



# The Exciter

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

No. 561

November 2016

## THE PASTOR'S PEN



Ah November! The leaves have turned color, football season is in full gear, and turkey (and more turkey and more turkey!) is on the horizon, and...and...it's Stewardship Season once again!

Let's face it, not too many people get excited about Stewardship Season. We might even feel a bit pestered and bothered about it all: a letter in the mail with a card and return envelope and long announcements at service on Sunday morning; all asking you to part with some of your hard-earned cash. Why would we ever want to share? Well, as Christians we share because we are grateful.

We have so much for which to be thankful. Many of those blessings have come through those who gave generously and faithfully in the past. They built the building in which we worship. They supported the ministry and outreach of our congregation and ministry around the world. Now it is our turn to do the same.

We have great reasons to give gratefully and generously. God has been so good to us. The Bible asks us to give 10% of our income to our church family (see Malachi 3:8-12). This was a command to our Old Testament ancestors in the faith. It was also the practice and expectation of Jesus and the early church. Jesus said that we put our money toward what is truly important to us. He said, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

The sad truth is that while we are a congregation of over four hundred members we regularly have under a hundred pledge-giving units. Many of our members did not make a pledge of any kind. Worse still, our per-person giving is at a rate that is significantly less than that of other Presbyterian churches in our Presbytery and also significantly behind other Protestant congregations in our own town.

So, maybe this is the year that we can turn this trend around, follow God's instruction, and show our gratefulness with our money. *If you have never made a pledge, please do so this year. If you have pledged sporadically, make this the year that you give consistently. If you have pledged before and followed through on your pledges make this the year that you go the distance and do what the Bible asks, offering a tithe of your income. Test the Lord! He won't let you down.*

Ahead of time let me thank you for making a pledge. Thank you for giving generously! Thank you for your obedience to the scriptures!

Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

Pastor Gregg



**Do you have a story to share about how God has touched your life? Pastor Gregg would like to hear about it and perhaps you could share your faith testimony with the congregation. Please phone, email or speak with Pastor Gregg personally.**

# CLERKS CORNER

Hello and Happy early Thanksgiving to my Church Family!

Our church will soon be a meeting place for a local chapter of Narcotics Anonymous (NA). As you likely know, there is an epidemic of illicit drug use, over doses and drug related deaths in our area. The Session unanimously agreed to accommodate NA in response to this need felt within the community.

Last month, I traveled with the Clerk of Session from Ripley to Edinboro for the annual church records review. The point of the review is to verify specific mandatory items within the minutes of Session and in the church register. (The register records membership history, the ordination of officers, baptisms, deaths, weddings, etc.) I'm pleased to report that our church records are in good order.

I would like to let you know that the 2017 Per Capita figures are established. It is \$30.00 per member (not per household). Just in case you are not familiar with Per Capita, it is a way that our congregation connects to and financially participates in the mission of the greater church. Your Per Capita gifts touch lives regionally, nationally and worldwide. In 2017, our congregation will contribute over \$12,000 to the greater church. If you would like to help with these outward-bound mission dollars, please place a note or write in the memo line of your check "Per Capita."

If you ever have any questions, please feel free to speak with me.

God Bless you all,

Patti Kuna  
Clerk of Session



## A NOTE FROM THE CHURCH SECRETARY

Hello Everyone!

I wanted to let you know that I recently attended a training session for administrative assistants that was organized by the Lake Erie Presbytery. It was a very worthwhile day spent in the company of my counterparts throughout the region. It was a highly collaborative and compassionate group.

As a group, we worshipped and shared a meal. We compared software (including financial software), newsletters, calendar management

and different methods of distributing information. Most valuable to me was the sharing of existing resources that may be tapped to assist people in dire straits. What's more is I came away with a whole new network of professionals who are only an email or phone call away.

Thank you for supporting me in this new responsibility. I love serving you as best as I am able.

In Christ,  
Patti Kuna

## MISSION COMMITTEE NEWS

*"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'"*

~ Matthew 25:40

The Mission Committee needs your help to provide a meal for homeless people. The meal is scheduled for the evening of Saturday, November 19 at the Church of the Covenant.

There are many ways to be involved. People are needed to make meat casseroles, vegetable casseroles, salads, bread and desserts. These items can all be dropped off at FPCNE. People are also needed to transport the food to the Church of the Covenant. Finally, help is also needed to serve the meal.

This is an opportunity to put your faith into action and help nourish "the least of these." How can you get involved in this mission opportunity? There are signup sheets in the Assembly Room for the various components, or you may call the church office at: 814-725-8641.

## PLAN FOR THE ADVENT SEASON

The season of expectation of the birth of Christ will soon be upon us. Mark your calendar and plan to attend.

- ★ Sunday, November 27 Advent Worship Services at 8:30am and 11:00am
- ★ Sunday, December 4 Advent Worship Services at 8:30am and 11:00am
- ★ Sunday, December 4 Family Advent Program and Dinner 4:00pm
- ★ Sunday, December 11 Advent Worship Services at 8:30am and 11:00am
- ★ Sunday, December 18 Advent Christmas Cantata at 11:00am
- ★ Saturday, December 24 Candlelight Christmas Eve Worship Service at 7:30pm
- ★ Sunday, December 25 Christmas Day Worship Service at 11am
- ★ Sunday, January 1 New Year's Day Worship Service at 11am



Pastor Gregg D. Townsend

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# SAMARITAN'S PURSE OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD



Our Mission Committee along with the Christian Education Committee and the Youth of our church is once again promoting and participating in *Operation Christmas Child* sponsored by **Samaritan's Purse**.

Last year we were able to fill and collect about 60 boxes. Our goal of course is to beat last year's numbers. (We want to try to block in Pastor Gregg as the filled boxes will be stacked around the pulpit.)

Boxes for packing will be available through the beginning of November. All boxes must be completed by Sunday, November 6<sup>th</sup>. Delivery for shipping will take place during that week. Finally, if you don't want to shop; we will do the shopping for you. Just see Donna Banks regarding transfer of funds for shopping. You can also see Donna with any questions. Please join us and bless a child from around the world with the hope and love of Jesus Christ our Lord.

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

### Sunday School Classes

It has been a great Fall start for our Sunday School classes. Children, youth and adults are enjoying learning about the teachings of the Word of God. Please consider joining us on Sunday mornings; we promise, you will look forward to returning week after week. The energy and excitement as we dive into the Word of the Lord is contagious and will keep you wanting and seeking MORE!

### Kids' Choir

It's that time of year — when our precious little ones begin practicing to share their angelic voices. Our first Kids Choir performance took place on Sunday, October 25 during the 11:00 A.M. worship service. The kids had been practicing extra hard and were excited to present new music to the congregation. If you have any questions, please contact Donna Banks or Jenn McClure. We're looking forward to another wonderful year of singing and praising. Check out their performance on the church's Facebook page.

### Christmas Cookies

The Youth will once again be your bakers for the Christmas season. We will be taking orders after both the 8:30 and 11:00 A.M. services beginning Sunday, November 13<sup>th</sup> up until December 4<sup>th</sup>. You may also contact the church office to place an order. Youth group members are invited to the church for baking on Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 A.M. until about 2:00 P.M.

The Youth are requesting donations of all sorts of baking supplies (flour, sugar, butter, sprinkles, etc.) to help defer the cost of our cookie baking project. If you can help; please drop your donations off in the Church Office.



The price has been frozen at \$10.00 for a scrumptious plate of two (2) dozen cookies and goodies. Cookies will be delivered on Sunday, December 12<sup>th</sup>. Please see Donna Banks if you have any questions.



**BE SURE TO "FALL BACK" AT 2:00 A.M.  
ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6.**



Pastor Gregg D. Townsend

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## NEWS FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Each fall season, the nominating committee meets to evaluate, discuss, and recommend to the congregation names of members of the church who will consider serving as elders, deacons and trustees. The offices are:

**RULING ELDER** is a high calling, a unique opportunity to offer servant leadership to the congregation, and an experience of spiritual growth. The Presbyterian Church Book of Order defines the role qualifications of those called to serve in this capacity *should be persons of strong faith, dedicated discipleship, and love of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world. (The PC(USA) Book of Order)*

**DEACON**, as set forth in Scripture, is one of compassion, witness, and service, sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures, or anyone in distress. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, sincere compassion, and sound judgment should be chosen for this ministry. (The PC(USA) Book of Order)

**TRUSTEE** is someone who handles the “business” of the church as it relates to the building and grounds maintenance, ensuring safety, proper working condition of any equipment, and installation and upkeep of any new facilities.

Please prayerfully consider whether God may be calling you into an opportunity to serve your church here in North East. If you are interested or want more information or answers to questions, please contact any member of the nominating committee as soon as possible. Committee members are: Rodger Hazen (Chair), Beth Seymour, Jenn McClure, Diane Lucore, Bob Nelson and Dave Poor.

## 2016 ANNUAL FAMILY ADVENT DINNER

As you are planning your holiday schedule, mark your calendar and plan to attend our annual Family Advent Program and Dinner on Sunday, December 4 following the Advent Program at 4:00 P.M. Please bring a large dish to share and your own place settings. Drinks will be provided. More details to come. See you there!



## PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN ACTIVITIES

The Presbyterian Women (PW) will gather for their monthly knitting/crocheting group on Wednesday, November 9 at 2 P.M. Then, the PW Book Club will meet on Thursday, November 10 at 2 P.M. in the conference room. They will be discussing All the Light We Cannot See by Anthony Doerr. Finally, on Sunday, November 13 after the 11:00 A.M. worship service, the PW will meet to disperse the funds from the cherry pie sales. Come with ideas!

## MAKE TITHING EASY BY SIGNING UP FOR 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 15 members who give via direct deposit and THEY LOVE IT! (If you need to change your giving at any point during the year, Jean can also help you adjust your giving if needed.)

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

**HAVE YOU FILLED OUT A PLEDGE CARD YET?**



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# MUSIC MINISTRY NEWS

There are many ways to get involved in the FPCNE Music Ministry.

## SING WITH THE CHANCEL CHOIR FOR CHRISTMAS

We recently began rehearsing for our special worship services for Advent and Christmas. The Chancel Choir will be offering a special Christmas cantata during the 11:00 A.M. service on December 18. Singing at Christmas time is a great way to sing with the choir if you cannot commit throughout the whole year. Speak with Jane Livingston for more information. Choir rehearsal is on Thursday evenings at 7:00 P.M. We'd love to have some extra voices join us for Christmas.

## JOIN THE BELL CHOIR

Bell Choir rehearsals have resumed for the season and are being held on Thursday evenings from 5:45 to 7:00 P.M. We need more ringers, so we hope that you will prayerfully consider joining us this year. We typically only ring once per month and on Christmas Eve and Easter Sunday.

We welcome our youth (grades 7 and up) and adults to join, and there is no experience needed. If you've never rung in a bell choir, we'll train you, and start you out on the easy bells! (Yes, there are easy bells!) Our Bell Choir has a long history at FPCNE, and while we continue to recruit a new permanent Bell Choir Director, Jane Livingston has stepped in to help get the Bell Choir ringing this fall. But,

we need more ringers! Our dedicated, current members only have so many hands to ring bells, so we need more folks to join our fun group. Perhaps the new night and time for rehearsals will work for you. Speak with Jane if you have questions.

## JOIN THE WORSHIP TEAM

Do you like to sing contemporary Christian music? Do you play guitar or other instruments? We'd like to add a few more numbers to our Worship Team. 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 also need more singers and always welcome more guitar players and other instruments. We have a lot of fun praising the Lord early in the morning! Speak with Jane for more information.

## JOIN THE SOUND/AV TEAM

If you can follow a few instructions and have some computer knowledge, you can be on our Sound/AV Team. We have a few dedicated members who run the sound and audiovisual equipment at our two worship services, but it would be helpful to have more people trained. We invite men and women, age 16 and older, to join our team. We will provide all the training, and Jane will run through the service with you each week so there's no guess-work. It really is easier than you think. Please prayerfully consider helping out.

# SERVICE SCHEDULE

DATE	USHERS	NURSERY
November 6	Dave Meehl, John Wilcox, Roger Meehl, Dianne Tyler, Sophie Tyler	John Luchs
November 13	Bob & Sandy Nelson, Ron Blosser, Al Mohnkern, Vivian Daughrity	Marcia and Tom Regan
November 20	Vern & Kitty Hurlburt, Joe & Sue Spacht, Garrett Connors	Jaimee and Jordan Knight
November 27	Kathy & Lynn Peterson, Barb Blount, Steve Seymour, Cole Elkin	Tim, Debbie and Madison Hartner
December 4	Dave Meehl, John Wilcox, Roger Meehl, Dianne Tyler, Sophie Tyler	Dean and Kathy Taylor
December 11	Bob & Sandy Nelson, Ron Blosser, Al Mohnkern, Vivian Daughrity	Dennis and Sandy Drab
December 18	Vern & Kitty Hurlburt, Joe & Sue Spacht, Garrett Connors	Payton and Sherri Lanahan
December 25	Kathy & Lynn Peterson, Barb Blount, Steve Seymour, Cole Elkin	Dave Meehl

————— **THANK YOU FOR SERVING YOUR CHURCH!** —————



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