



THE TOWER

MARCH 2016

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, TITUSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

Letter from Reverend David Oyler

Greetings in Christ,

Henri J. M. Nouwen, in his book [The Wounded Healer](#), tells this story of divine interaction with humanity. ‘One day a young fugitive, trying to hide himself from the enemy, entered a small village. The people were kind to him and offered him a place to stay. But when the soldiers who sought the fugitive asked where he was hiding, everyone became very fearful. The soldiers threatened to burn the village and kill every man in it unless the young man were handed over to them before dawn. The people went to the minister and asked him what to do. The minister, torn between handing over the boy to the enemy or having his people killed, withdrew to his room and read his Bible, hoping to find an answer before dawn. After many hours, in the early morning his eyes fell on these words: ‘It is better that one man dies than that the whole people be lost.’

Then the minister closed his Bible, called the soldiers and told them where the boy was hidden. And after the soldiers led the fugitive away to be killed, there was a feast in the village because the minister had saved the lives of the people. But the minister did not celebrate. Overcome with a deep sadness, he remained in his room. That night an angel came to him, and asked, ‘What have you done?’ He said: ‘I handed the fugitive over to the enemy.’ Then the angel said: ‘But don’t you know that you have handed over the Messiah?’ ‘How could I know?’ the minister replied anxiously. Then the angel said: ‘If, instead of reading your Bible, you had visited this young man just once and looked into his eyes, you would have known.’

While versions of this story are very old, it seems the most modern of tales. Ever more rapidly you and I are drawn through Lent toward the profound events of Holy Week. You are invited, along with your friends and family, to engage in this rich journey of faith. Palm Sunday worship, followed by the drama of Maundy Thursday enriched by music provided by Lake Erie String Quartet, and then the explosive joy of Easter morning.

At the same time you are invited to look into the eyes of the people all around you. Lent invites us into self-reflection and self-inspection. And at the same time Lent invites us to look deeply into the eyes of others. It is an opportunity for rebuilding relationships, or building them for the first time, with people from whom we might feel estranged or with people who we do not yet know.

Lent is an important time of journey inward, journey outward. Join with you church family in these days. You are warmly welcomed. And invite a friend to share with you in claiming this life changing message. The Messiah walks among us, identifying with us. Join with your brothers and sisters in Christ.

With Great Anticipation,

Rev. David Oyler,

Journeying with you in this Lenten Season

Office Hours for Pastor David Oyler

Pastor Oyler will be in the church office

for the week of March 6

Tuesday morning March 8; Wednesday afternoon March 9; and Thursday afternoon March 10. He welcomes conversation as the Titusville Church anticipates the future.

for the week of March 13

Monday morning and afternoon March 14; Friday afternoon and evening March 18 and Saturday March 19. He welcomes conversation as the Titusville Church anticipates the Spirit's leading into the future.

for the week of March 20

Monday afternoon and evening March 21; Wednesday afternoon March 23; and Thursday afternoon and evening March 24. He welcomes discussion as God leads the congregation into the future.

for the week of March 27

The church office will be closed on Monday March 28. Pastor Oyler will be in the office Tuesday morning March 29 and Thursday morning and afternoon March 31. He values discussion around God's word in anticipating the leading of the Spirit.

Session News

Your Session met on Thursday, February 18 with all ruling elders present except for one who was excused. The Session engaged in rich conversation including the following discussion and actions:

- Spent time Dwelling in the Word as Ephesians 4 was read and discussed
- Had robust conversation about the work God is doing through the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center
- Received a report from the Interim Search Committee on their diligent search for full time interim leadership
- Received information about several people who have expressed a desire to join the Titusville Church
- Discussed the role and ministry of the various committees of the congregation, including the present and future programs in which they are engaged
- Voted to accept, with regret, the resignation of Susie Shaffer from the Session as she and her husband have relocated to South Carolina
- Set the next scheduled Session meetings for March 21, April 25, May 23

Pray with your Session as they eagerly seek God's leading.

God is doing powerful ministry through the Titusville Presbyterian Church.

Upcoming Meetings

Christian Education - Thursday, March 3, 6 p.m., Conference Room

Session Meeting – Monday, March 21, 7 p.m., Conference Room

PW Board Meeting- Monday, March 28, 4 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

Sunday School Class Offered

So What Does the Church in Corinth Have to Teach the Church in Titusville in the 21st Century?

The book of I Corinthians includes important teaching for the 21st 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!

Lenten Family Nights Continue

The Lenten Family Night Dinners/Programs will continue to meet each Wednesday night through March 9 at 5:30 p.m., in Scheide Hall. Those attending are asked to bring a dish to share according to the food theme of the week. The evening's program will begin at 6:30 p.m. and they are listed below. The Christian Education Committee has lined up speakers for everyone to enjoy, so plan to come and have a great time!

The scheduled programs are:

March 9: Ghana Mission – and what the church in Ghana has to teach North American Christians. Rev. David Oyler will be speaking about the developing mission partnership between Lake Erie Presbytery and the Upper Northern Presbytery, Ghana. Come join in the conversation!
Theme: Mexican

Transformation Tuesdays

Each Tuesday, from 3 p.m.- 5 p.m. all children in grades Kindergarten-5th 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 24th. We will collaborate with the Memorial Handbell choir for this special service.

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 11:00-12:30pm 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.

Youth Fellowship and Missions Committee Continue to Collect Items for "Love Our Neighbors Collection"

The Senior High and Middle School Youth Fellowship groups have partnered with the Mission committee and Transformation Tuesdays to collect items for the families living at St. James. Help us make a difference by sharing our love and our many blessings with the families, our very own neighbors at St. James. You can place your donations in the white laundry baskets throughout the church until Palm Sunday, March 20.

Cleaning items, laundry and personal hygiene

Air freshener spray	Deodorant
Body wash	Hand Soap
Bleach	Shampoo & Conditioner
New combs and brushes	Hand sanitizer
Dish soap	Shaving Cream
Disinfectant spray (Lysol type)	Toothbrushes and Toothpaste
Disposable razors	Denture Cleaner
Disinfectant wipes	Toilet bowl cleaner
Sanitary feminine products	Household cleaners- Windex, comet
Dryer sheets	cleanser, ready to use cleaners, and
Garbage Bags kitchen & large	cleaners that can be diluted-Mr. Clean

Linens

Twin size sheets sets

Blankets

Dish towels, dish cloths, scrubbing pads

Bath towels

Wash cloths

Bath Scrubbies

Kitchen and pantry

Canned tuna and chicken

Cereal/cereal bars/granola bars

Pudding

Applesauce

Jell-O

Jelly

Peanut Butter

Coffee/non-dairy creamers/ filters

Crackers

Macaroni and cheese-box or microwaveable

Soups

Tea bags

Tin foil

Plastic wrap

Food storage bags-lunch, quart, gallon

**Paper towels/napkins/toilet paper **

Monetary donations are always welcome. The money keeps the shelter up and running. Gift cards from local stores such as the Dollar Stores, Giant Eagle, Save-a-Lot, and Wal-Mart are also welcome. These can provide emergency funds for the needs of the residents and their families during their stay.

We thank you very much in advance for your generosity in our mission service project

Music Ministry

A Hymn for Holy Week

During the Lenten Family Night on February 17th, I had the pleasure of leading members of this church in a program about hymnody. We learned about the *structure* of hymns, which are, at their core, simply pieces of poetry. We also considered the different *purposes* of hymns: hymns of joy and praise, hymns about liturgical seasons like Christmas and Lent, hymns about social justice, and so forth. We also took time to read hymns aloud and consider their *meaning*, just as we might think about what a poem is trying to convey to us. And finally, we tried our hands at crafting our very own hymns.

As we approach Holy Week and turn our attention toward the last week of Jesus' life and sacrifice on the cross, I'd like to leave you with the text of a meaningful hymn written by a German hymnist, Johann Heerman in 1630. It is a powerful text that still holds much meaning to Christians today as we look ahead toward the way of the cross.

Ah, holy Jesus, how has thou offended,
that we to judge thee have in hate pretended?
By foes derided, by thine own rejected,
O most afflicted!

Who was the guilty? Who brought this upon thee?
Alas, my treason, Jesus, hath undone thee!
'Twas I, Lord Jesus, I it was denied thee;
I crucified thee.

For me, kind Jesus, was thy incarnation,
thy mortal sorrow, and thy life's oblation;
thy death of anguish and thy bitter passion,
for my salvation.

Therefore, kind Jesus, since I cannot pay thee,
I do adore thee, and will every pray thee,
think on thy pity and thy love unswerving,
not my deserving. Filippa Duke

Maundy Thursday Communion Service

Please join us for this year's Maundy Thursday communion service on March 24, 2016, at 7:45 p.m. (service at 8:00 p.m.). This meaningful service remembers Jesus' last week of life on earth before his crucifixion. In addition to anthems by the Chancel Choir, the Lake Erie String Quartet, composed of members of the Erie Philharmonic and the Erie Chamber Orchestras will lead worship. The members of the Lake Erie String Quartet are Howard Lyon and Louis Nicolia, violins, Robert Rudolph, viola, and Marian Byard, cello.

Although the service will not begin until 8:00 p.m., the Lake Erie String Quartet will begin their prelude at 7:45 p.m. The evening's service will help us look toward Jesus' death on the cross through readings from the Gospel, choral anthems by the Chancel Choir, and hymns accompanied by organ and strings. The culmination of the service will be the celebration of the Lord's Supper. The quartet will also offer the postlude.

Childcare will be provided beginning at 7:30 p.m. in the Children's Pavilion. This worship service promises to again be a meaningful service during our church's journey through Passion Week to the cross and resurrection of our Lord. We look forward to worshipping together with you.

Filippa Duke

Chancel Choirs

You are invited to add to the ministry of music by joining the Chancel Choir on Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. during Lent. On Wednesday, March 16th we return to our regular rehearsal time at 7 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 March 6th, March 20th, and April 24th.

Handbell Choir

The Memorial Handbell Choir welcomes new members as we rehearse this spring at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesdays. We will be leading worship on March 13th and April 24th, 2016.

Presbyterian Women

PW Association to hold Book Sale

The PW Women will hold their annual book sale on Tuesday, March 8, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Wednesday, March 9, 12 noon to 7 p.m. Anyone who loves reading a good book should stop and take a look!

Lenten Salad Bar Luncheon – Wednesday, March 23, at 12 noon

The annual Lenten Salad Bar Luncheon hosted by the Presbyterian Women, will be held Wednesday, March 23, from 12 noon to 1 p.m. in Scheide Hall.

This year's program will be announced. Dr. David Oyler will give devotions and prayer.

All those who attend are asked to bring a salad (for 8). Rolls and beverages will be provided. This is a great time to invite a friend to lunch. Childcare will be provided.

Church Family Picnic

Mark your calendar and plan to stay for the Church Family Picnic on Sunday, April 24, 2016 held in Scheide Hall.

Senior Adult Ministry (SAM's Club) Ministry

SAM's Lunch and a Movie

On March 4, 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, March 18, 2016.

This Month's Ushers

John Clark, Dean Chappel, Sandy Hasbrouck, Eric Mowrey

Birthdays

Kasey Harroun	2	J. L. Love	14	Heidi Wonderling	23
Claude Lemley	3	Donna Yoas	15	Barb Frye	24
Diane Sharer	4	Betty Kriner	16	Maxine Behen	24
Cheri Finlan	6	Julie Patterson	16	Adam Sutley	24
Ernie Axton	7	Uriah Sampson	18	Becky Keebler	26
Martha Warren	9	Helen Boemmel	19	Lynn Cressman	28
David Fitz	10	Desirae Patterson	20	Tom Tarr	30
Bill Schulz	11	Kim Foley	20	Robert Herps	30
Terry Funk	11	Dan Long	23	William Martin	31
Dion Young	12	Tammy Root	23		

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.

Easter Flowers

Easter flowers, for placing in the church sanctuary, can be purchased by filling out the order form found on the last page of this Tower. Ordering deadline is March 13.

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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Visit us on the web at

www.titusvillefirstpresbyterian.com

Staff:

Vickie Corey, Housekeeper

Theresa Davitt, Administrative Assistant

Email: tdavitt.presby@gmail.com

Dr. Filippa Duke, Director of Music

Email: fduke.presby@gmail.com

Kelly Evans, Sexton

Eryn Lavery, Coordinator of Youth Ministry Intern

Email: eryn@erynlavery.com

Tom Newcombe, Fellowship Assistant

Email: tnewcombe.presby@gmail.com

Dr. David Oyler, Temporary Pastor

Email: david@pbylakeerie.org

The beauty and fragrance of the Easter flowers
proclaim the message of hope and joy . . .

Christ is risen!!!

This Easter place an Easter plant in our church in
memory or in honor of your loved ones.

Please fill in the order form and place it in the offering
plate or bring it to the church office along with your
check made out to The First Presbyterian Church.
Order forms must be received by Sunday, March 13,
2016.

Choose from:

- _____ \$12.00 – Single stem lily (5-7 blooms)
- _____ \$10.00 – 6” Potted Tulip (assorted)
- _____ \$10.00 – 6” Potted Daffodil
- _____ \$15.00 – 6” Cyclamen (assorted)

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

Given by: _____

Amount Enclosed \$ _____

*Please take your flower(s) home after Easter Sunday
Worship to share with loved ones.*

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