



THE TOWER

JUNE 2016

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, TITUSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

Reflections from Part Time Interim Pastor David Oyler

...and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God.

-Micah 6:8

This has been a season of transitions in the life of the Titusville Presbyterian Church. Over the last few years there have been transitions with staffing in our faith community, and those transitions continue. There have been transitions in our relationships within our church family – some have departed, others have joined in, still others have dealt with (or are dealing with) health changes which have an impact on their lives. And we look at the community around us where we recognize that change is occurring for our neighbors and friends; our schools and our businesses. Our continuing discussions with the Lombard Peace Center point to the ever increasing need to live out our Christian faith in rapidly changing world – both internally and externally.

Understandably we have been spending a great deal of time discussing our internal life and relationships within our faith community. With a whirling, swirling world of change all around us we cannot help but pay attention to those matters that are closest to home. At the same time I would encourage you to spend time in your devotional life reflecting on the words of Micah 6:8 printed above. Every one of us can immediately think of examples where justice does not prevail. It could be something from the national news but just as easily it could be something that involves our relationships with our next door neighbor. Every one of us can immediately think of examples where kindness has prevailed in our own lives – or where impatience has boiled over and had a difficult impact on our Christian witness in this community. And every one of us can immediately think of examples where we have walked humbly with our God. And, uncomfortably, there are moments – if we are honest with ourselves – where we have not walked with the humility that the Scriptures desire.

Even as we think of our body life together you are encouraged to work together in building and re-building relationships within our own church family. And at the same time dwell on the implications as we implement Micah 6:8 in our lives: ‘...and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.’ As we do that we move closer to the Kingdom of God.

Office Hours for Pastor David Oyler

Pastor Oyler desires to be supportive of the Titusville congregation through being available for office hours whenever possible. The month of June, however, will be quite different due to his limited availability. Your flexibility as a congregation is appreciated. He will be out of the area from June 9 to 24. During that time Rev. Jim McCormack will be the guest speaker for worship on June 12 and 19. He has preached here previously. Come and hear what the Lord has to say to us in our worship services those two Sundays! And welcome him warmly! During that period of time two Presbyterian pastors are also available in the case of special need – Rev. Jamie Fowler (Hasson Heights, Oil City and Pleasantville) and Rev. Barry Jenkins (Franklin) – can be called upon for assistance. Ruling Elder, Jim McFarland will also be available for visitation as needed from June 9 to the 24 by contacting him on his cell at 758-6280. As needed please contact the church office to reach Rev. Fowler or Rev. Jenkins.

During the rest of the month Pastor Oyler will be in Titusville:

Wednesday, June 1, all day

Saturday, June 4, all day

Tuesday, June 7, all day

Monday, June 27, afternoon and evening

Wednesday, June 29, all day

The Lord is at work in our faith community forming and fashioning all of us together into a beautiful tapestry that honors His Name! Come and join in the journey and engage in conversation with Pastor Oyler as time permits!

Deep Lombard Conversations Continue!!

If you have been unable to join with us in important conversations in recent months we invite you to join with us now. God is up to something quite profound in our midst as many in your church family have been engaging with each other in deep conversation! Again this month – on June 4 from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. – you are warmly encouraged to participate in this conversation with leaders from the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center. In our shared work with them we have learned a great deal. On June 4 we will continue the healing phase of our discussion. God desires health and wholeness. One way in which we strengthen our health and wholeness is through our discussions with one another founded on our common faith in Christ. If you have not yet signed up for June 4 please call the church office TODAY (or even sooner!!) as we discover God's preferred and promised future. See you June 4!

Session News

Welcome to Our New Interim Pastor!

The question:

So when will a new full time interim pastor arrive to minister with us?
That is a question that has been heard often in the halls of our church building in recent months?

The answer: July 1!

The Session and the interim search committee are both pleased to announce that Interim Pastor Norma Prina Murphy has agreed to partner with the Titusville Presbyterian Church in the next chapter of our journey as a faith community. Interim Pastor Murphy grew up in the Pittsburgh area and graduated from Indiana University of Pennsylvania with a focus on music. She has served in church musical positions prior to her earning a Master of Divinity degree from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Since her ordination she has served in a called/installed pastoral position as well as having served several interim positions.

You will learn more about Interim Pastor Murphy in the coming weeks! For now you are encouraged to pray with her as she relocates to Titusville from upstate New York. And think about how you might personally welcome her into this faith community. She will journey with us as we seek God's guidance into the future. Welcome!

Notes from the May 23 Session Meeting

Your Session met on Monday, May 23 with 13 of the 16 elders present. The evening was packed with significant work and growth, including:

1. Significant time Dwelling in The Word with a focus on Luke 10:1-12.
2. As noted elsewhere the Session spent important time in discerning together an invitation to invite Norma Prina Murphy to serve as Interim Pastor, effective July 1. The entire Session encourages the building of new relationships with Pastor Murphy as she begins to serve with us.
3. Approved the baptism for June 5 for the younger son of Jason and Kate (Funk) Johnson. Join with us in worship on that special day as both baptism and communion is celebrated, along with the honoring of high school seniors!
4. Received reports from various committees as they work on behalf of our congregation to share Good News in our community.

The Session will next meet on Monday, June 27 at 7:00 PM.

Your Prayers Are Invited for Our Shared Musical Ministry Together!

Even as this newsletter includes the good news of the arrival soon of a full time interim pastor you are encouraged to pray with your Personnel Committee as its members seek God's guidance in the area of music ministry. Earlier in May the news was shared with the congregation that Dr. Filippa Duke will be concluding her service as the musical director for the Titusville Church in mid-August. As the Personnel Committee members continued to pray and make decisions about musical leadership, they invited you to complete a survey that was in the bulletin several Sundays in May. And they invited you into a conversation following worship on May 29 to seek and discern God's leading on this important topic. The Personnel Committee members continue to pray as they make decisions about the musical leadership.

Of course, many of us hold various perspectives on the role of music in Christian worship. No one style can satisfy everyone. As Psalm 98 proclaims: 'O sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things.' May we pray together that the song we sing as a congregation will offer praise to God even as we seek new musical leadership. God is doing a new thing in our midst! Pray with your church as we eagerly pursue what God is up to next in our musical ministry!

Upcoming Meetings

Christian Education - Thursday, June 9, 6 p.m., Conference Room

Session Meeting – Monday, June 27, 7 p.m., Conference Room

Missions

Missions and Outreach Committee Formed

The Missions and Outreach committee was formed this winter. It is the former Benevolence Committee. It is a combination of the responsibilities of a few other committees such as the Deacons and the Evangelism Committee. This committee will be overseeing the Missions and Giving budget.

This past winter saw a few exciting changes at First Presby, and one of the best changes was the combination of a few smaller committees into one whole, single-focused committee called Missions and Outreach Committee. The primary goal of this new committee is the building of meaningful, lasting, and Christ-like relationships in our local community. Not only does this committee oversee the Missions and Giving budget, but it actively seeks practical ways to serve our community and share the love of Jesus with our neighbors.

The first project of the Missions and Outreach committee was the highly successful "Lenten Love Our Neighbors" collection taken up by this congregation and youth groups, bringing hundreds of food, cleaning, and personal items for the women and children staying next door at St. James House. In her thank-you note to the church, Ashleigh English, St. James House director, noted that they had never received such a large donation before. Through working with the youth, who took up a scavenger hunt for a good portion of the items, the committee was able to provide multiple items for almost every item on the wish list. The ladies' faces as our young people kept hauling bag after bag of supplies from the church was simply priceless, and by the same token extremely satisfying to the youth and committee volunteers. Because of the generosity of our congregation and efforts of our youth groups, the necessities donated will last the families of St. James House for a long time to come. We eagerly await God's prompting for the next way in which we can serve these families and others throughout the community.

While the "Lenten Love Your Neighbor" collection was highly visible in the church, it's often the quieter, smaller acts of kindness that can make all the difference for a person in need. Providing a listening ear, praying over one another, and showing hospitality to visitors and guests are just a few ways to build a sense of community and belonging in the Body of Christ. If you have a passion for mission, or ideas for bold new ways to show our love for one another, we encourage you to consider joining the committee. Current chairs are Jessica Decker and Gail Billig, so feel free to speak to one of them or call the church office at 827-3665 to express your interest in having a front-row seat to the love of Christ being shown in our community and beyond.

Summer Mission- Associated Charities Back-to-School Backpack Fill-Up

Most of us have experienced the excitement a new school year often brings and felt the anticipation of a fresh new start right after a summer of fun in the sun. Parents and grandparents make sure their children have everything they need to get the new school year off to the best possible start: shiny new shoes, jackets, sharpened pencils, fresh backpacks, lunch boxes, notebooks -- and everything in-between!

But while some of us have only two or three kids to send off to school, Connie McIntyre and her many dedicated volunteers at Associated Charities have the daunting task of preparing anywhere from 125 to 200 school-aged children in the Titusville Area School District. Through donations and local support from the community, these dedicated Christians fill a staggering number of backpacks with supplies and toiletries for children ranging in age anywhere from 3 to 18 (Head Start to High School).

But perhaps the most incredible part of their service is that in addition to collecting, packing, and handing out countless school supplies for these children, they invite them and their families into the building to "shop" for their items. Instead of being handed over clothing that is roughly the right size, these kids have the privilege to actually try on and choose what clothing suits them and their individual tastes best. The excitement and appreciation shown by these children and their families is overwhelming.

Our Missions and Outreach Committee has asked Associated Charities for the privilege to help send these students back to school ready for success. Because school supplies are cheapest in the month of July, we at First Presby will use that month to collect notebooks, pencils, erasers, folders, glue sticks, scissors, toiletries, etc. Look for collection baskets placed near entrances to the church.

But that's not all!

The Missions and Outreach Committee would also like to extend an invitation to the congregation to participate in a special offering for this Back to School Backpack Program, collected as cash, checks, or gift cards for the Associated Charities to purchase clothing, shoes, and any other essential school supplies for families in need.

The most exciting part?

The Missions and Outreach Committee will **MATCH** the monies collected in these special offerings. If your gift is \$5, we will match it with \$5, and our combined gift to Associated Charities is now \$10. Think of what a huge difference we can make by working together on this! We will present our collected school supplies and monetary donations to Associated Charities on the last Sunday of July. Look for updates on this project in the weeks to come.

Thank you in advance for your kindness and generosity as we share the blessings we have received in Christ to bless the children and families right here in our community.

Items needed: Pencils, pens, pencil boxes, notebooks, backpacks, erasers, markers, crayons, folders, binders, highlighters, rulers, scissors, calculators, etc. (Wal-Mart typically has a huge display set out.) Packages of socks and underwear for children in all sizes are appreciated throughout the year. Shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, soaps and body washes, razors, toothbrushes, and toothpaste are always important items in ensuring a child's success at school.

Area Families Need our Help

Greetings from Missions and Outreach. Summer is the time for picnics, reunions, vacations, parties, and a time for families and friends to get together over food while making wonderful memories. While you are out shopping for your special events we are asking you to think of our friends and neighbors who may be struggling to provide the basics for their families and pick up a little something extra to help those who are in need.

We recently replaced the white Food Pantry collection boxes at the church entrances with black baskets. Please fill these baskets to overflowing with paper goods and non-perishable food items.

During the summer months, Associated Charities would like to remind you that having children home all day means families food budgets are stretched further, because the children are not getting the meals that the schools provided during the school year. They rely on the Food Pantry to help make up the difference.

We would appreciate donations of cereals, breakfast bars, baked beans, pasta salad mixes, condiments, snacks and crackers, canned fruits and vegetables, macaroni and cheese, peanut butter and jellies, cake mixes and frostings, pancake mixes, and syrups. We always need paper towels, napkins, wet wipes, and baby wipes. Thank you for your generosity.

Christian Education

Youth Redefining Mission

"UP, IN & OUT: A Summer of Doing Stuff"

The youth of First Presby are teaming up with the youth of Pleasantville Presbyterian Church this summer to "do stuff" - aka redefine the Christian meaning of "mission" as it applies to serving our local community needs. The challenge and goal is to complete one simple, "in-and-out" service project per week from June until August, with some added down-time and recreation mixed in. Young people will be hitting the streets to do park clean-ups, visit nursing homes, put on skits for neighborhood kids, and much more! Plans also include one or two larger service projects, such as working at the Erie City Mission.

Any 9th grade through graduated senior interested in "doing stuff" with us this summer is welcome to participate. Pleasantville Presbyterian pastor Jamie Fowler and First Presby youth coordinator Eryn Lavery will be leading the group, with the first meeting June 15 at 10 a.m. in the First Presbyterian Church conference room. The group will generally meet weekly on Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, beginning at the church and then going on location for the service project of the week. Any questions, feel free to contact Eryn Lavery at 657-4817 or Rev. Jamie Flower at 673-0874.

Plans are flexible to allow for as-needed service projects, so anyone with a need or ideas for a project is welcome to contact either Eryn (657-4817) or Jamie Fowler at Pleasantville Presbyterian Church.

Summer Bible Study: "Prayer and a Pint"

Taking a cue from our Lord Jesus, who often met people right where they were to bring the good news of the Gospel to them, a new Bible Study is being piloted this summer at the Blue Canoe restaurant in Titusville. "Prayer and a Pint" is open to adults aged 21 and up from all walks of life and faith every Sunday evening from 6:30 p.m.-8 p.m. at the Blue Canoe, beginning June 26. The group will be studying the book of James, and participants are encouraged to bring a Bible for study if they have one. Anyone with questions is welcome to contact Eryn Lavery (eryn@erynlavery.com) or Jesse Lavery (jesse@jesselavery.com) for more information.

Music Ministry

Pie and Pipes

What a wonderful day May 22 was! Over 50 attendees gathered to enjoy a buffet of amazing pies. I would like to extend my thanks to the Worship and Music Committee and especially to Sandy Smith and her excellent group of pie-slicers who baked pies and graciously hosted the reception. I'd also like to thank Joe Thompson and Steve Winslow for their musicianship and great humor during the recital. It was a wonderful time of light-hearted fellowship with members and music lovers in the community!

- Filippa Duke

Memorial Handbell Choir

Thank you to all of the dedicated ringers in the Memorial Handbell Choir. Our final date for playing in worship before the summer break is Sunday, June 5. We will meet at 9:15 a.m. to rehearse before worship. It has been an exciting year as we have welcomed new members and grown as musicians!

Chancel Choir

Thank you to all of the dedicated singers in the Chancel Choir. Our final date for singing in worship before the summer break is Sunday, June 5. We will meet at 10:30 a.m. to rehearse before worship. Thank you for your hard work and gift of music!

Summer Choir

Do you like to sing? Are you curious about the choir? Summer Choir is for you! This summer we will be starting a new "Summer Choir" on the first Sundays of each month of the summer: Sunday, July 3, 2016 and Sunday, August 7, 2016. We will meet at 9:15 a.m. (Service at 10:00 a.m.) on each of the two Sundays and learn a simple piece to be sung during church. All are welcome- current choir members, past choir members, and new interested singers! We will not robe or process (or make new singers sing an initiation solo!) so new singers should not worry about diving right in. Come and join us on July 3rd!

This Month's Ushers: Mike Wonderling, Dan Nicols, Mike Seefried,
Terry Wonderling

Campus Ministries

College Fellowship Continues to Meet During the Summer Months

The College Ministry will continue during the summer months with the young adults who come home for the summer as well as all the Pitt students who live in town. This group meets here in our church each Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. in Scheide Hall. Anyone who is home for the summer and would like to come to this great fellowship of spiritual growth and exploration are more than welcome. Activities will be planned by the group. Contact Tom Newcombe for more information.

Senior Adult Ministry (SAM's Club) Ministry

SAM's Summertime Events

In June we will once again have a Potluck Supper on June 15 at 5:30 p.m. in Scheide Hall. The speaker will be announced. We will also continue the knitting group on Wednesdays at 1 p.m. and Cards on Thursdays at 1 p.m. Lunch and a movie will continue as long as there is an interest on June 10 at 12:00 noon in Scheide Hall with a movie to shortly follow in Emerson Parlor. This group will meet again on Friday, June 24, 2016.

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. If you have any questions speak with Tom Newcombe.

Birthdays

Sam Bodamer	1	Martina Love	9	Dan Dunlap	22
Brannidi Hasbrouck	1	Nancy Brown	10	Brittany Love	23
Tammy Schneider	2	Lynne Stover	10	Jesse Lavery	23
Connie McFarland	3	Benjamin Rapp	10	Owen Mowrey	24
George McDonald	3	Harriet Brown	13	Pandi Ford	24
Jeff Jones	3	B. J. Engleka	13	Cathy Buchan	24
William Evans	4	Ava Young	16	Tylere Webb	26
Doreen Snyder	5	Shannon Vinson	19	Brittini Wonderling	27
Andrew Zahn	6	Cindy Owens	20	Jacob Rash	29
Jerry Harroun	6	Marian Head	20	David Gavin	30
Nancy Mowrey	8	Shirley Webber	21		

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.

Contact us:

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