



# The Exciter

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NORTH EAST  
25 West Main Street • North East PA 16428 • (814) 725-8641

No. 555

February 2016

## THE PASTOR'S PEN



One of the true gems located within the halls of our church is the Gertrude M. Bostwick Memorial Library. The Bostwick library is lovingly cared for, ordered, and promoted by the Library Committee. Because of their diligent and thoughtful efforts, our library has proved to be a source of knowledge, inspiration, and joy for countless members through the years.

February is Library Month here at the church. I would like to encourage you to make your way to the library and check out at least one book to read. Perhaps you would consider taking time to read each day during the upcoming Lenten Season. There are many, many fine volumes from which to choose. Here are a few selections that I offer for your consideration:

First, there is Anne Lamott's *Plan B: Further Thoughts on Faith*. Lamott is both a nationally known novelist and a Presbyterian Elder! Plan B is a marvelous collection of stories from her own life. She writes in a vulnerable and endearing way but refuses to romanticize her life and faith. It's easy to find yourself in the stories that she tells.

Second, pick up Eric Metaxas' *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy*. Metaxas has published works in a variety of literary genres. This biography of Dietrich Bonhoeffer has rightly earned him great praise. He was even asked to speak at the National Prayer Breakfast a few years ago. The biography is lengthy but also hard to put down. Metaxas has an engaging and enjoyable (if not humorous) way of storytelling.

Third, in *Speaking my Mind*, Christian sociologist, writer, and speaker Tony Campolo raises and attempts to answer a variety of challenging questions that we Christians are asking these days. Campolo's style is very direct and unwavering. You may not always agree with his conclusions but he will certainly make you think deeply.

I wish you a blessed February and beginning to the Lenten Season. It's cold out so stay inside and read a good book!

In the Service of the King,  
Pastor Gregg



**FEBRUARY IS LIBRARY PROMOTION MONTH!** Check out the new books that are displayed in the Assembly Room, or stop in and search through extensive inventory. The Annual Library Tea will be held on February 28 following the 11:00 A.M. worship service.



## THE PRAYER CHAIN

**IF YOU HAVE A PRAYER REQUEST**, speak with Pastor Gregg, call Jennifer in the church office (814-725-8641), or email our prayer chain ([jlivingston@neo.rr.com](mailto:jlivingston@neo.rr.com) OR [jspencer@fpcne.org](mailto:jspencer@fpcne.org)). Email us if you'd like to be added to our email prayer chain.



Pastor Gregg D. Townsend

VISIT US ONLINE AT [WWW.FPCNE.ORG](http://WWW.FPCNE.ORG)

# CLERKS CORNER



Greetings to my church family!

This is a busy time for Session as we are working with the closing of one year and the beginning of a new one. Your Session met on January 10, 2016 to adopt a new budget. I'm very pleased to let you know that after many years of a projected deficit budget, this year we expect to have a balanced one! This was achieved in a three-fold manner:

1. Your generous giving (first and foremost)
2. A 3% reduction in all controllable expenses
3. A modest staff salary increase estimated around 1% (all staff except the Pastor, as the congregation will vote on that salary package at the annual meeting)

The church staff runs a tight financial ship, but this year will be even tighter.

In other matters, our neighbor, *The Cork*, is expanding. Session took a hard look at their plans to build a section for walk-in cooler units. After we studied it and met with the proprietors, we decided the building project was not a concern. Their project falls upon their property,

and the only variance needed was to the south of their building. The parking spots that will be lost as a result of this project are few, and are not located within the church's property. There will be a follow-up meeting held between Pastor Townsend, Paul Zorzie and the owner of *The Cork* to iron out responsibility for the upkeep of the area between the buildings, although our relationship with *The Cork* is excellent, and they have been very amenable to working with the church.

In case you haven't noticed, the windows above the Assembly Room have been replaced with glass block. The previous windows were not doing the job of keeping the elements outside. This project cost \$12,500 and was paid for out of the church's savings. Session also approved the replacement of a specific section of a rubber roof, as it has been repaired and patched too many times. This will also be paid for out of past generous giving (savings).

Thank you.

God Bless you during your spiritual, Lenten journey,

Patti Kuna  
Clerk of Session

## NEWS FROM THE DEACONS

### HELPING THOSE IN NEED

The Deacons are beginning an ongoing collection project in cooperation with the *4 NINE Thrift Store* in North East to provide baskets filled with household and personal care items to individuals or families in need. Vicki Stetson, the thrift store manager, compiled a list of items for the baskets. We also need baskets. As baskets are filled, we will deliver them to the thrift store for distribution to individuals or families in need. Look for a collection box in the Assembly Room. Everyone is welcome to donate. We hope to continue this project as the need arises. Thank you all for having such kind hearts. Tracy Connors, Deacon President

### SUGGESTED ITEMS FOR BASKETS:

#### HOUSEHOLD (LAUNDRY BASKET)

- Dish detergent
- Plastic scrubby
- Dish cloth
- Dish towel
- Laundry detergent
- Fabric softener
- Facial tissue
- Toilet paper
- Spray cleaner

#### PERSONAL CARE (SMALL TOTE/BASKET)

- Soap
- Shampoo
- Deodorant
- Hand lotion
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrush
- Band aids
- Powder

**“LIKE” US ON FACEBOOK, AND KEEP UP ON THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH.** We post important news and church happenings and upload lots of great photos and videos. Have something you'd like to share? Send it to Jennifer in the Church Office at [jspencer@fpcne.org](mailto:jspencer@fpcne.org) and we'll post it for you.



VISIT US ONLINE AT [WWW.FPCNE.ORG](http://WWW.FPCNE.ORG)

## LIBRARY SPOTLIGHT: LIBRARY PROMOTION MONTH

The church library ladies welcome you to visit our wonderfully decorated library and check out one of the many interesting books. Books will be displayed in the Assembly Room for your viewing. Gift cards will be given to the adult and the child who read the most in the month of February.

The Library Board wishes to thank the following people for their Angel Tree donations:

- *Come Rain or Shine* given by the Hazens
- *Puppy that Came for Christmas* given by Mary Ann Reid-Boyd
- *All the Light We Cannot See* given by the Blossers in honor of Lois Siverling
- *Not a Fan: Becoming a Completely Committed Follower of Jesus* given by the Tyler family in memory of Jane Evans
- *Christmas Day in the Morning* and *Winter is Coming* given by Emelyn Olson
- *The Reindeer Wish* given by the Hinmans in honor of their grandchildren
- *Dead Wake, The Last Crossing of the Lusitania* given by Marge Campbell
- *Dear Sweetie, I Am Okay* given by Joe and Sue Spacht in memory of Sally McCord
- *Little Deer Lost* given by the Logan family
- *The Holy Bible NKJV – Large Print* donated by Florence Croscut



## SAVE THE DATE: ANNUAL MEETING NEWS

Please join us for the Annual Meeting of the Congregation on Sunday, February 14. Once again, the Session has decided to hold the meeting *during* the 11:00 A.M. worship service. This will be a tremendous time of celebration for all that God has done in our midst in 2015 and a time to look and pray about where we are headed in 2016 and beyond. **THERE WILL BE ONLY ONE WORSHIP SERVICE THAT MORNING.** The Session will host a luncheon following the meeting. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend.



## ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

Begin the Lenten season with a service of reflection, and join us at 7:00 P.M. on Wednesday, February 10 for our Ash Wednesday Service. Pastor Gregg will offer a special message. The first Sunday in Lent begins on February 14. We have some special worship services planned throughout Lent.

►► **ONLINE SERMONS:** You can catch up on Pastor Gregg's sermon series on Galatians by listening to his sermons on our church website. Visit us at [FPCNE.ORG](http://FPCNE.ORG).



Pastor Gregg D. Townsend

VISIT US ONLINE AT [WWW.FPCNE.ORG](http://WWW.FPCNE.ORG)





## Silent Auction to Support West Virginia Mission Trip

The Christian Education and Mission Committees are currently in the process of making plans for the 2016 Mission trip, which will include both youth and adults from the congregation. Part of this process includes a few fundraising events, with the first taking place right now. Our "Silent Auction" for families and friends of the church will continue through January 31 with pick-up of items on February 7.

What can you do to help? Bid on our wide variety of baskets, get some great "stuff," and in turn, help raise funds for our West Virginia Mission Trip.

## West Virginia Mission Trip

Any member from the congregation who is interested in serving in a different and exciting way should see Donna Banks regarding the 2016 Mission Trip to Philippi, West Virginia this summer. We are currently putting together a Mission team and have space for up to 10 people. This year's team will depart North East on Sunday, July 10 and return Saturday, July 16.



## Our Children are Challenged to Make a "Change" with Fish Banks

As part of our Lenten reflection; Sunday School children will be receiving "Fish Banks" on February Sunday, February 14 during the 11:00 A.M. worship service. We would like to challenge our children to "find some change" so they can help make a "change" in the lives of others who are without food, water, and shelter. The children will learn about giving back to others by filling their banks and then bringing them back to church on Palm Sunday or Easter Sunday where they can help fill the net.

The CE Committee will have additional Fish Banks available in the Assembly Room for any adults who would like to participate in our challenge.

## Kids' Choir

Under the direction of Jenn McClure and assisted by Donna Banks, Kids' Choir will soon be meeting again. We plan on starting to meet the week toward the end of March, following the Easter season in order to begin preparation for our latest upcoming performance on Youth Sunday. Please keep your eyes open for upcoming announcements and mailings for times and dates.

## UPCOMING EVENTS FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL

### Palm Sunday

The children and youth Sunday School classes will participate in the Procession of the Palms at the beginning of the 11:00 A.M. worship service on Palm Sunday. They will practice the procession during *Prayer & Praise* time at 10:30 that morning.

In addition, during the 11:00 A.M. service, Kirk Kids will be led by Donna Banks and our Middle/High School Youth class. They will be providing activities and an Easter Egg Hunt for all children, preschool age through fifth grade. Don't miss the fun we have planned!

### Easter Sunday

All children and youth Sunday School classes will meet as usual at 9:45 A.M. for unique Easter programming and curriculum. Kids' Sunday School will watch a special "Worthy is the Lamb" video with some "eggstra" special surprises for all. During the 11:00 A.M. service, Kirk Kids will be suspended so families can worship together on this most joyous of days.

# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

WE CAN COUNT ON GOD.

# JESUS



## HELP FEED LOCAL FAMILIES

### CAN WE SURROUND THE PERIMETER OF THE SANCTUARY?

The annual **Souper Bowl of Caring** challenge is underway, and we will continue collecting canned soups and other nonperishable food items to donate to the North East Community Food Pantry. These items will continue to assist the food pantry in feeding members of our community during the winter months. With the support of the Christian Education and Mission Committees, the youth of our congregation is currently challenging all members of our congregation to surround the perimeter of the sanctuary! Though we are underway, we definitely need everyone's help to meet this challenge.

We will continue collecting food until the February 7. That's the day that congregation members get to "reap what they sow." That is, the youth will be feeding the congregation. And what's on the menu? Well soup of course! There will be a choice of two homemade soups, which will include beef vegetable and cream of potato, along with bread and butter and homemade desserts being provided by our Mission Committee members. So join us twice — first by helping to meet the challenge of filling and surrounding the sanctuary, and then later by breaking bread and sharing a bowl of soup.



## MUSIC MINISTRY NEWS



**IT'S A GREAT TIME TO GET INVOLVED IN OUR CHURCH'S MUSIC MINISTRY.** From the Chancel and Bell Choirs to our Worship Team, we have a variety of ways you can serve the church and glorify God through music. Come join in the fun and service.

- **The Chancel Choir practices on THURSDAY EVENINGS at 7:30 P.M.** and typically sings three times per month. We have begun preparing for Lent and Easter music. Speak with our Director of Music Ministry, Jane Livingston, if you have any questions.
- **The Bell Choir practices on TUESDAY EVENINGS at 6:30 P.M.** and rings once per month. Director Jack Salter would love to talk with you about ringing in the choir.
- **The Worship Team practices on SUNDAY MORNINGS at 7:45 A.M.** and plays each week for the 8:30 A.M. worship service. We are looking for singers and other instrumentalists. Even if you cannot make every week, you are welcome to join our team. Speak with Jane for details.

### SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT FOR A SPECIAL NEED

**The Sound/AV Team needs two to three new members to serve on our team. We welcome men and women, age 16 and older. We are losing two of our team members over the next few weeks, and really need help for both our 8:30 and 11:00 A.M. worship services. You're scheduled in advance and only need to help on one or two Sundays each month. It's a great way to serve. The sound and visual aspect of our worship is something that many of us probably take for granted, but it's the members of our Sound/AV Team who ensure that we can hear and see throughout the worship service. It's easier than you think, and we'll train you and review the service ahead of time with you. Please speak with Jane Livingston for more information. We really need a few folks to step forward to help.**

**Speak with our Director of Music Ministry, Jane Livingston, if you have any questions or would like more information. We'd love to have you join us.**



# TITHING MADE EASY WITH DIRECT DEPOSIT

Sign up to have your church giving done via direct deposit. It's a great way to give your financial support to the church without having to worry about writing a check or putting an envelope in the offering plate each week. Plus if you find it challenging to give regularly, this is a good way to establish the practice of regular giving. Jean Bahm can get you set up. It's super easy. We have about 17 members who give via direct deposit and THEY LOVE IT! (If you have to change your giving at any point during the year, Jean can also help you adjust your giving if needed.)



## SERVICE SCHEDULES

DATE	USHERS	NURSERY	READER
February 7	Dave Meehl, John Wilcox, Roger Meehl, Dianne Tyler, Evelyn Daughrity	Lori Haas & Sherri Lanahan	Deanna Ott
February 14	Bob & Sandy Nelson, Ron Blosser, Al Mohnkern, Vivian Daughrity	Barb & Harry Blount	Sue Spacht
February 21	Vern & Kitty Hurlburt, Garrett Connors, Joe & Sue Spacht	Dennis & Sandra Drab	Dave Uglow
February 28	Kathy & Lynn Peterson, Barb Blount, Steve Seymour, Cole Elkin	Scott DeVore, Debra & Taylor Alcorn	Fred Lucore
March 6	Dave Meehl, John Wilcox, Roger Meehl, Dianne Tyler, Evelyn Daughrity	Jean Burch, Kameran and Kaylan Mayes	Joe Spacht
March 13	Bob & Sandy Nelson, Ron Blosser, Al Mohnkern, Vivian Daughrity	Lisa and Marissa Kelly	Selina Uglow
March 20	Vern & Kitty Hurlburt, Garrett Connors, Joe & Sue Spacht	Bob Boyd and Mary Ann Reid-Boyd	Marcia Regan
March 27	Kathy & Lynn Peterson, Barb Blount, Steve Seymour, Cole Elkin	Dave Meehl and Donna Banks	

CHURCH OFFICERS		
2016	2017	2018
SESSION		
Pauline Fisher	Vern Hurlburt	Rodger Hazen
Abby Johnson	Roy Orton	Craig Carlson
Tom McClure	Doty Wagner	Scott Connors
Marcia Regan	Richard Zahner	Patti Kuna
Paul Zorzie		
DEACONS		
Sue Hinman	Barbara Blount	Sally Murray
Tracy Connors	Ashley Connors	Donna Banks
Debbie Hartner	Becky Oyler	Jean LaFuria
Cathy McClure	Kathy Peterson	
Terri Andrews	Carol Ripley	
TRUSTEES		
Ron Blosser	Bob Murray	Fred Lucore
Fred Brostmeyer	Al Walz	Tom Schenker
Joe Spacht	Jerry Weinheimer	Jeff Hinman
AUDITORS		
Abby Johnson	Yvonne Peck	Jean Bahm
PRESBYTERIAN HOMES REPRESENTATIVES		
Pauline Fisher and Doty Wagner		



Make 2016 the year that you begin to TITHE and set aside 10% of your income to the Lord's house.



VISIT US ONLINE AT [WWW.FPCNE.ORG](http://WWW.FPCNE.ORG)