



# THE TOWER

JANUARY 2017

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, TITUSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

## A Note from Pastor Norma Murphy

The Lord be with you all!

As we enter into the year 2017, I am recalling that John writes his vision of a new heaven and a new earth in Revelation 21:1-6a. In verse 5 he records God saying, “See, I am making all things new!” And I wonder, how much is actually new in your lives right now? What is God making new for you?

Chances are your answer is, “Not much.” For all our grumbling about the same-old, same-old, for all our complaints about what is wrong in our lives and the world we don’t really take advantage of opportunities to allow much to change and become new.

This is not a call to renewed New Year’s Resolutions by you all, but an honest look at how few of them have actually effected any change. I am 1 for about 50 in that department, having actually quit smoking in January of 1983 and never lighting up again since. But that’s it. The rest are a monumental bust in terms of them sticking for any appreciable amount of time.

But New Year’s-type resolutions are not what God is talking about. God is talking about the redemption of the entire creation. This is not based in some personal wish, no matter how deeply seated it is. It is based in God’s desire for us and for our world, that we should become more and more what God created us to be.

What new things would God have you living in your life? What new behavior does God will for you or your family right now and lasting for all time?

And what new things would God have this congregation living in its life? What new behavior or program or practice does God will for us and lasting far into the future?

By the end of this month Titusville Presbyterian church will be asked to make changes to the by-laws recommended by the session to work toward reducing the number of elders from 18 to 12. We will elect 4 new elders and a full board of 12 deacons, restoring that board to full responsibilities. We will also be announcing a slight re-organization of the committees of the session in an effort that each elder be assigned to only one committee.

Are these changes aligned with God's desires for this congregation? Your session prays and hopes so! Will they lead to God making something new here at First Presbyterian Church? Only time will tell.

In the meantime, we will all continue to pray and to discern as best we can. And continue to watch for ways in which God will indeed call us into the future to live in new ways.

Grace and peace, and a blessed, joyous 2017 to all!  
Norma

## Session News

Your Session met to discern God's leading for our congregation on Monday, November 28, 2016. During the meeting the spiritual leaders of the church:

- Re-organized the committees of the session for 2017 as follows:
  - Christian Education and Fellowship (4 elders)
  - Finance/Administration/Personnel and Property (4 elders)
  - Heritage (1 elder)
  - Missions (2 elders)
  - Worship and Stewardship (3 elders)
  - Clerk of Session (1 elder)
  - Task Forces who report directly to the session: Seniors and FFF
- Heard a report from Committee on Ministry (COM) liaison David Pickens regarding their recent retreat and a program called Pittsburgh Churches Unglued
- Heard the reports of the various committees
- Activities (becoming Fellowship) is going to host Fellowship Time on Christmas morning beginning at 10:30 a.m.
- Missions received permission to hold 2 special offerings: The Christmas Joy PC(USA) offering the 4 Sundays of Advent and the Associated Charities offering as usual on Christmas Eve
- Heard from Personnel that annual reviews are almost completed
- Nominating reported that good progress is being made in completing a slate of nominees for the congregational meeting
- Approved calling the Annual Congregational Meeting on Wednesday, January 25, 2017, beginning with a Dinner at 6 p.m. served by the session
- Approved the request of Kevin and Shannon Vinson to be removed from the rolls
- Approved the request of Tina Cleland to be reinstated to the rolls
- The next stated meeting of the session will be on Monday, January 23, 2017 with elders-elect invited to attend

## **Offering Envelopes**

Pledge envelopes for 2017 are now available for pickup on the table in the hallway by the church office. (Note: If you would like to receive envelopes but did not pledge, let Terry Davitt know and she will see that you get them.)

All who live outside the Titusville area should receive their pledge cards soon.

## **Upcoming Meetings**

Christian Education - Wednesday, January 11, 11:30 a.m., Conference Room

Heritage Committee - Sunday, January 15, 12 noon, Conference Room

Worship Committee - Sunday, January 22, 12 noon, Emerson Parlor

Session - Monday, January 23, 7 p.m., Conference Room

Congregational Dinner and Meeting – Wednesday, January 25, 5:30 p.m., Scheide Hall

## **Annual Congregational Dinner/Meeting – January 25<sup>th</sup>**

The Annual Congregational Dinner/Meeting will be held Wednesday, January 25, at 5:30 p.m. in Scheide Hall. This year we are going to have a potluck supper coordinated by The Activities Committee where everyone is to bring either a casserole or a dessert to share. The meat, beverage, and table service will be supplied by the church.

Annual Reports will be available on Sunday, January 22 and at the meeting.

Stop in or call the church office to make a reservation. This way we'll know how many to setup for.

## **Sunday School Opportunities**

### **Available Adult Sunday School Classes**

Did you know that, besides 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 to Begin New Study**

Beginning January 10, 2017, the women's Tuesday Bible Study will begin a new study led by Eryn Lavery on building community in the Body of Christ. Weaving together God's Holy Word and sage anecdotes from contemporary Christian leaders, the group will discover what it means to use the building blocks of community as a means to strengthen the entire Body and advance the Kingdom.

The study is based on the book, Groups: The Life-Giving Power of Community by John Ortberg, Laurie Pederson, and Judson Poling. A sign-up sheet will be available in the office for anyone wishing to order the book for this study. Books are \$10 each, and deadline for sign-ups and payment is January 3. (Or feel free to purchase the book yourself at [www.christianbook.com](http://www.christianbook.com))

## **New Spring Semester to Begin for Transformation Tuesday Program**

Transformation Tuesdays, First Presby's after-school program tailor-made for K-5 through 5<sup>th</sup> grade students, will begin its new spring semester on January 3, 2017. Each Tuesday students 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.

In addition to the weekly program, children are sent home with handouts that encourage children to incorporate that week's lesson into their everyday lives. Each child also takes a turn bringing home the "Bible Bag," a backpack containing an age-appropriate Bible for children to read at home with their families.

This impactful disciple-making program currently serves 15-20 local children from the community each week, and therefore relies heavily on dedicated volunteers – of which we can never have too many! - to continue its success. If you feel God might be calling you to serve in this highly-rewarding capacity, see program leaders Eryn Lavery, Filippa Duke, or Shannon Grinder for more information.

## **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 to Begin January 12, 2017**

With the busy holiday season right around the corner, the Thursday Prayer and a Pint Bible Study which meets at the Blue Canoe twice a month will take a break from meeting until after the New Year.

The new session will begin January 12, 2017 at 7 p.m. at the Blue Canoe, and 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 and can be reached via email at [jesse@jesselavery.com](mailto:jesse@jesselavery.com) with any questions.

### **Moms' Small Group to Meet**

A small group for moms of young children is meeting every other Thursday (January 5 and January 19) 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](mailto:eryn@erynlavery.com).

#### **Youth Groups to Serve Erie City Mission**

Early this spring, our First Presby youth and their adult chaperones will have the chance to serve at the Erie City Mission (date TBA). The youth had their first experience serving at the ECM this past summer when they teamed up with the Pleasantville Presbyterian youth group. The young people had a chance to prep food, sort food donations, cook, serve the mid-day meal to a long line of hungry folks, and wash dishes. After their hard work, volunteers were invited to a meal and devotion with the regular workers at the Mission. Several young people have requested we return to the ECM and volunteer again. We will be taking a small group of youth and adults this spring, but space is limited. Anyone interested in joining this mission is encouraged to speak to Eryn Lavery at the church or via email: [eryn@erynlavery.com](mailto:eryn@erynlavery.com).

## Christian Ed Corner

Spotlight On: MILO DECKER

Full Name: Milo Kurtis Decker

Age: 7  $\frac{3}{4}$  years old

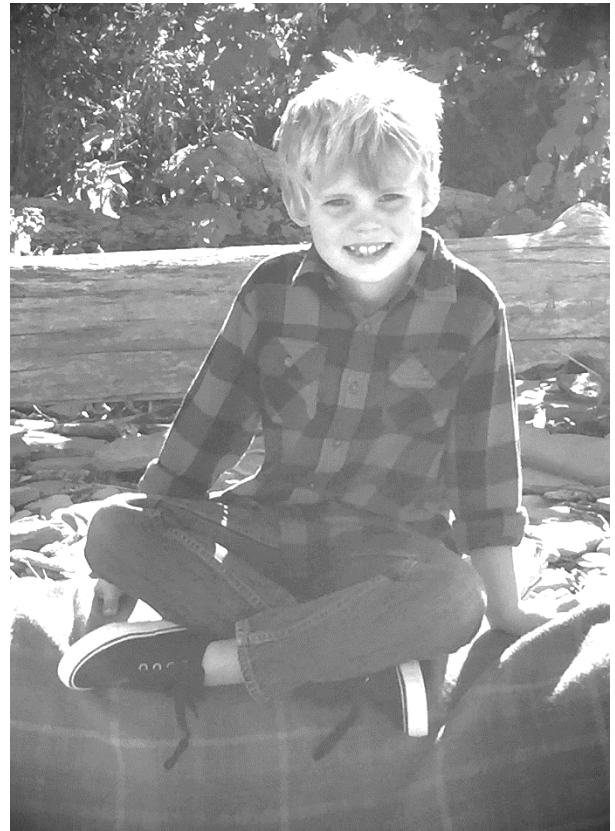
Grade/School: 2<sup>nd</sup> grade at Main Street

Parents' Names: Kirk and Jessica

Siblings' Names: Olivia

Favorite Foods: Grilled Cheese, Pizza, Ramen,  
Ham, and Fruit Snacks

Favorite Movies/TV shows: Star Wars,  
Home Alone, A Christmas Story, and  
The Guardians



Favorite Books: Junction of Sunshine and Lucky, BFG, and Matilda

Are you in any activities at First Presby? Transformation Tuesdays

What do you love to do on school breaks? Play outside, ride bike, swim in Lake Erie, play with Legos, watch movies, and play with Olivia

Who are your friends? Cash, David, Lucas

What are three things you could never live without? Mom and Dad, Oliva, and his toys!

What's the most unusual thing about you? I don't eat milk on my cereal. I will have a glass of milk with my cereal. I am a picky eater. I love junk food.

What is one question you would want to ask God face-to-face some day? I'd ask him to be wise to solve the problems of the world. I'd want to get everyone to stop fighting and get along. No wars, no divorces, no fighting over toys, and no fighting over presidents.

# 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** Terry Davitt and Barb Frye

## Worship and Music

Happy New Year! May 2017 be filled with God's love, joy, and peace. The holidays are behind us; let us look forward to the year with a spirit of hospitality. Here is a thought by Henri J. M. Nouwen: "Hospitality means primarily the creation of free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend instead of an enemy. Hospitality is not to change people, but to offer them space where change can take place. It is not to bring men and women over to our side, but to offer freedom not disturbed by dividing lines."

As our pastor, Norma Prina Murphy, will be on vacation on January 1, 2017, Eryn Lavery will be in our pulpit that day. As we look forward, the first celebration of communion in 2017 will be on Sunday, January 8; and, communion will be served by intinction.

Ushering falls under the Worship and Music Committee; therefore, if ushering is of interest to you, please contact me. Teams are getting set up for the year.

The Worship and Music Committee will meet on January 22, 2017.

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, January 22, 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](mailto:fduke.presby@gmail.com)) or the church office. The Memorial Handbell Choir will lead worship on Sunday, January 22, 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

### 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, January 6, 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, January 20; then every other Friday.

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.

### SAM's Club Potluck Dinner

On Wednesday, January 11, at 5:30 p.m., in Scheide Hall the SAM's Club Ministry will have a potluck supper. Each person is to bring a tureen to share.

Contact Tom Newcombe if you have any question regarding the SAM's Ministry.

## Birthdays

Adam Schwab	2	Phil Cauvel	11	Terry Warner	19
Tom Newcombe	2	Karen Sampson	12	Robbie Herps	20
Cassie Rago	2	Chase Steinbuhler	13	Bill Warren	20
Sean Clark	3	Debi Sutley	14	Kay Locke	22
Joann Pondel-Fry	3	Dick von Tacky	14	Kathy Barker	23
Nadine Harrison	5	Ray Crawford	15	Matt Sutley	27
Haley Brown	7	Lee Gavin	15	Stephanie Burton	28
Nancy Chappel	7	Sharon Evans	17	Kevin Harroun	30
Jack Samonsky	8	Patti Jo Young	17	Dean Chappel	31
Sandy Smith	9	Bill Love	18		
Laura Scott	9	Sasha Archer	18		

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



## 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.

## Community

### A Food Pantry

With the holidays fast approaching, 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 - 5<sup>th</sup>, 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:

### First Presbyterian Church

216 North Franklin Street, Titusville, PA 16354  
(814) 827-3665      [firstpresby216@verizon.net](mailto:firstpresby216@verizon.net)

Visit us on the web at: [www.titusvillefirstpresbyterian.com](http://www.titusvillefirstpresbyterian.com)

## Staff:

Kai Baldwin, Accompanist  
Vickie Corey, Housekeeper  
Theresa Davitt, Administrative Assistant  
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Children's Choir Director  
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Kelly Evans, Sexton  
Eryn Lavery, Christian Education Director

Email: [eryn@erynlavery.com](mailto:eryn@erynlavery.com)  
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