



UPLIFT Newsletter

The United
Presbyterian Church
of Blairsville, PA

MAY 2024

How Long Does Encouragement Last?

Hot weather does not bother me so long as I can feel a breeze. One of the hottest summers I can remember was 1987—not much of a breeze seemed to exist! I was entering my freshmen year of football camp. I readily admit I was intimidated! Our little high school was known for “good football.” I rode my bike to practice everyday that summer and was excited to be there, but was a little anxious to look around and see all these well-known athletes in our locker room as I was dealing with the heat, and then I learned “we little freshmen” were going to practice with the varsity for the first month of football camp. Back then, heat indexes were not monitored and frequent water breaks were discouraged! On top of that, we practiced everyday in “full gear.” Meaning, we were to wear all pads, we were going to condition (fancy way of saying we would run until we almost passed out), practice, and hit with extra weight on our bodies! The freshmen coach was Bobby Duvall and he was a spark of encouragement daily. He knew us freshmen were at the bottom of the totem poll so to speak and we were struggling. He constantly reminded us of these things, “You can do more than you think you can,” or “Nothing is as bad as it seems.” Thirty-six years later, I am still clinging to these phrases when I find myself in choppy waters. I am still amazed at how these “encouraging words” still resonate with me after all this time. This should remind us of the power of words and the power of encouragement.

Jesus Christ, our Savior, continues to encourage us some two thousand years later! So many encouraging words from Jesus include:

John 14:27 says, “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

John 16:33 says, “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

Matthew 11:28-30 says, “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

John 14:1-4 says, “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know.”

A few days ago, Coach Duvall passed away. I once again find myself in the choppy waters of grief, confusion, and wishing I could hear his encouraging words once more. However, because of Jesus, I not only have an Advocate, a Friend, Someone who loves me, and but most importantly, Someone who gave His life for me and everyone. Jesus declares He wants us to follow Him. On the days I long to hear encouraging words from someone who was very good to me, I am thankful I can read the words of the One who died for me...the encouragement of Jesus endures to eternity and cannot be measured!

By Allen Jones

*South Green Street church of Christ
Glasgow, KY*

Worship Leaders

May 5

Speaker Graham Smith
Audio/Visual Kristi & Olivia Eckenroad
Property Mgr. Dennis Gould

May 12

Speaker Randy Stear
Audio/Visual Bylea Borbonus & John Bruner
Property Mgr. Bob Cosharek

May 19

Speaker Donna Yarnal
Audio/Visual Eli & Brennan Borbonus
Flowers Steve & Joan Moran
Property Mgr. Terry Brown

May 26

Speaker Rev. Dr. Donald Wilson
Audio/Visual Karen & John Kerin
Property Mgr. Gene Artman

Offering Counters

Tom & Janet Smith



Summer Schedule

Begins

Sunday, June 2, 2024

Summer Worship Time

10:00 a.m.

The Chancel Choir and
The Handbell Choir
are in recess until Fall.

Bible Study

Bible Study is held each Wednesday morning in Fellowship Hall from 10:00—11:30 a.m. Leaders are Gene Artman and Bill Lint. The study is open to all who would like to attend. For additional information, please contact Gene.

June Newsletter

Articles to be published in the June edition of the UPLIFT newsletter are due to the church office by Wednesday, May 15th.

New Online Giving

Our online giving portal is now active!! If you want to give through the website, just click on the donate now button on the top right corner. If you want to scan the QR code, it's below. Open your phone's camera and hover over the box below. A link will appear. Touch the link and it will take you to the online portal. Follow the online instructions. It's that simple. Pew cards are now available including the QR code for in house worshippers.



Volunteers Needed

- * Volunteers are needed to run the **audio/visual equipment** in the balcony each Sunday morning. Those interested will be trained. Please see Jean Heberling or Doug Clayton if interested.
- * Volunteers are needed to **usher**. An usher signup sheet is located on the table in the back of the sanctuary. If you would like to participate in worship as an usher/greeter, please sign-up. There are dates available. Our deacons thank you.
- * If you would like to help during the worship service as a **liturgist**, volunteers are needed. As a liturgist you will lead the order of worship from the pulpit with the aid of a liturgist guide. A liturgist guide and a copy of the bulletin will be sent to you ahead of Sunday for your preparation. Please contact Elaine Jellison if you are considering helping as a liturgist.

Movie Night Thank You

Jean Heberling and the Worship Committee would like to thank each person who helped to make our Movie Night (Noah) happen and be so successful. We had forty people attend. There were so many favorable comments.

MMC Spring Program

The Monday Music Club will present their Spring Program, "Celebrating 100 Years Through Music" on Monday, May 6th at 7:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Doors will be open at 6:30 p.m. Tickets for the evening are \$10 and are available from a Monday Music Club member or contact the church office, 724-459-7991. Proceeds from the evening will support the club's scholarship fund. We hope you will join us!

2024 Flower Chart

The Flower Chart is located on the bulletin board in the hallway by the church office. You may sign-up for your choice of dates. Gary's Floral provides our arrangements. After worship, you may take your flowers home or we ask that you pick up by the following Tuesday. Those remaining after Tuesday will be delivered to one of our home bound members. Dedications to be printed in the bulletin can be submitted to the church office or noted on the sign-up chart. Flower arrangements are \$20 each and checks can be made payable to the "Board of Deacons."

Pentecost Communion

We will celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion Pentecost Sunday, May 19 during worship. Please take time to prepare to receive and share the sacrament.

Congregational Update—PNC Committee Progress Report—April 28, 2024

Our Pastor Nominating Committee continues to work in a directed and deliberate manner to find the next Pastor for our Church. We continue to pray before and after each regular meeting to be led by the Holy Spirit and would ask for your prayers as well. Because we hold confidentiality as especially important during the interview and screening process, your patience and support is greatly appreciated.

As a brief review, here are the accepted tiers/sources of Pastoral candidates to serve in the PCUSA and Kiskiminetas Presbytery:

- Full Communion Partner Churches: PCUSA, Evangelical Lutheran Church, United Church of Christ and Reformed Church in America
- Letter of Correspondence Churches: World Council of Churches and Christian Churches Together
- Or they must go through our Presbytery's full 2-Year Ordination Process/Exams

During the interview process, both initial screening and in-depth questions, we focus on the following key areas:

- Preaching the Gospel and Authority of Scripture
- Outreach and Evangelism
- Leadership and Vision: Worship Service design/delivery, including music ministry
- Church Ministries: Youth Program
- Stewardship

Included within these areas are focused questions on the Pastor's view of Traditional Marriage and Support for Women in Leadership Roles.

Now, on to the update since our last briefing in March:

On April 14th, the PNC visited Jacksonville Presbyterian Church to hear a Pastor preach and lead worship. This Pastor has already been through the Virtual and In-Person interview steps.

On April 20th, the PNC conducted an in-person interview with a Pastoral Candidate from Delaware. After joint scoring with the Committee members, this candidate was eliminated from the process.

On April 21st, the PNC conducted a virtual interview with a Pastoral Candidate from Ohio. After joint scoring with the Committee members, this candidate was eliminated from the process.

Week of April 28th, the Committee will be verifying professional references for the Pastor who preached at Jacksonville Presbyterian Church. Additionally, we will be conducting follow-up/outreach to candidates who have not yet responded to initial inquiries.

Some of the unique approaches that the Committee has undertaken include; conducting searches from the four surrounding Presbyteries (Redstone, Pittsburgh, Beaver/Butler, and Huntington) for Associate Pastor personnel that may be interested in leading their own congregation, utilizing LinkedIn (professional networking website) to identify and contact potential candidates, expanding the search to include Pastors from the full communion partner churches (United Church of Christ and Evangelical Lutheran) and researching the potential use of Christian radio broadcasts to promote our Pastor position.

Once the PNC has identified a candidate to serve as Pastor, the following steps would take place:

- Meeting with PNC/Session
- Review of final candidate with Presbytery; to ensure credentials
- Finalized candidates to be brought before Congregation
- Vote by Congregation on Terms of Call
- Installation of Pastor

A committee is being formed to assess the level of renovations and next steps for the manse; target end of April for committee formation/kick-off.

On behalf of your Pastoral Nominating Committee and in Fellowship:

Chris Antis, Mary Anzelone, Tricia Baker, Zack Barto, Mark Borbonus, Bonni Dunlap, Todd Faulk, Pam Irwin and Rick Shoemaker

(Additional information continues on page 4)

Complete Summary of Work to Date:

- Church Leadership Connection (Presbyterian Church Website)
 - ◊ 37 Initial Matches
 - ◊ 18 Screened Out
 - ◊ 19 Invited to Apply
 - ◊ 14 Rejections/No Response (Eliminated)
 - ◊ 3 No Response (Active)
 - ◊ 2 Accepted
 - ◊ 2 Self Referrals (connections through Don Wilson our Presbyter)
 - ◊ Both the self-referrals and 2 accepted candidates have been interviewed
 - ◊ One remains active and a viable candidate
- JustChurchJobs (Candidates outside of PCUSA)
 - ◊ 9 Official Applications
 - ◊ 6 were rejected
 - ◊ 3 were requested for interview, but their denomination/ordination did not meet PCUSA and Kiskiminetas Approval
 - ◊ **Approximately 125 candidates screened from overall PA/OH/WV region**
 - ◊ 15 Candidates were invited to apply and sent individual follow-up
 - ◊ 12 No Responses
 - ◊ 1 Responded with no interest
 - ◊ 2 Screened Out After Initial Discussion
 - ◊ Next Step is to Broaden Search to MD/NY
- Extended Outreach Efforts:
 - ◊ Search of Redstone/Butler&Beaver/Pittsburgh/Huntington Presbyteries
 - * 23 Associate Pastors Identified/Invited to Apply
 - * 5 Screened Out
 - * 18 Contacted via email/phone/LinkedIn
 - * 3 Declined/No Interest
 - * 15 No Response
 - ◊ United Church of Christ and Evangelical Lutheran Church
 - * 2 candidates contacted; 1 rejection and 1 No Response
 - ◊ LinkedIn Professional Search Site:
 - * 10 Candidates Contacted; 2 rejections and 8 no responses
 - * Creation of Customized Page and Position Posting Next



Summer Camping Opportunities

Summer is coming and camps are preparing for this season! There are three local camps supported by local presbyteries.

1—**Camp Lambec** is supported by the Camping Association of the Presbyteries of Northwestern Pennsylvania. It is located on 92 acres with beachfront access to Lake Erie.

2—**Pine Springs Camp** is a ministry of the Washington (PA) and Redstone (PA) Presbyteries. Since 1948, Pine Springs camp has been a place where lives have been changed by encountering Christ in a vital way.

3—**Crestfield Camp & Conference Center** is supported by the Pittsburgh Presbytery. It is a 59 acre site in Slippery Rock, PA. Programs are offered to those 4 years and older from mid-June through July. For more information on Crestfield Camp, check out their website at crestfieldcc.org.

Brochures are available at the back of the sanctuary. Please call the office for details.





How Well Do You Know Your Bible

Bible Trivia

Answers in the next newsletter

1. How did Moses' mother save him from the Egyptian soldiers?
2. Through what did God speak to Moses in the desert?
3. When Daniel prayed to God after it was not allowed, what was his punishment?
4. Who got Joseph thrown into prison by lying about him?
5. What did Jesus say is the second greatest commandment?

BIBLE TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. What happened after Jesus was buried in the tomb?
Answer: He rose to life (Luke 24:1-12)
2. How did Jesus leave earth and go to heaven?
Answer: Ascended in a cloud (Acts 1:6-11)
3. What garden did Jesus go to when he prayed after the Last Supper?
Answer: Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-46)
4. Who was the Roman Governor who sat over Jesus' trial?
Answer: Pilate (Matthew 27:1-2)
5. Who cut off a soldier's ear when Jesus was being arrested?
Answer: Peter (John 18:1-11)



— STAYING — CONNECTED

Find us online at the following:

Website—www.r-church.com

Facebook page—The United Presbyterian Church of Blairsville

Instagram—Presbyterianblairsville

Youtube—@theunitedpresbyterianchurc7667

Each Sunday our worship service is **live streamed**. Access is available through our facebook page or our Youtube channel. Previous services can be watched from our Youtube channel.

Stay up-to-date with news through our weekly email updates. If you're not on our email list and would like to be, send us your email address, upchurch@r-church.com.