the utterance of a holy word, stones that cause some to stumble, stones that lift some to new heights.

As we move closer to Holy Week, we come to terms with a stone that has confronted every soul of every generation that has travelled this sod since Jesus ventured this earth. The confrontation is not a matter of the size of the stone, but rather the world's perception of the stone's power. Medieval philosophers mused over some peculiar questions: How many angels can dance on the head of a pin? If a tree falls in the forest and there is no one there to hear it, did it make a noise? If God can do anything, can God create a stone so large that even he cannot move it?

In a few days we will revisit Jerusalem where Jesus' lifeless body was removed from a cross. John tells us how two secret disciples, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus received permission to take possession of the corpse. The two wrapped Jesus' body with spices in linen cloths and placed it in an unused tomb in which no one had ever been laid. Matthew tells us that Joseph rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and then went away. The Gospel accounts are consistent in their testimony that the women witnessed this event.

A body that was lifeless. An entrance that was sealed tight. Eye witnesses who concur on who laid dead in the tomb. Was the stone solid enough evidence to end the story in the heads and minds of those present? Was that stone powerful enough to dash the hopes of those who had followed Jesus? Even more important, is there a stone big enough to stop you in your faith journey?

It is God alone who breathes life into the lifeless. It is God alone who moves obstacles that obstruct hope. It is God alone who enlivens that which has died within us and moves us from a life among tombstones to a future among living stones that become a spiritual home. While the resurrection of Jesus is an historical event, it is more fully a way of life for us who believe and follow him. What happened within that tomb, unseen by human eyes, has forever unlied the hearts of those who dare to trust that such a power is made real in us.

To those in Jerusalem that day who resigned themselves to the sight of a stone sealed tomb, life continued with an "it is what it is" attitude. Everyday victimized them by their circumstances. Nothing new ever happened because they could not escape the grip of their past. The thrill of a dream never stirred their heart because their dashed hope forbade them from considering the possibility. To surrender to an "it is what it is" mentality is to leave Jesus in his tomb while we retire to our own.

The joy of Easter Day is that there is no stone so big that God cannot move it. There is no prison, self-made or worldly imposed, so strong that it keeps us in bondage. There is no failure so defeating that we cannot get up and start again. There is no pain so deep that we cannot find a comfort that gives us the courage to move forward, even if it is only an inch from where we were yesterday.

As Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James, and Salome made their way to the tomb to anoint the body of Jesus, they lamented, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" Oh the time we waste fretting that which God has already resolved. As you hold your stone in your hand, remember the stones God has moved from your path. Be mindful of the hinderances he will remove from your tomorrows. You are not a prisoner to your past, your sin is forgiven. You are not a victim of your circumstance, you are being recreated day by day. As a living stone, you are a vital part of the household of faith, built into a spiritual house to be a holy people. Being found in the risen Lord, know that the power and freedom of resurrection is God's gift to you, without end.....

In Christ's love,

*Pastor Jim*

## Scripture Texts for Worship

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

### Sunday, April 3

Isaiah 43:16-21

John 12:1-8

### Sunday, April 10

Philippians 2:5-11

Luke 19:28-40

### Maundy Thursday, April 14

Exodus 12:1-4 (5-10) 11-14

John 13:1-17, 31-35

### Easter Day, April 17

I Corinthians 15:19-26

Luke 24:1-12

### Sunday, April 24

Revelation 1:4-8

Acts 5:27-32

### Sunday, May 1

Revelation 5:11-14

John 21:1-19

## May Newsletter

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

## Handbell Choir

The Handbell Choir has changed its rehearsal time. Rehearsals are now each Wednesday at 5:45 p.m. in the Bell Room. The choir is currently in need of 3 or 4 new ringers so it can ring the 3-octave music. We welcome any seasoned ringers and any new to handbell ringing. Contact Vicky Westley, director, for more information.

## Worship Assistants

### April 3

Liturgist: Mary Gorslene

Streaming/

Proj/Audio: Eli & Brylea Borbonus

### April 10

Liturgist: Mel Woodring

Flowers: Gary & Barri Stuchal

Streaming/ Elizabeth, Abigail &

Proj/Audio: John Bruner

### April 14—Maundy Thursday

Liturgist: Bobbi Monroe

Streaming/ Kristi & Olivia Eckenroad

Proj/Audio: Dennis Gould

### April 17—Easter Day 8:00

Streaming/ Elizabeth, Abigail &

Proj/Audio: John Bruner

### April 17—Easter Day 11:00

Liturgist: Jean Heberling

Flowers: Easter Lilies & Tulips

Streaming/ Elizabeth, Abigail &

Proj/Audio: John Bruner

### April 24

Liturgist: Rick Shoemaker

Flowers: Ron & Kim McKinney

Streaming/

Proj/Audio: Kristi & Olivia Eckenroad

### Offering Counters

Linda George and Jean Heberling

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## Living Stones

Special stones are available to you in the back of the sanctuary as part of our 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. You are encouraged to take one and to carry it with you as a reminder of your calling, the blessings of your heritage and your responsibility to live out with boldness the work entrusted to your care. We look forward to our celebration of God's presence in our midst.



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

### Wednesdays

Online Community Lenten Services,  
12:00 p.m.

### Sunday, April 10

Palm Sunday

### Maundy Thursday, April 14

Worship & Communion, 7:00 p.m.

### Good Friday, April 15

Community Worship

C&MA Church, 7:00 p.m.

### Easter Day, April 17

Early Easter Worship, 8:00 a.m.

Light Easter Breakfast, 9:00 a.m.

Easter Day Worship, 11:00 a.m.

## Graduates

The Christian Education Committee is looking for the names of upcoming graduates from high school or schools of higher learning. It has been our tradition to recognize the accomplishments of our young people during a worship service. Please submit names of graduates to the church office.

## Chancel Choir

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

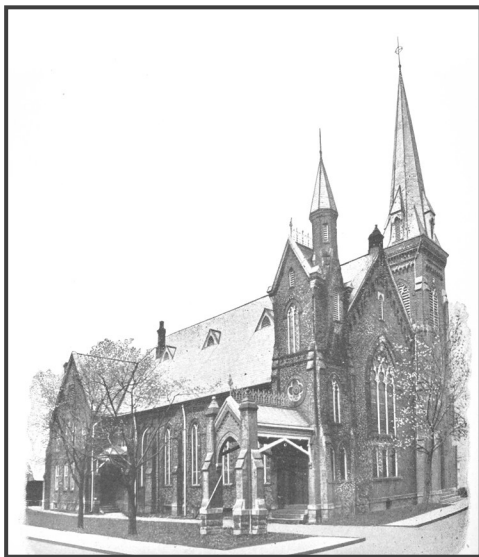
## Community Lenten Services

Community Lenten Reflections will be presented by local ministers and available online each Wednesday during Lent. The 2022 Lenten services will focus on the theme: *True Religion—The Spiritual and Social Responsibilities of the Church*. The first service will be available Ash Wednesday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>. Please use this link to access the youtube channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3nq0fsIDKtI4d1bpHN1pHg>

The schedule of speakers is listed below.

Apr 6 The Prejudiced & Oppressed..... Rev. Joe Baird  
Apr 13 The Sick & Dying.....Rev. Timothy Monroe  
Apr 15 Good Friday .....Rev. Rusty McClurg  
7:00 p.m. in person at the C&MA Church



## 200th Anniversary Celebration Schedule of Activities

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### Saturday, August 13

Open House at our Church during the Knotweed Festival

### Sunday, August 14

Church Picnic & Men with Mixers

### Saturday, September 17

200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner & Presentation

### Sunday, September 18

Bicentennial Worship and Soup & Salad Lunch

### Wednesday, September 21

200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert & Reception



## It's a Shower!

The deacons are having a shower for the Alice Paul House in Indiana! We are collecting items needed by the Alice Paul House through out the month of April. We ask that all donations be brought to the church by Sunday, May 1st. A container is located at the back of the sanctuary to collect items.

### Their Wish List

Walmart, Sheetz, Lowes gift cards  
Laundry detergent, Laundry baskets  
Dryer sheets  
Toilet paper, Paper towels, Tissues  
Disinfectant wipes, Magic Erasers  
Toilet bowl cleaner/Comet/Bleach  
Tall kitchen & small trash bags  
Hand soap & hand sanitizer  
Chapstick  
Dry goods, Canned food

The mission of the Alice Paul House is to promote awareness of domestic violence, sexual assault, and victimization in our community through primary prevention and educational programs; to assist and empower all victims of crime; and to provide safety to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

If you have any questions, please see Bobbi Monroe or a deacon.

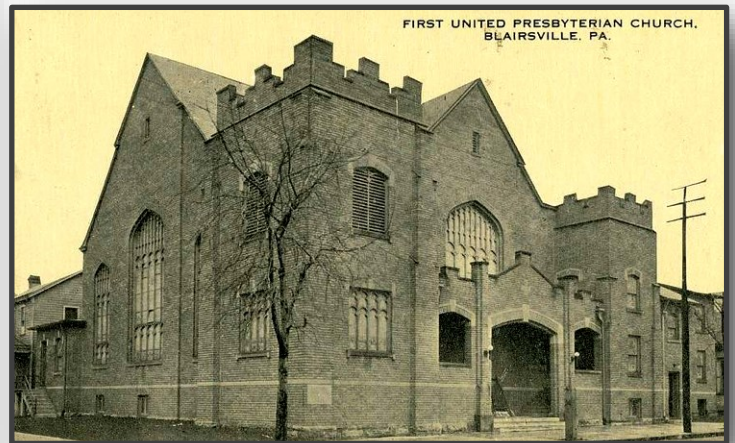
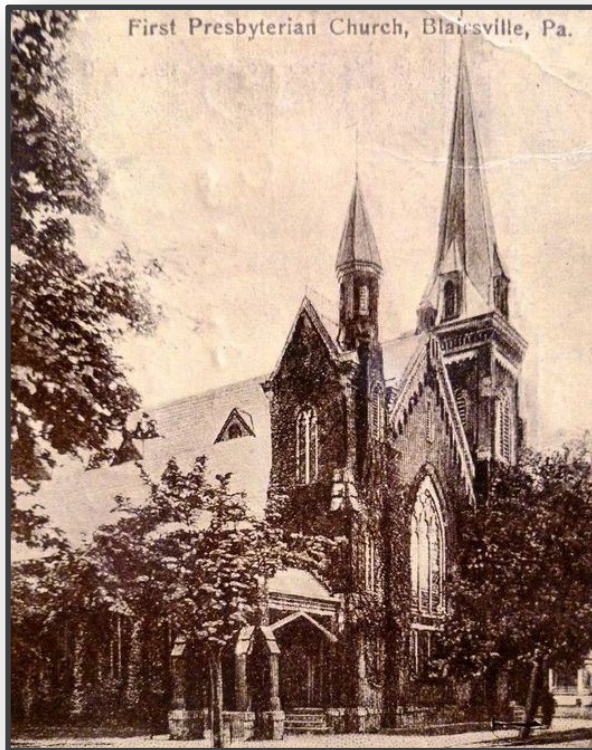
# Celebrating 200 Years of Ministry

## Installed Ministers of the First Presbyterian Church

Rev. Thomas Davis.....	1822-1848
Rev. George Hill, D.D. ....	1841-1895
Rev. Joseph W. Criswell.....	1888-1904
Rev. William L. Barrett, D.D. ....	1905-1910
Rev. Michael M. McDivitt, D.D. ....	1911-1919
Rev. J. Norman Hunter, D.D. ....	1919-1930
Rev. Joseph C. Stuart, D.D. ....	1930-1950
Rev. Lee Schaeffer .....	1950-1965
Rev. Walter L. Wenhold .....	1966-1969

## Installed Ministers of the Calvin United Presbyterian Church

Rev. N.C. Weede .....	1833-1838
Rev. J.G. Fulton .....	1839-1846
Rev. J.W. Duff.....	1848-1850
Rev. Matthew Clark.....	1853-1855
Rev. William Connor .....	1858-1863
Rev. D.W. Collins.....	1865-1882
Rev. W.H. McMaster.....	1882-1890
*Rev. R.E. McClure.....	1892-1947
(*Began filling the pulpit as a seminary student 1891)	
Rev. H.H. McConnell, Jr.....	1947-1950
*Rev. Richard W. Braun .....	1951-1953
(*Began filling the pulpit as a seminary student 1950)	
Rev. Clarence F. Anderson .....	1954-1957
Rev. Edward J. Thompson.....	1958-1969



### In 1969

## Merger of First Presbyterian Church and Calvin United Presbyterian Church

Co-pastored 1969-1973

Rev. Walter L. Wenhold and Rev. Edward J. Thompson

Rev. Dr. Roger D. Petersen.....	1974-1995
Rev. Dr. Darrell D. Knopp .....	1997-2000
Rev. Jeffrey Ruff .....	2003-2004
Rev. Timothy R. Monroe .....	2005-Present



In April of 1918, the pastor was the Rev. Michael McDivitt. The world was at war and had been since July of 1914. Below is the pastor's letter from The Yearly Bulletin dated April 1, 1918. (This booklet is equivalent to our Annual Report and Directory combined.) Read his words of comfort for his flock.

THE MINISTER'S MESSAGE

MY DEAR PEOPLE:—

We send out this Yearly Bulletin under severe and terrifying conditions. Our sons, our husbands, our brothers, and our kinsmen are in large numbers now in the service of our country waging a just war for the defense of our National Honor and the safety of humanity throughout the whole world. But this is not all—many have gone from us and many more will go during the coming days.

Your minister takes this opportunity to say to his people that his prayers go up unceasingly for all who have sent loved ones to the war. His prayer is that God will be gracious to us and to our loved ones in whatever place He may call us.

My Brethren, these are trying days and days that should keep us all very close to God. Let us all in prayer and service become acquainted with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, for once we are acquainted with God we will be at peace in the very midst of all that this World War may bring to us.

Turn in your Bibles to Isaiah 58:11 and you will read these inspiring words: "And the Lord shall guide thee continually". It seems that such words were written for this very time and for this very congregation. With these gracious, comforting, inspiring words I want to couple Susie L. Spencer's soul penetrating poem.

"Give me grace, dear Lord, to be  
 One with Thee in service sweet;  
 Dearer may it be to me,  
 Still to wait and watch for Thee.  
 With Thy hand enfolding mine,  
 In the day or in the night,  
 Let me hear Thy voice Divine;  
 Lead me through the dark to light.  
 So as days and years go by,  
 May thy will be done in me;  
 Hear me when to Thee I cry,  
 Guide me, keep me close to Thee."

We suggest that you read this Yearly Bulletin very carefully. You will then observe, from the reports, that this is our best year in this church in many respects. We are all very grateful to God for leading us to such heights of usefulness, but at the same time we must all realize the responsibility that rests upon us. The First Presbyterian Church of Blairsville will under God not only retain the ground won, but she will "Go Forward" and occupy by spiritual conquest new and larger territory.

Sincerely Your Minister and Friend,

MICHAEL M. McDIVITT.

The Manse, April 1, 1918.



CLASS No. 19.

Class No. 19, as pictured above, has made a fine record in attendance. It is the youngest class of boys in the Intermediate Department. The boys are bright, wide-awake, and much interested in the Sunday School. The entire class is in the picture. The teacher, Miss May Stitt, has been punctual and faithful in her work, having been present for roll call at the opening of the school, every Sunday morning, without exception, for twenty-one months. Let us encourage the boys in this and in all other boys' classes, remembering that "the churching of the boys today will be the manning of the church tomorrow."

A page from the 1910 Yearly Bulletin. The Rev. William Barrett was minister of the church.

**J**OSEPH MOORHEAD is one of our two old-young elders. He has come down to us from a former generation, and coming out of the past he brings with him the wisdom and experience of the past and unites them with the wisdom and experience of the present. Mr. Moorhead was born August 16, 1829, in Burrel township, Indiana county, Pa. His parents, Samuel, and Martha Bell Moorhead, were charter members of the First Presbyterian Church of Blairsville.

Mr. Moorhead was admitted to the Communion of this Church in 1853, and was elected to the eldership, April 12, 1861. He has always been a faithful Christian and zealous worker for the peace and harmony of the Church. He has been faithful through many years and may the Lord permit him to continue his faithfulness in actual work through many years to come. This is his fifty-first year as a ruling elder in the First Presbyterian Church of Blairsville.



MR. JOSEPH MOORHEAD

Joseph Moorhead was celebrated in the 1912 Yearly Bulletin. This is a photo and write-up about him. The Rev. Michael McDivitt was the Minister.



## Bible Trivia

### How Well Do You Know Your Bible?

*Answers in the next newsletter*

1. Who anointed Saul as king?
2. Which books of the Bible record David's time as king?
3. Which member of the Jewish ruling council came to ask Jesus questions at night?
4. How many days was Lazarus dead before Jesus visited?
5. How many people saw Jesus after his resurrection?

#### **BIBLE TRIVIA ANSWERS FROM MARCH**

1. Which two tribes of Israel were not named after sons of Jacob?  
Answer: Ephraim and Manasseh (Genesis 48:5, 16)
2. What did Melchizedek give to Abram?  
Answer: Bread and wine (Genesis 14:18)
3. When the disciples saw Jesus walking on water, what did they think he was?  
Answer: A ghost (Matthew 14:26)
4. Which missionary was described as having known the holy scriptures from an early age?  
Answer: Timothy (II Timothy 3:15)
5. Which tribe of Israel received no inheritance of land?  
Answer: The Levites (Deuteronomy 10:9)

### **Food for Family Thought**

1. Suppose that 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, you had to hear a background noise in your head. This background noise would always be there throughout your life. What background noise would you choose as your very own?  
**\*\*When you're stressed, your imagination can help. Call to mind sounds that calm you—a babbling brook, birds chirping, a favorite song—and let them lead you to an inner place where you can hear the still, small voice of God.**
2. Suppose you were told that you could have one wish come true—but the wish you make would have to be for someone else, not for yourself. What would you wish for, and for whom would you wish it?  
**\*\*Empathy is a fundamental building block for all moral growth. Make it a family value to frequently consider how your behavior and choices affect others. When your child talks about other children's experiences, gently ask, "And how do you think he/she felt about that?" This will nurture your child's capacity for compassion.**