



# THE TOWER

APRIL 2016

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, TITUSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

## Letter from Reverend David Oyler

Grace and Peace in this Easter Season,

Life is a spiritual journey. You may recall that my signature in The Tower last month included this line – ‘Journeying with you in this Lenten Season’. As followers of God the word journey has a rich depth to it. In Genesis 12, Abram journeys from Haran to Canaan. Against his will, Joseph is taken on a journey to Egypt which prepared the way for his family and the future of the Israelites. The journey took the Israelites through the Red Sea, on across the wilderness, past Mt. Sinai and into the Promised Land. Late in life, the journey Jesus took led him from the Sea of Galilee, past Samaria, to Palm Sunday, Passover, the crucifixion and a stunningly empty tomb.

As a faith community we are also on a journey. The journey takes us faithfully through the Biblical passages. At the same time the journey takes us through the seasons of our lives as a faith community. In this season of our lives we are engaged in thoughtful, reflective conversation about who we are, where we are headed and what God is up to next. Many of you have engaged in this thoughtful conversation with Lombard Mennonite Peace Center. Those conversations help to make us more knowledgeable Christians and strengthens the Titusville congregation. It is a growth opportunity for it allows us to reflect wisely on the quality of our relationships within our congregation, our community and our families. It is a unique opportunity to grow emotionally and spiritually as we examine the Scriptures together.

Several of you have also asked recently about what the future journey looks like for the Titusville Presbyterian Church in relationship to pastoral leadership. It is a good question. As most of you know, I am serving here as a part time, short term interim pastor. It was the discernment of the Session and the Committee on Ministry that there would be value in having me serve in this ‘in between’ time. I am privileged to serve with you. Yet

I readily acknowledge that in the 20 hours a week available in my schedule that I cannot fill the role of a full time pastor. Some of you are taking on new tasks to help ease those responsibilities for which I thank God for each one of you.

In this continuing journey some of you are clearly asking what is next in the area of pastoral leadership. And here is the answer: Your Session has asked a team of several church members to search out another full time interim pastor. Some of you might ask: Why another interim pastor? Why don't we just move along and invite a long term called and installed pastor to serve faithfully with us? That is a complex question but the short answer is this: There is still more robust conversation to be shared to help us prepare for the future. Lombard discussions are a part of that. Enhancing our healthy, honest discussions internally is a part of that as well. How do we build consensus? How do we communicate with one another in a manner in which all the voices can be heard? Where is God calling our congregation to engage the community in ways that do not currently occur? How do we get out in the community in an era when people are less inclined to enter the doors of a church? How do we build patterns that best strengthen our congregation when we agree? And when we disagree?

I would suggest this is all a part of our spiritual journey as a faith community. These questions are not answered overnight. They are profoundly important ones to engage in order to be a vital congregation. It is most helpful for many of these questions to be engaged with an interim pastor who will not be here in the long term. Of course, some of these questions will overlap into the time when a called pastor joins in this journey with you.

So the journey continues as we learn, live, love and laugh. The journey continues as we pray, ponder and process the dramatically changing world in which God invites us to serve as his disciples. I will continue to serve with you as a part time, short term interim pastor for the present. Only the divine wisdom of God knows how long this leg of the journey that might extend. I would encourage you to remember that God is found, not only in the destination, but also in the journey.

Privileged to journey with you,

Pastor David Oyler

## Office Hours for Pastor David Oyler

Pastor Oyler will be in the church office:

For the Week of April 3 – April 9

Tuesday morning, April 5 and Friday morning and afternoon, April 8. He welcomes conversation as the Titusville Church anticipates the Spirit's leading in this Easter season.

For the Week of April 10 – April 16

Tuesday afternoon, April 12 and Friday morning and afternoon, April 15. He welcomes conversation as the Titusville Church anticipates the Spirit's leading in this Easter season.

For the Week of April 17 – April 23

Monday morning and afternoon, April 18 and Thursday morning and afternoon, April 21. He welcomes conversation as the Titusville Church anticipates the Spirit's leading in this Easter season.

For the Week of April 24 – April 30

Monday afternoon and evening, April 25 and Thursday morning and afternoon, April 28. He welcomes conversation as the Titusville Church anticipates the Spirit's leading in this Easter season.

## Session News

Your Session gathered on March 21 for prayer and discussion at the beginning of Holy Week. Included in their time together:

- Dwelling in the Word as Ephesians 4 was the focus.
- Reviewed the rich and good work in which the congregation is engaged with the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center. All church members and friends are strongly encouraged to participate in the 90 minute long small group discussion scheduled April 21 and 22. Sign up at the church. Every voice is important!
- Received an update from the interim search committee as they faithfully seek pastoral leadership on behalf of the Session and congregation.
- Engaged in rich conversation about the structure and focus of the congregation. This discussion included the function of bylaws and the work of the committees. No actions were taken but the dialogue will continue as we discern and discover the best way to do God's work together.
- Applied for a grant from the Presbytery of Lake Erie to support a second year of 'Growing in History' projects.

- Heard from the Christian Education Committee on an opportunity to engage youth and adults in prayer with the community around us.
- Discussed upcoming worship opportunities and special programs to draw each of us closer to the Good News.
- Adjourned with prayer, planning to gather again on April 25.

### **Small Group Discussion Meetings to be Signed Up For**

The Lombard Mennonite Peace Center is setting up small group discussion meetings for Thursday, April 21 (options are 6:30-8 p.m. or 8-9:30 p.m.), Friday, April 22 (options are 8:30-10 a.m., 10-11:30 a.m. or 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.) and Friday, May 20 (options are 3-4:30 p.m. or 4:30-6 p.m.) We highly recommend that you consider coming to one (1) of these meetings as it will give each of us the opportunity to express our interests and concerns. This is a vital step in the transformational stage in which we find ourselves. We want to hear you! Your input is crucial to identifying who we want to be and the direction we want to move as a congregation.

You can schedule your meeting, date and time, with anyone from the church office by calling 827-3665 or by signing up on the bulletin board located outside the church office.

## **Upcoming Meetings**

Christian Education - Thursday, April 14, 6 p.m., Conference Room  
Finance Committee Meeting, April 21, 5:30 p.m., Conference Room  
PW Board Meeting- Monday, April 25, 4 p.m., Conference Room  
Session Meeting – Monday, April 25, 7 p.m., Conference Room

## **Church Mission Statement**

### First Presbyterian Church

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

## Invitation to Explore Membership

Is God leading you to explore membership in the First Presbyterian Church of Titusville? If so you might be thinking about questions like these: What does it really mean to be a member of a church? What if I have uncertainty about my faith? What if I don't know much about the Bible? And you may have other questions as well. If you find yourself in that situation then the Titusville Church invites you to further conversation. The Session welcomes you to consider membership by attending a series of three Sunday morning classes – **April 3, 10 and 17 from 9:45 to 10:45 AM in the pastor's study**. You can explore the faith and membership questions you might have with Interim Pastor Oyler. After the classes, if interested, you would be invited to affiliate with the church – but it not a requirement. Come and explore your faith! It is an opportunity to connect, or re-connect, with God. Hope to see you there!

## Christian Education

### Craft Items Needed for Children's Worship

Each Sunday our children do arts and crafts during the time the adults are worshipping. We are currently asking for donations of art supplies so the children can learn about recycling. The supplies that we are looking for are old CD's, margarine containers, cotton balls, old newspapers and magazines, plastic frozen juice containers with lids, small coffee cans with lids, papers plates (unused), egg cartons, popsicle sticks, yarn, T.P. rolls, ribbon, beads, glue and glue sticks.

Drop your donations off in the bins located at each entryway (marked "crafts"). Our hope is to have these items by June 5. If you have any questions, please see Pandi Ford.

### Sunday School Class

This Sunday School Class will be meeting with the New Members Class on April 3, 10 and 17 from 9:45 to 10:45 AM in the pastor's study. Then on Sunday, April 24 they will continue their study on the book of I Corinthians that includes important teaching for the 21<sup>st</sup> century church. How do we live in a post-Christendom culture? What does Christian love look like where wide differences exist? Where do my rights intersect, or diverge, from others within my faith community? These questions – and many more – are addressed in the class meeting during the Sunday School hour in the Pastor's Study. Why don't you consider joining us? Hope to see you there!

## **Transformation Tuesdays**

Each Tuesday, from 3 p.m.- 5 p.m. all children in grades Kindergarten-5<sup>th</sup> grade are invited to participate in Transformation Tuesdays. Volunteers from the program escort children from Main Street Elementary to the church each week.

This spring we are working on a program, "Noah & the Ark" for Children's Sunday on April 24<sup>th</sup>. We will collaborate with the Memorial Handbell choir for this special service. Our final Transformation Tuesday will be Tuesday, April 26, 2016. We will have an Open House at 4:00 p.m. where we will also present "Noah and the Ark" again. You're invited!

Follow the action on Facebook: Transformation Tuesdays at First Presbyterian Church, Titusville, PA.

Note: After-school Programs follow the School Calendar. No School – No After-School Program

## **Women's Bible Study**

We are currently reading "Horizontal Jesus: How our Relationships with Others Affect our Experiences with God" by Dr. Tony Evans. Reading guides and books are available for \$10. See Eryn Lavery for copies or more details. Bible Study meets Tuesdays 11:00-12:30 p.m. with Pandi Ford providing daycare in the nursery.

## **Men of First Breakfast Bible Study**

On Wednesday mornings at 7 a.m. in Scheide Hall, men of the church come to a Bible Study that offers a delicious breakfast, good fellowship, and conversation on a passage of the Bible.

## **Middle School and Senior High Youth Fellowships**

Our times have changed! MS youth group will now meet 5-6:30 p.m. on Sunday nights, and HS youth group will meet right after from 6:30-8 p.m. Groups always meet first in the prayer room for prayer, and then branch out depending on that week's activity. Activities vary and include Bible study, service/mission work, fellowship, prayer, and fun! See leaders Eryn Lavery or Pandi Ford for more details.

## Music Ministry

### Noah and the Ark

Filippa Duke

Squeak! Chomp! Woof! Squawk! He-haw! Ee-Ee!

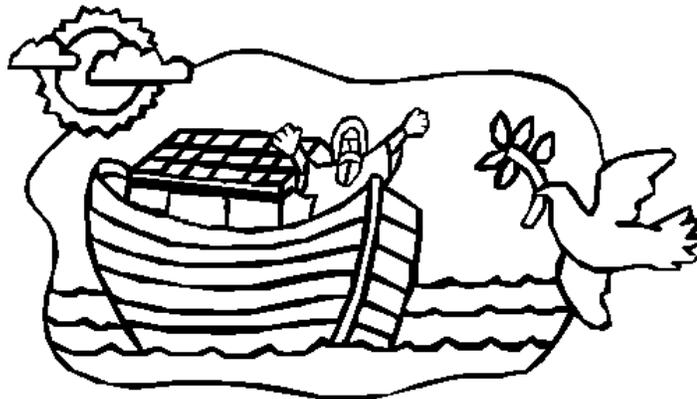
You are invited to an exciting musical and dramatic collaboration this April! The children of Transformation Tuesdays will be teaming up with the Memorial Handbell Choir to present "Noah and the Ark" twice during the month of April for Children's Sunday and the final Open House of the year. All are invited to see and hear the story of Noah, God, the great flood, and, *of course*, the herd of animals aboard the ark! The play will be accompanied by music from the Memorial Handbell Choir. We hope to see you there!

**Sunday, April 24, 2016**

11:00 a.m. Children's Sunday

**Tuesday, April 26, 2016**

4:00 p.m. Spring Open House



### Chancel Choirs

You are invited to add to the ministry of music by joining the Chancel Choir on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. If you have interest or questions, Dr. Filippa Duke is happy to visit with you.

### Children's Choir I and II

The Children's Choirs will sing on Sunday, April 24<sup>th</sup>.

### Handbell Choir

The Memorial Handbell Choir welcomes new members as we rehearse this spring at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesdays. They will be leading worship on Sunday, April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

## **Campus Ministries**

### **New UPT Fellowship Meeting Here at the Church**

A new College Ministry will be meeting here in Scheide Hall each Wednesday evening at 5:30 p.m. An atmosphere of spiritual growth and exploration; to support, foster, and challenge those in the college community to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, is what we hope to achieve.

## **Presbyterian Women**

### **Church Family Picnic**

A Family Picnic for the whole church and community, sponsored by the Presbyterian Women, will be held on Sunday, April 24<sup>th</sup> immediately following the morning worship service, which happens to be Children's Sunday, in Scheide Hall.

Families are welcome to attend this picnic lunch of hotdogs, chips, baked beans, dessert and a beverage. A free-will offering will be collected.

Please sign up in the church office by coming in, calling in, emailing in, etc., as we would like to have an estimate of how many to prepare for.

## **Senior Adult Ministry (SAM's Club) Ministry**

### **SAM's Lunch and a Movie**

On April 1, lunch will be served at 12:00 noon in Scheide Hall with a movie to shortly follow in Emerson Parlor. All are welcome to attend.

You can suggest a good movie to watch, make the soup (or the whole meal), or simply just come and eat. All we want is you to join us.

This group will meet again on Friday, April 15 and on April 29, 2016.

## **This Month's Ushers**

David Snyder, Richard Peebles, Randy Schneider

## Birthdays

Becky Gavin	2	Marjorie Seybert	16	Elaine Muirhead	27
Samantha Schneider	3	Andrea Strong	17	Jon Walker	27
Sarah Sampson	3	Marcia Garrett	18	Shawn Sampson	27
Dede Kerr	5	Patti Paden	18	David Steinbuhler	28
John Proano	8	Aaron Mowrey	19	Jean Spence	28
Megan Arendash	10	Elaine Osborn	19	Scott McAllister	28
Allison Seib	10	B.J. Webb	21	Denise Seib	28
Earl Yingling	11	Connie McIntyre	21	Katelyn Garrett	28
Carrie Zahn	12	Adam Middleton	21	Susan Webb	29
Courtney Zahn	12	Billie Gilbert	22	Russ Yoas	30
Toby Cressman	12	Audrey Snyder	23	Lisa Bodamer	30
Maryellen Arendash	14	Caroline Wilkens	25	Russ Yoas	30
Sharon Hoban	15	Ray Zahner	27	Jack Gasdsby	30

*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 in 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

The Food Pantry can still use our help. They are in need of most food items and will gladly take donations.

### Boy Scout Troop Meets on Mondays

All boys in grades 1st - 5th interested in joining the cub scouts are invited to come each Monday night at 6 p.m. in the Scheide Hall. Contact Chad Rugh (814) 673-6364 or Steve Coleman (814) 827-3686.

### Girl Scout Troop Meets Here

Did you know? Any girl in 2 and 3 grades is welcome to become part of a Girl Scout Troop. On Thursdays from 3 p.m. to 4:45 p.m., this group will meet upstairs in the Jonathan/David Room. Leaders are Rhonda Clark, Jessica Decker, Jacqui Sampson, and Gina Watkins. Contact Jessica Decker (814) 827-90778.

## Contact us:

### First Presbyterian Church

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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:

Vickie Corey, Housekeeper

Theresa Davitt, Administrative Assistant

Email: [tdavitt.presby@gmail.com](mailto:tdavitt.presby@gmail.com)

Dr. Filippa Duke, Director of Music

Email: [fduke.presby@gmail.com](mailto:fduke.presby@gmail.com)

Kelly Evans, Sexton

Eryn Lavery, Coordinator of Youth Ministry Intern

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

Tom Newcombe, Fellowship Assistant

Email: [tnewcombe.presby@gmail.com](mailto:tnewcombe.presby@gmail.com)

Dr. David Oyler, Temporary Pastor

Email: [david@pbylakeerie.org](mailto:david@pbylakeerie.org)