



UPLIFT Newsletter

The United
Presbyterian Church
of Blairsville, PA

MARCH 2023

I've shared this story many times. After a month of marriage, Bobbi told me, "When I married you I knew you were Mr. Right, I just didn't realize your first name was Always." Both being the oldest child in a family we're each used to being in charge, knowing what's best, expecting the others to follow our example. Being the oldest means making sure everyone follows the rules and stays in their place. For the most part we've lived peaceably for nearly 33 years except when it comes to loading the dishwasher. After dinner she puts things where she thinks they should go and once she leaves the room, I rearrange them to their proper place. A therapist once counselled such a couple, "Look, it comes down to this, do you want to be right or do you want to be married?"

Sometimes we fuss about the little things like loading the dishes or folding the towels so we don't need to deal with the bigger things like pleasing God or loving our neighbor. Sometimes we're so fixed on doing that we lose sight of being the kind of person we should be. The Old Testament is filled with rules to be followed, rules that kept God's people different than the other people of the world. Following God's rules to the letter was the goal of being the perfect child. But what pleases God more, following the letter of the law or following the spirit of it? Is it singing a song on perfect pitch or is it singing with joy from the bottom of your heart?

Each Ash Wednesday we hear the words God gives us through his prophet Isaiah (58). We not only hear them, we're confronted, called to task by them. We fast as an act of devotion to God only quarrel and fight with our neighbors. We play the part of a humble servant only to make ourselves look holy in the sight of others. We are of one posture in the temple, but quite different everywhere else. What God wants from us is consistency, lives in which our actions mirror our words and our desires are aligned with God's heart.

This season of Lent is a time of saying "no" to ourselves so we are free to say "yes" to the needs of others. It's a time of putting aside our privilege so we can understand the needs of the world around us. It's a time of caring more about being righteous (in God's sight) than being right (in people's sight). Its coming to terms with who we are and praying that we would be refashioned into who God wants us to be.

It's when we realize we are not the center of the world that we are set free to focus on the one who is. That is what Paul is talking about when he says, "I have been crucified with Christ, and so it is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20). John the Baptist summed it up years earlier when he said, "Jesus must increase, I must decrease."

So, does it really matter if everyone does things your way or is it more important that the dishes get as clean as clean can be? May your Lenten journey bring you closer to your Lord and to your neighbor.....

In Christ's love,

Pastor Jim

Scripture Texts for Worship

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

2nd Sunday in Lent

March 5

Genesis 12:1-4a
Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

3rd Sunday in Lent

March 12

Exodus 17:1-7
John 4:5-42

4th Sunday in Lent

March 19

Ephesians 5:8-14
John 9:1-41

5th Sunday in Lent

March 26

Ezekiel 37:1-14
John 11:1-45

Palm Sunday, April 2

Philippians 2:5-11
Matthew 21:1-11

Food Bank

The Blairsville Area Food Bank is held the second Tuesday of each month. Food bags are distributed to folks from our community between the hours of 10:30 a.m.—12:00 p.m. Proof of address in the Blairsville Borough is needed when signing up.

April Newsletter

Articles to be published in the April edition of the UPLIFT newsletter are due to the church office by Wednesday, March 15th.

Keepsake Ornaments

Ornaments of the church from Wendall August Forge continue to be available to purchase at a cost of \$12.00 each. Checks can be made payable to the church.

Dates to Remember for the Season of Lent and Easter

Wednesdays

Community Lenten Lunches, 12:00 pm

Sunday, April 2

Palm Sunday Worship, 11:00 am

Maundy Thursday, April 6

Seder & Communion, 6:00 pm

Good Friday, April 7

Community Worship
St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 7:00 pm

Easter Day, April 9

Early Easter Worship & Communion,
8:00 am
Easter Breakfast, 9:00 am
Easter Day Worship & Communion,
11:00 am

OGHS Offering

We will receive the One Great Hour of Sharing offering Palm Sunday, April 2nd 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, fish banks and giving calendars are available at the back of the sanctuary. The calendar can be used as a tool to help provide information as well as opportunities to add to your bank.

Change Your Clocks

Daylight Saving Time begins Sunday, March 12. Be sure to change your clocks. We spring forward!



*We will celebrate
the sacrament of Holy Communion
Sunday, March 12
during worship.
Please take time
to prepare to receive
and share the sacrament.*

2023 Flower Chart

The Flower Chart is located on the bulletin board in the hallway by the church office. You may sign-up for your choice of dates. Gary's Floral provides our arrangements. After worship, you may take your flowers home or we ask that you pick up by the following Tuesday. Those remaining after Tuesday will be delivered to one of our home bound members. Dedications to be printed in the bulletin can be submitted to the church office or noted on the sign-up chart. Flower arrangements are \$20 each and checks can be made payable to the "Board of Deacons."



Offering Update

We received our Souper Bowl of Caring Offering Sunday, February 12th during morning worship. One hundred percent of the gifts were sent to ICCAP in support of the Food Bank. This year our offering totaled \$764.25. Thank you to all those who supported this offering.

Home Communion

If you are not able to come to worship and would like to receive communion in your home, please call the church office at 724-459-7991 and arrangements can be made for the sacrament to be shared with you.

“Miracle of Christmas”

Sight and Sound Theater
Strasburg, PA (Lancaster County)

THE ULTIMATE GIFT

This holiday season, travel back in time to Bethlehem as the original Christmas story unfolds all around you. Journey alongside Mary and Joseph, a flock of surprised shepherds, and three wisemen—along with their camels! There may be no room at the inn, but God has a lowly stable prepared as the angels announce the coming of the Messiah!

Experience MIRACLE OF CHRISTMAS as it comes to life on stage with massive sets and live animals in this cherished holiday production.



Our church is offering you the opportunity to travel by bus to Sight and Sound Theater to attend the presentation “Miracle of Christmas.”

DATE:

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

COST OF TRAVEL AND SHOW:

\$167.00 (\$85 due with reservation—\$82 due by November 1st)

Make checks payable to the church: UPC

Monies are non-refundable but may be transferred to another person if you are unable to attend

Please bring extra money if you want to purchase souvenirs

TRAVEL:

40 passenger motorcoach with driver from Quest

Cost is included above however, donations will be received as gratuity for the driver

FOOD:

Please bring a bagged breakfast and snacks to eat on the bus

Extra money will be needed for your lunch meal and drink or snack at the rest stops

ITINERARY:

- 5:45 a.m. Meet at the church parking lot
- 6:00 a.m. Depart from the parking lot
- 8:00 a.m. Rest stop
- 10:30 a.m. Arrive at Sight and Sound Theater
- 11:00 a.m. Show begins
- 2:00 p.m. Depart Sight and Sound Theater
- 2:30 p.m. Lunch stop at Cracker Barrel (upon confirmation)
- 4:00 p.m. Depart Cracker Barrel
- 6:00 p.m. Rest stop
- 8:30 p.m. Arrive at the church parking lot

RESERVATIONS:

Contact Charlotte Cosharek or Linda George
Between 9:00 a.m.—8:00 p.m. to make your reservation



Meet Our Newest Members

On Sunday, December 18, 2022, eight parishioners united with the congregation and two who previously transferred their memberships were recognized. We would like to introduce you to five of our newest members in this newsletter and we hope to introduce the others in next month's edition.

Zachary Barto is engaged to Lindsay Sharp and they have a daughter, Hayden. Zach grew up in the Catholic Church until he was confirmation age. For fun and relaxation, he likes to spend time with his family, golfing, fishing and playing hockey. Zach is employed with Culligan Water Company. He would like the church to help guide him and his family in the way of God. Zach is willing to be an active member in the church.

Brennan Borbonus is the son of Marty and Sheila Borbonus. He has two brothers, Eli and Ewan. Brennan is in 9th grade at Derry Area High School. He enjoys studying Science and English in school. Outside of school he enjoys sports, mountain biking, being outside and art. Brennan would like to serve Jesus by praying for others, attending church, and informing others about our church and Christianity.

Brady Doak is the son of Adam and Dana Doak. He is currently in the eighth grade. In school he enjoys studying Math and Health. Outside of school he enjoys sports including basketball, baseball, golf, football and track. Brady would like to serve Jesus by following his commandments and sharing the word of God with social media.

Pam Irwin transferred her membership in 2022. Her faith background is Protestant, she was baptized and confirmed in the Lutheran Church. Pam enjoys music for fun and relaxation. She is a retired teacher from Greater Latrobe School District. Pam enjoys sharing her musical talents with us during worship and is willing to help when she is needed.

Lindsay Sharp is engaged to Zach Barto and is mom to Hayden. She attended the Church of Christ on and off growing up. For fun and relaxation, Lindsay likes to run, watch sports, play with their dog, Layla and spend time with her family. Outside the home she works as a Mental Health Therapist. As a congregation, we can be welcoming and supportive of her family. Lindsay would like to volunteer and help out in anyway she is needed.



Seder Meal

We will gather to share a Seder Meal Maundy Thursday, April 6th beginning at 6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. A Seder is a traditional Jewish Passover meal that celebrates God's deliverance from bondage. Each food served helps to tell the story. Please let us know if you plan to attend by completing the form below.

**Maundy Thursday, April 6
6:30 p.m.
Fellowship Hall**

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.

Name _____

Number attending _____

I would like to help set-up Wednesday, April 5 at 6PM

I would like to help clean-up following the Seder



Volunteers Needed

- * Volunteers are needed to run the audio/visual equipment in the balcony each Sunday morning. Those interested will be trained. Please see Jean Heberling or Doug Clayton if interested.
- * Volunteers are needed to usher. An usher signup sheet is located on the table in the back of the sanctuary. If you would like to participate in worship as an usher/greeter, please sign-up. There are dates available. Our deacons thank you.

2023 Community Lenten Lunches

The Blairsville Area Ministerium has made the decision to resume the community Lenten services and lunches this year. Each Wednesday through the season of Lent, beginning at 12:00 noon, a Lenten service is held followed by a soup and sandwich luncheon. A schedule of dates, places, and pastors are listed below.

Wednesday, March 1.....	Hopewell Methodist Church	Pastor Fred Craig
Wednesday, March 8.....	C&MA Church.....	Pastor John Smaligo
Wednesday, March 15	Hebron Lutheran Church.....	Pastor Timothy Monroe
Wednesday, March 22.....	First United Methodist Church.....	Pastor Linda Corle
Wednesday, March 29.....	United Presbyterian Church	Pastor Joe Baird
Wednesday, April 5	SS Simon & Jude Church.....	Pastor Harold Hicks
Good Friday, April 7 at 7:00 p.m.....	St. Peter's Episcopal Church	Pastor Collin McKnight

Lenten Devotionals

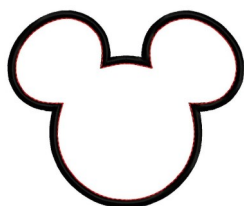
Lenten Devotional Booklets are available at the back of the sanctuary for anyone wishing to take one. The booklets include a Daily Lenten Reflection for each day through Lent and concludes on Easter Day. It was a community effort again this year with devotions written by friends in area churches. We would like to thank those from our church who participated by writing a devotion. We hope you pick one up and use it through the season.

66th Annual YMCA Good Friday Breakfast

The Annual Good Friday Breakfast hosted by the YMCA of Indiana County will be held Friday, April 7th beginning at 7:00 a.m. Guest speaker this year is Travis Freeman who will share an amazing story of perseverance through adversity. Tickets are on sale now \$20 a person thru March 23 (includes breakfast) and \$25 a person March 24-April 7 (includes breakfast). For information on the speakers and tickets visit icymca.org/GFB or stop by the YMCA.

American Red Cross Blood Drive

A blood drive will be held at Connect Church in the Worship Center, 50 S. Walnut Street Tuesday, March 14th from 1:00—6:00 p.m. If you are an eligible type O, B– or A– donor, consider making a Power Red donation. Red blood cells are the most commonly transfused blood component. When you give blood in March, you will receive a \$10 Visa Prepaid Card by email. PLUS, get a chance to win a \$3,000 Visa Prepaid Card to help with gas or grocery expenses. Be one of 5 lucky winners. Please call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter: CONNECT to schedule an appointment.



Disney Dazzle—Monday Music Club

Blairsville Monday Music Club is presenting a Disney Dazzle program and is welcoming any women who would like to sing along with our members. The music consists of familiar Disney songs. We will be practicing on Monday's starting March 6, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. at the Presbyterian Church sanctuary. Come join our Music Club Mouseketeers for this program. Any questions can be directed to Cindy Borbonus.

Compassion Child Update

Dear United Presbyterian Sunday School,
I greet you in the name of Jesus, may God's peace be with you. How are you? I am fine; I thank God for protecting me and my family. I am in preparations for going back to school, to start the first trimester of the last year in high school. Thank you for showing me love constantly and for your everyday prayers. I once again request your prayers to succeed the National Examination and trimester examinations. Thank you, have good times.

Thanks, Samuel
Compassion Child from Rwanda



How Well Do You Know Your Bible

Bible Trivia

Answers in the next newsletter

1. What did Jesus do at the Last Supper to his disciples?
2. What did the woman pour on Jesus' feet at the home of Simon the Leper?
3. Name the disciple who betrayed Jesus.
4. True or False: Jesus didn't know that he was going to be arrested and killed in Jerusalem.
5. Which disciple denied Jesus three times?

BIBLE TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. Name the place where Jesus walked on water.
Answer: The Sea of Galilee (Matt. 14:22-36; Mark 6:45-56; John 6:16-24)
2. Who bought Joseph as a slave?
Answer: Potiphar, captain of the Pharaoh's guards (Genesis 37:18-31)
3. What did Esau receive in exchange for his birthright?
Answer: Stew (Genesis 25:29-34)
4. Who were Daniel's three friends? (Babylonian names)
Answer: Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego (Daniel 1:6-20)
5. Which apostle shared the gospel with an Ethiopian official on the road to Gaza?
Answer: Philip (Acts 8:26-40)

Lent's 40-Day Period Starts with Ash Wednesday

Every year, Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and is always 46 days before Easter Sunday. Lent is a 40-day season (not counting Sundays) marked by repentance, fasting, reflection, and ultimately celebration. The 40-day period represents Christ's time of temptation in the wilderness, where he fasted and where Satan tempted him. Lent asks believers to set aside a time each year for similar fasting, marking an intentional season of focus on Christ's life, ministry, sacrifice, and resurrection. The key events of Lent include Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Day.

At the start of Lent on **Ash Wednesday**, many Christians get a cross on their foreheads from the ashes during a church service. The ashes symbolize grief and the acceptance of our sinful state. **Maundy Thursday** is recognized as the day before Jesus is crucified. It is believed to be the day Jesus celebrated Passover with his disciples and most notably, washed their feet as a display of humility and love. **Good Friday** is the day we remember the crucifixion and death of Jesus on the cross. It is called "good" because it is part of God's plan for our salvation. God's good plan to redeem us from sin included the suffering of Jesus. **Easter Day** is the often referred to as the most important day in Christian history. Three days after his death, we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus rose again, conquering the grave and death. Through Jesus, we have the opportunity to have eternal forgiveness for our sins, relationship with God, and eternity in heaven.