



THE TOWER

FEBRUARY 2017

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, TITUSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

A Note from Pastor Norma Murphy

The Lord be with you all!

As I write this, Eryn Lavery flew to the APCE (Association of Presbyterian Christian Educators) Conference in Denver, and I taught the lesson for Transformation Tuesdays for her. It was on the Beatitudes, the opening of the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5.

The list of 'Blessed are the ...' is one of Jesus' best known teachings. As one character in the lesson video exclaimed, how can these people be blessed when they are so unlucky? Sad and lonely, poor in spirit, forgiving of people who are unkind, picked on for following Jesus --- this doesn't sound much like being blessed to him or to the world.

But they are blessed to Jesus. Because Jesus turns everything upside down.

And Jesus is still turning everything upside down. When we are sad and lonely, God blesses us by comforting us. When we are weak and wonder if we can keep going, God blesses us by lifting us up and carrying us. When we are forgiving of others, even those who don't necessarily deserve it, God blesses us with forgiveness.

We are reorganized on Session, and have a fresh, new class of elders coming on to begin their three-year terms. We are looking to engage in ministries and mission that support our primary mission and purpose. We are looking to prayerfully discover ways to do that mission and ministry while achieving a closer balance of fiscal responsibility. And we believe that if we are humble and seek God's will, we will be blessed with some real answers.

How might Jesus turn your life or your world upside down? How is God blessing you, today and every day? And how might God bless this congregation as we move into the future?

Because we ARE truly "BLESSED!"

Grace and peace, Norma

Session News

Highlights of Annual Meeting

On Wednesday, January 25, at the Annual Meeting, the following members were nominated to be ordained and installed as your new elders and deacons. They will be ordained and installed on Sunday, February 5, 2017.

Elders:

Class of 2019

Toby Cressman
Connie McIntyre
Jack Samsonsky
Kirt Zimmerman

Deacons:

Class of 2017

Polly Deitz
Amanda Enright
Joan Foley
Lynn Nicols

Class of 2018

Kathy Mitcham
Jackie Samonsky
Ellen Stover

Class of 2019

Carol Cauvel
Rochelle Cressman
Janet Gadsby
Martina Love

2017 Nominating Committee (Members at Large):

Connie McFarland
Nancy Roeder
Dick Zimmerman

Session Committees Selected

Your Session met to discern God's leading for our congregation on Monday, January 23, 2017. During the meeting, the spiritual leaders of the church:

- Re-organized the committees of the Session for 2017 as follows:

Administration (Finance, Personnel, and Property)

Rose Nystrom and Jack Samonsky, Co-Moderators
Joe Thompson*, Co-Moderator for Personnel

Christian Education and Fellowship

Gail Billig, Moderator
Patti Paden

Congregational Care

Jim McFarland, Moderator

Heritage

Rhonda Clark, Moderator

Missions

Jessica Decker*, Moderator
Connie McIntyre
C.J. Kirvan

Worship and Stewardship

Sandy Smith, Moderator
Barb Frye
Phil Cauvel

Clerk of Session

Kirt Zimmerman

*not currently a member of Session

- Approved Study Leave for Pastor Norma: Monday, February 6, to Wednesday, February 8, 2017
- Heard a report from Committee on Ministry (COM) liaison, David Pickens, regarding its new liaison program beginning soon
- Set a special meeting for Monday, March 13, at 7 p.m. to begin working on issues assigned to the Session in the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center process
- Heard the reports of the various committees
- Approved the request of Susan Shaffer to be removed from the rolls
- Elected John Schultz as elder commissioner to the Saturday, February 18, 2017, meeting of the Presbytery of Lake Erie in Erie
- Thanked the five elders who have completed their terms of service: Polly Deitz, David Fitz, Sandy Swanson, Gloria Taylor, and Mike Wonderling
- The next stated meeting of the session will be on Monday, February 27, 2017

Upcoming Meetings

Christian Education - Wednesday, February 8, 11:30 a.m., Conference Room
Heritage Committee - Sunday, February 19, 12 noon, Conference Room
Worship Committee - Sunday, February 26, 12 noon, Emerson Parlor
PW Board Meeting – Monday, February 27, 4 p.m., Conference Room
Session - Monday, February 27, 7 p.m., Conference Room

Sunday School Opportunities

Available Adult Sunday School Classes

Did you know that, long with our Sunday School classes for K4-12 grades, we also have classes for parents who might want to get plugged into a class while their children are busy learning about the Bible and God's love? We currently have three classes that are open for any adult to attend, and they are:

1. Commissioned Women – This class meets in the conference room, and uses the “The Present Word, by PC(USA).”
2. Lee Green – This class meets in Scheide Hall.
3. The Seeker's Class meets in Pastor Murphy's office.

Christian Education

Women's Bible Study Underway with New Study

The women's Tuesday Bible Study recently began a new study led by Eryn Lavery on the building of relationships and community in the Body of Christ. Weaving together God's Holy Word and sage anecdotes from contemporary Christian leaders, the study takes a look at biblical definitions and examples of community in the Bible that are applicable to our daily walk as Christians.

All women from this congregation and/or local community are invited to join the group each Tuesday, 10-11:15 am, for fellowship, prayer, and study. Free baby-sitting is available in the nursery during the study, provided by Pandi Ford. See or email Eryn Lavery for more information @ eryn@erynlavery.com.

Transformation Tuesday Sees Recent Growth, New Production

First Presby's Transformation Tuesday program has experienced new growth in numbers these last few months, largely due to the dedication of program volunteers and Spiritual Guides who commit to loving the children faithfully week after week.

The program takes place after school when students K-4 - 5th grade are invited to the church from 3:00 - 5:00 for a snack, Bible story, music, and craft. In addition, each child receives one-on-one prayer time in the prayer room with a caring adult volunteer (aka “Spiritual Guide”) from the church. Two Open Houses are held annually, one right before Christmas Break and the second in May at the close of the season.

In addition, this spring students will be teaming up with the church's memorial handbell choir, under the direction of Dr. Filippa Duke, to present "Jonah and the Whale." The children will perform the play at the Open House on Tuesday, May 2, at 4 p.m., and again during morning worship on Youth Sunday, May 7, 2017. Any and all members of the congregation are invited to attend both the Open House and Youth Sunday to support these youngest members of our church family.

Men of First Breakfast Bible Study

All men from our church, their friends, and friends of the community are welcome to attend each Wednesday morning's breakfast/Bible study held in Scheide Hall at 7 a.m. A delicious breakfast is always served, along with good fellowship and great conversation on a passage from the Bible. Any questions can be directed to facilitator, Tom Newcombe.

Prayer and a Pint Bible Study

The February sessions will be on February 9 and February 23, at 7 p.m., at the Blue Canoe; and we will be studying the book of Ephesians. Our regular table is in the far back corner of the dining room area. Anyone interested in participating in this ministry - or just curious about this public witness - is welcome to attend. Contact person is Jesse Lavery who can be reached via email at jesse@jesselavery.com with any questions.

Moms' Small Group to Meet

A small group for moms of young children is meeting every other Thursday (February 2 and February 16) from 7-8 p.m. at the home of Mrs. Shannon Grinder. Moms will take turns bringing a devotion/Bible passage to share with the group; and, children are welcome to attend. See Shannon Grinder or Eryn Lavery for more information.

Youth Group News

Meeting Time

All 6-12 grade students are invited to join us in the prayer room Sunday evenings at 6 p.m. for prayer, fellowship, and fun! If you have questions, contact Eryn Lavery via email at eryn@erynlavery.com.

Christian Ed Corner

Spotlight On: Brianna Hannold

Full Name: Brianna Denise Hannold

Age: 18

Grade/School: 12th grade at Titusville Senior High School

What is your favorite food? Taco salad

What is your favorite movie? "Soul Surfer"

What is your favorite music? Hip hop/country

What hobbies do you have? I like playing volleyball.

What plans do you have for after graduation?

I plan to attend Edinboro University to become a history teacher.

What are three things that you absolutely love?

Reading, exercising (sometimes), and doing a lot of homework.

What's the most unusual thing about you?

The most unusual thing about me is that I'm proud to just be myself; and, even if I'm not good at everything, I still like having fun.

When did you decide to become a Christian and how did you get to that decision?

I decided to become a Christian because, when I was little, I always felt like I was stuck inside of myself. I wanted someone who would love me for who I am, not for what people wanted me to be. Jesus does that; and, now, I have a lot of friends who care about me and are always there for me too.

What is one question you would want to ask God face-to-face?

I would ask God if he can always protect me and if he is always going to be there for me when I get to my breaking point.



Church Mission Statement

First Presbyterian Church

A Christian community that welcomes all people and equips them to proclaim, witness, and teach the good news of Jesus Christ through worship, prayer, and caring service.

This Month's Ushers Rochelle Cressman, Kirk Decker, Rob Seib (captain)

Worship and Music

The committee met on January 22, 2017. Planning is beginning to take place for the upcoming services during Lent, the first one being Ash Wednesday on March 1.

If you are interesting in singing in the choir, contact Nathaniel Licht. If you are interested in ringing handbells, contact Filippa Duke.

The next meeting will be after church on February 26.

Ushers for February are Rob Seib (Captain), Rochelle Cressman, and Kirk Decker. If you are interested in serving as an usher, please contact Sandy Smith.

Our next holy communion will be on Sunday, February 5.

Peace.

Sandy Smith, Moderator

Music Ministries

Chancel Choir

“What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.” 1 Corinthians 14:26

The Chancel Choir meets each Wednesday at 7 p.m. in the Sanctuary. We would love to have you join us!!

Children's Choirs I and II

The Children's Choirs I and II will lead worship on Sunday, February 26, 2017. We will meet at 10:30 a.m. to rehearse in the Sanctuary.

Memorial Handbell Choir

The Memorial Handbell Choir rehearses on Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m., in the Sanctuary. If you are interested in joining, contact Filippa Duke (fduke.presby@gmail.com) or the church office. The Memorial Handbell Choir will lead worship on Sunday, February 26, 2017. We will meet at 9:15 a.m. to rehearse in the Sanctuary.

Campus Ministries

College Fellowship Meetings Here at the Church

The College Fellowship Meetings are held each Sunday in Scheide Hall at 8:30 p.m. All from the college community are welcome to participate in this ministry. Our hope is to achieve an atmosphere of spiritual growth and exploration and support, foster, and challenge those in the college community to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Any questions speak with Tom Newcombe.

Senior Adult Ministry (SAM's Club) Ministry

All those 55+ are invited to participate in all SAM's Club events. If you have a suggestion for a movie, would like to make the soup for the day, or simply need a ride, don't hesitate to call the Tom Newcombe at 827-3665.

Valentine's Dinner

On Wednesday, February 15, at 5:30 p.m., in Scheide Hall the SAM's Club Ministry has planned a Valentine's Dinner catered by Joe Gionti Catering Service. The cost for this event will be \$8.00 per person. The menu will be stuffed chicken breast, mashed potatoes, vegetable, dessert and beverage.

SAM's Club Needle Crafts and Cards

Each Wednesday, join the SAM's Club group for an afternoon of needle crafting.

Each Thursday, join the SAM's Club group for an afternoon of card playing.

Both events take place in Emerson Parlor at 1 p.m.

SAM's Club Lunch and a Movie

On Friday, February 3, at 12 noon, in Scheide Hall, join the SAM's Club for Lunch and a Movie. Soup will be served, followed by a movie yet to be determined.

Lunch and a Movie will meet again on Friday, February 17.

Presbyterian Women Events

PW to Hold Fundraiser

The PW Women will hold a Jane Stromboli Fundraiser beginning on Sunday, February 19 to March 19. Anyone wishing to purchase pies, strombolis, apple dumplings or pumpkin rolls, should see the order forms located in the church office. If you have any questions, please speak with Sandy Swanson or Terry Davitt. Orders will be in just in time for Easter!

Gently Used Books Needed

The PW Women will hold its annual book sale on Tuesday, March 28, and Wednesday, March 29. Anyone who has gently-used books and would like to donate them for the sale is asked to bring them to the church office or place them in the Dobb Doors.

Flowers

Chancel Flowers

If you would like to place flowers in the Sanctuary on any Sunday throughout the year, let Terry Davitt know at the church office (827-3665) by the Wednesday prior to them being in the sanctuary. This way she can place the dedication in the bulletin.

Birthdays

Kirk Decker	1	Jeff Burton	12	Ava Hlad	25
Mark Sampson	2	Charles Ford	14	Art McIntyre	25
Randy Schneider	4	Matt Sampson	14	John Reagle	25
Andy Osborn	4	Mary Lou Tucker	14	Sheila Schneider	26
Lakyn Hauptman	5	Stan Thompson	15	Lisa Conner	26
Terry Davitt	5	Debbie Newcombe	16	Tammey Dunlap	27
Kelly Evans	7	Eric Fenske	17	Bette Harrison	27
Ardelle Hutchison	8	Jessica Harshbarger	20	Craig Ludwick	27
Dick Peebles	9	Char Eggleston	20	Haley Schneider	28
Karen Schlack	9	Allen Hughes	21		
Amy Brown	11	Kirt Zimmerman	23		

If we have missed your birthday – please let us know.

Community

A Food Pantry

The Food Pantry could really use our help. A donation of a food item or a gift cards is always welcome.

Boy Scout Troop Meets on Mondays

Each Monday at 6 p.m., in Scheide Hall, all boys in grades Kindergarten - 5th, who are interested in joining a great club for boys, are invited to come and check it out. Any questions should be directed to Ashley Peterson at 493-3852.

Contact us:

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