



# UPLIFT Newsletter

The United  
Presbyterian Church  
of Blairsville, PA

MAY 2023

There are three traditional streams of the Christian Faith—Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant. The Roman Catholics and Protestants celebrate Easter Day on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Spring equinox. If the full moon falls on a Sunday then Easter is the following Sunday. The Orthodox Church sets the date based on when Passover is celebrated. Some years, all Christians observe Easter on the same day. This year, we marked Easter a week earlier than our Orthodox siblings. Maybe you noticed candy wasn't marked down significantly until the Orthodox paid full price too. (My Orthodox brother-in-law and I do a lot of teasing about that).

The fact of the matter is that Easter is not restricted to one day. For Christians, Easter Day and Eastertide is a season that lasts fifty days and extends until the Day of Pentecost, when we celebrate the arrival of the Holy Spirit into our midst, birthing us as the Church. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John bear witness to Jesus' resurrection and his encounters with believers until the fortieth day when the Father called him from this world home to his heavenly throne where he abides until he is sent to return and gather his faithful as he judges the living (the quick) and the dead.

I find wise instruction in the Heidelberg Catechism as it explains the benefit we receive from Christ's ascension into heaven. First, as Jesus takes his place at the right hand of the Father he serves as our Advocate. In their heavenly conversation, our names come up; our joys and our sorrows are shared, our hopes and our fears are discussed, our laughter and our tears are felt. The old gospel hymn goes— "Nobody knows the trouble I've seen, nobody knows but Jesus." Well Jesus tells the Father what is going on in our lives and what we most need at the moment. Its not that the Father, the Son and the Spirit don't already know all that, it's the knowledge that in their oneness they care and together minister to us.

Secondly, with Christ in heaven's glory, a part of us is there too. Paul writes, "If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation." Being united with Christ in his death, we are also united with him in his resurrected life. Being found in Christ, we are given a foretaste of glory divine, a glimpse of the beauty and power that awaits us. That flesh which we and Jesus share now has been welcomed into glory and we are given a pledge that we will be kept safe until we're "all in." Because Christ, the head of the Church, abides there—we as the body of Christ have a place there as well.

Thirdly, now that Jesus has arrived home from his service in this world, the Holy Spirit is now deployed to equip us with the fullness of God's gifts. The Spirit is said to be "a counter pledge by whose power we seek what is above where Christ is—not things that are on earth." Because we have experienced God through our faith in Jesus Christ, the Spirit opens us to grow all the more in relationship with our creator. By learning more of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we not only learn how to find peace and strength in this world, we are given the hope and assurance of what is yet to be—and that which is coming far exceeds what has been.

Within the Orthodox and Roman Catholic tradition, Ascension Day is a "red letter" day on the calendar. But within the Protestant community, it often comes and goes without notice. The one exception is our Amish brothers and sisters. Ascension Day is a time when earthly labor, worldly endeavors cease. Business transactions are put on hold as hearts and minds turn heavenward. Faithful gather to hear the Word proclaimed and respond in prayer and singing and fellowship. For a time that puzzled me, but the more I think about it, the more sense it makes. The Amish live each day knowing this world is not their home. They breathe each breath in anticipation of the glory of heaven. What better way to celebrate the good news that Jesus is there already praying for us each and every moment—waiting to welcome us home.

Mark May 18th on your calendar and make time to reflect on the goodness and grace you have received in the risen Lord, but so too anticipate the glory of that place his resurrection has prepared for you.....

In Christ's love,

*Pastor Jim*

## Scripture Texts for Worship

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

### May 7

I Peter 2:2-10  
John 14:1-14

### May 14

John 14:15-21  
I Peter 3:13-22

### May 21

I Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11  
John 17:1-11

### May 28

Numbers 11:24-30  
Acts 2:1-21

### June 4

II Corinthians 13:11-13  
Matthew 28:16-20

## Summer Musicians

Our Chancel Choir will take a break for the summer months. Beginning in June, we will host guest musicians and have Special Music during worship. If you or someone you know would like to share a musical talent during worship, please see Cindy Borbonus or contact the church office.

## Food Bank

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



*We will celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion Pentecost Sunday, May 28th during worship. Please take time to prepare to receive and share the sacrament.*

## 2023 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.

## Blanket Offering

The Blanket Offering will be received Mother's Day, Sunday, May 14th during worship. The Blanket Offering gifts are sent to Church World Service to supply blankets to those in need. Blankets protect from the cold, comfort after a disaster and remind families that they're not alone. Each one costs only \$10 but can be a vital resource for someone needing a little support, warmth and encouragement. Please prayerfully consider your gift.



## Summer Schedule

Begins

**Sunday, June 4, 2023**

Summer Worship Time  
**10:00 a.m.**

The Chancel Choir and The Handbell Choir are in recess until Fall.

## OGHS Update

The One Great Hour of Sharing Offering was received during Palm Sunday worship, April 2nd. We received a total of \$712. Thank you to all who gave gifts to support the offering.



## 2023 Flower Chart

The Flower Chart is located on the bulletin board in the hallway by the church office. Dates are still available for Sundays this year. Gary's Floral provides our arrangements. After worship, you may take your flowers home or we ask that you pick them 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."

## 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.

## Organ Fund

The Session has approved the establishment of an Organ Fund to receive donations for future repairs or replacement of our pipe organ. Gifts should be made payable to the church and clearly marked in the memo line for Organ Fund.

## June-July Newsletter

Articles to be published in the combined June-July edition of the UPLIFT newsletter are due to the church office by Monday, April 15th.

## Ball Brothers' Concerts Scheduled

The Ball Brothers have been bearing witness to their faith in Jesus Christ in small towns and large cities around America. Their musical gifts are truly from God the Father and their message is inspired by the Holy Spirit. Now that their ministries are taking some new directions, they are engaged in their Farewell Tour. We looked at the possibility of hosting them for an evening here in Blairsville, but we didn't feel we could do that with the limits of their timeline. So we are encouraging you to attend one of two concerts of praise being offered in our area in the coming months.

**Friday, May 12** at 7:00 p.m. in Roseville Chapel, 3598 Rt. 322, Brookville, PA (814) 849-0817

**Friday, July 21** at 7:00 p.m. in Memorial Baptist Church, 7154 Rt. 403 South, Dilltown, PA (814) 446-5019

You can call each church for information about tickets. Through the years their gospel message has touched many lives. We pray God will continue to bless and use their ministries in creative and powerful ways.



## Summer Camping Opportunities

Summer is coming and camps are preparing for this season! Camp is described by one as, "A place to explore, grow, belong, learn God's word and have fun." There are three local camps supported by local presbyteries.

1—**Camp Lambec** is supported by the Camping Association of the Presbyteries of Northwestern Pennsylvania. It is located on 92 acres with beachfront access to Lake Erie. CAPNWP offers summer camp programs for all ages from late June to early August annually.

2—**Pine Springs Camp** is a ministry of the Washington (PA) and Redstone (PA) Presbyteries. Since 1948, Pine Springs camp has been a place where lives have been changed by encountering Christ in a vital way. This year Pine Springs Camp celebrates a 75-year legacy. Exciting things are planned!

3—**Crestfield Camp & Conference Center** is supported by the Pittsburgh Presbytery. It is a 59 acre site in Slippery Rock, PA. Programs are offered to those 4 years and older from mid-June through July. For more information on Crestfield Camp, check out their website at [crestfieldcc.org](http://crestfieldcc.org).

Brochures are available at the back of the sanctuary. Also, funding is available to offset some of the cost for campers. Please call the office for details.

## News from Gitarama

Dear Blairsville Congregation,

Many greetings to Our Friends from Blairsville Congregation. We thank you so much for the last gift (\$1,000) of the fourth quarter 2022 given for us. This amount was supported in the works of Kabingo chapel construction.

After starting that construction we thank God because now we finish the halls and we need the roof. Pray for us in order to success.

Yours faithfully,  
Pastor Alphonse Ndererehe  
Gitarama Congregation



## How Well Do You Know Your Bible

### Bible Trivia

*Answers in the next newsletter*

1. Who preached at Pentecost?
2. Who was exiled to an island?
3. In what city were Jesus' followers first called "Christians"?
4. Which apostle took the Gospel to the city of Samaria?
5. What did Pilate do to "cleanse himself" of the crucifixion?

### BIBLE TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. What happened after Jesus was buried in the tomb?  
**Answer:** He rose again (Luke 24:6-7)
2. How did Jesus leave earth and go to heaven?  
**Answer:** He rose into the clouds (Acts 1:9-11)
3. What garden did Jesus go to when he prayed after the Last Supper?  
**Answer:** The Garden of Gethsemane (Matt. 26:36-46, Luke 22:39-46, Mark 14:32-42)
4. Who was the Roman Governor who sat over Jesus' trial?  
**Answer:** Pontius Pilate (Matt. 27:1-2)
5. Who cut off a soldier's ear when Jesus was being arrested?  
**Answer:** Peter (Matt. 26:47-56, Mark 14:43-50, Luke 22:47-53, John 18:3-11)

### John, a Friend of Jesus Secret Code

Each number stands for a letter of the alphabet. Write the correct letter in the blank to find the coded words and phrase.

6 9 19 8 5 18 13 1 14

6 18 9 5 14 4

18 5 22 5 12 1 20 9 15 14

John was known as "the \_\_\_\_\_ disciple."  
2 5 12 15 22 5 4

A 1	N 14
B 2	O 15
C 3	P 16
D 4	Q 17
E 5	R 18
F 6	S 19
G 7	T 20
H 8	U 21
I 9	V 22
J 10	W 23
K 11	X 24
L 12	Y 25
M 13	Z 26

### EASTER WORD SCRAMBLE ANSWERS

spring, basket, Sunday, bunny, chocolate, lamb, eggs, bonnet, jellybeans, parade, candy, lily, flowers, decorate, chick