



# The Exciter

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

No. 560

October 2016

## THE PASTOR'S PEN

Although our calendars tell us that the year is slowly approaching the end of the calendar year, it seems that in many ways the “year” is just beginning: Children and teachers are back in school, college football teams are taking the field, and many community programs and entertainment events are promoted. In many ways the grape harvest and the changing colors of the trees signal a time of new beginnings.

The arrival of the fall season also signals a time of new beginnings here at church. Of course, we have never stopped being the church! We bear witness to and faithfully follow Jesus each and every day. The church calendar, however, does tell us that Sunday School classes have begun for children and adults, mission projects like the CROP walk and Operation Christmas boxes are, or are soon to be, underway. I hope that you will come and be a part of the worship and mission life of our church as we touch lives in our town and all over the world in Jesus' name.

Specifically, I'd like to ask you to do three things. First, attend worship! Like almost all Protestant congregations in the United States, a significant portion of our congregation's membership only occasionally or sometimes rarely attends worship services. I'm sure you agree that worshipping and being strengthened by God's word along with other Christians is vital to being a strong Christian. Come on out at 8:30 A.M. or 11:00 A.M. each Sunday and stay for Sunday School in between those services.

Second, be involved! Recently we held a special time following worship in which the different committees of our church set up tables to describe their activities. It was great to see a number of people commit to participating in a variety of ways in the days ahead. God has given you gifts, abilities, and interests to use in His service and for His glory. I hope that you will take advantage of that. If you are interested in serving and aren't sure where to go please talk with me or the chair of our Membership Development Committee, Pauline Fisher. We'd be happy to help you find a way into serving others in such a way that it will be enjoyable and encouraging for you.

Third, invite others to attend with you! I recently read the results of a survey on the factors that contributed most notably to churches that grow in worship attendance, membership, and mission activity. The results were not surprising at all. There were no surprising insights. There was no magic bullet or special factors! There are the three main reasons why congregations grow in worship attendance and membership: 1. Biblical Preaching: people want to attend churches where the Bible is honored and explained clearly, 2. The congregation is a welcoming place, and 3. People were invited to attend church. That's it! It was that simple.

We are doing a great job at 1. and 2.: Biblical preaching is essential to us and our congregation is a welcoming place. Visitors often remark on these two things to me. When we receive new members they often state these two reasons for becoming a part of our congregation. So, it is number 3 that is our challenge and opportunity. I ask you to please invite a friend to attend church with you this week and make a regular practice of doing so.

In the Service of our King,

Pastor Gregg



Pastor Gregg D. Townsend

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

# CLERKS CORNER



Happy Fall to my Church Family! I hope this note finds you well.

Here is an update on what we are doing around the Session table.

First, due to a change in the presbytery rules, our church is now eligible to send a second Ruling Elder to the presbytery meetings. As no one elder is able to wholly commit to this schedule, we are developing a rotation based schedule. This additional representative will have voting privileges. Also, this representative need not be an elder currently serving. So, if you are an elder and have an interest in representing our church at these meetings, please speak with Pastor Gregg or with me. There are five meetings in 2017 and the dates are already set.

Our beautiful church building gets older every year, and consequently is in need of some TLC (Tender Loving Care). There is some water damage in the basement, the brickwork needs sealed and the break wall along the creek is crumbling. Session enacted a Subcommittee on Building Needs to get a comprehensive understanding of the scope and expense of pressing needs. The committee is a blend of Trustees and Session. I'll keep you informed as new developments occur.

Session approved me (Patti Kuna) as the new church secretary. I aim to serve you all faithfully and efficiently. Thank you for your patience as I learn the nuts and bolts of this new role.

Kudos to Pauline Fisher and Doty Wagner who, along with their committees, successfully hosted our first "Faith in Action" Sunday on September 18. The goal of this event was to inform and encourage more people to get involved with the life of the church.

The Mission Committee is always very active. The group recently sent \$2500 to the North East Food Pantry for the purchase of fresh eggs. Eggs are an inexpensive source of protein, relative to meat, and easy to prepare. Many, many families frequenting the food pantry will benefit from this nutritious item.

The Mission Committee also reported to Session that over \$1500 was raised through Erie Gives. These funds are earmarked for the 2017 mission trip. Finally, this committee coordinated our church's participation in last month's Erie County Crop Walk held at Presque Isle.

The Christian Education committee is once again hosting Financial Peace University. Jenn McClure is leading the class. There are a number of folks benefitting from this program and from Jenn's leadership.

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

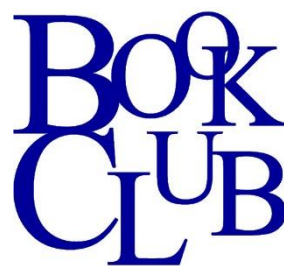
God Bless you all,

*Patti Kuna*  
*Clerk of Session*

## NEWS FROM THE PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

**Book Club will be meeting October 13 at 2:00 PM.**

Women of all ages are invited to take part in the Presbyterian Women's Book Club. Our next meeting will be on the second Thursday of the month, October 13 at 2:00 PM in the conference room next to the Pastor's study. We will be finishing our discussion of *The Secret Chord* by Geraldine Brooks. We will also be choosing our next book. Come for the fellowship and leave with new friends!



## THE PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS OFFERING IS OCTOBER 2



**We are called to be Christ's helpers in bringing hope for all those who have suffered from acts of violence.**

The Peace & Global Witness Offering (formerly known as the Peacemaking Offering) will be received on World Communion Sunday, October 2. Wars rage. Women and children are victims of atrocities. Anger bubbles over into violence. Differences between people grow and understanding is in short supply. In all cultures of violence, God spreads a table of peace through the witness of congregations like ours. Through this offering, you can help bring Christ's peace to those people and

communities afflicted by war, sexual violence, gun violence and racism. Noteworthy is that 25% of your gift stays with our congregation to support peacemaking and witness locally.



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



## RALLY DAY WAS A OUTSTANDING SUCCESS

Rally Day was a huge success, as we celebrated the opening of our Sunday School year with a pizza party. Nearly 100 members and friends of FPCNE enjoyed several varieties of cheese pizza, fresh salads, and dessert pizza. It was a fun and delicious way to kick off Sunday School and the Christian Education year. Kudos to the members of the Christian Education Committee for their creativity and hard work!

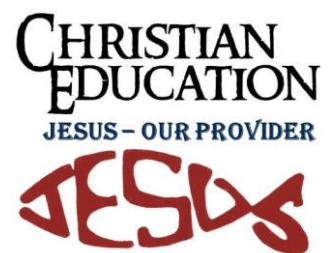
## KIDS CHOIR NEWS

It's that time of year — when our precious little ones begin practicing to share their angelic voices. Our Kids Choir will sing on Sunday, October 23 during the 11:00 a.m. worship service. We began practicing on Thursday, September 25 at 4:30. Additional practices will take place on October 2, October 6, and October 16 at 4:30 p.m. Kids should meet in the Assembly Room of the church.

If you have any questions, please contact Donna Banks or Jenn McClure. We're looking forward to another wonderful year of singing and praising.

## JOIN US FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL

It has been an astounding fall start for our Sunday School classes. Both kids (elementary, middle and high school) and adults are enjoying learning and participating as they revive their journeys and continue to grow and learn about the teachings and word of our Lord, Jesus Christ. There are classes for each and every member of the family, including an adult class, based on the Bible, being led by Andy Bartlett. In the next month or so, we will also offer a second adult offering. Keep your eye out over the next few weeks announcing this upcoming class. Each and every one of our classes welcome new members. Please consider joining us on Sunday mornings; We promise, you will look forward to returning week after week.



## BIBLE SUNDAY

On Sunday, September 18th, the Christian Education Committee presented new Bibles for our next group of child Bible scholars. Children in Godly Play, Second grade and Sixth grade received a new Bible. Students in Godly play received The New Bible in Pictures for Little Eyes. The Second grade students received The New Adventure Bible, while Sixth graders received the ESV Teen Study Bible and Those children receiving Bibles included Claire Hirneisen, Hadley Hartner, Sparrow Magill, Madison Hartner, Emma Hirneisen, Taylor Alcorn and Matthew DeVore.

## OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SAMARITAN'S PURSE

This year the Christian Education Committee and Mission Committee have once again joined forces to not only present but also sponsor Operation Christmas Child. We are joining together to not only bring a little bit of Christmastime cheer to children around the world who would not normally have this experience, but to also share with them the love of Jesus Christ (by sharing the giving of gifts). We are challenging all of the members and each Committee of the church to compete with one another to fill as many Christmas boxes as possible. Our goal as a congregation is to fill and prepare 100 boxes for shipping and distribution.

Members, nonmembers and committees can participate in two different ways. The first way to help is to donate items for boxes and our youth will fill them for you. Secondly, if you're just not up to shopping, then you could make a donation and we will not only fill a box for you, but will also do the shopping.

Light that Christmas light in your heart and join us in bringing Christmas and the love of Jesus Christ to those children around the world who are less fortunate. If you have any questions, please contact Donna Banks or Scott Connors.

## BECOME A LITURGIST FOR WORSHIP SERVICES

**SERVE AS A LITURGIST.** We encourage members to get involved in our weekly worship services by serving as a reader/liturgist. Pastor Gregg will walk through the service with you and give you all the pointers you'll need. Most of our readers only read a few times each year. Please speak with Pastor Gregg or Jane Livingston if you are interested.



# MUSIC MINISTRY NEWS

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

## JOIN OUR CHANCEL CHOIR

Joining the Chancel Choir is a fun and rewarding way to serve the church. We practice on Thursday evenings at 7:30 P.M. We are always looking for new members, and welcome our youth from grade 7 and up to sing with us. The Chancel Choir sings at the 11:00 worship service about three times per month.



We will be starting to practice Advent and Christmas music soon. We have a terrific new cantata, "Come, Let Us Adore" on order. Singing with the choir during Advent and Christmas is a good way to "try out" singing with us.

See our Director of Music Ministry, Jane Livingston for any questions. You're also encouraged to speak with any choir member — they are great ambassadors and can give you many reasons to join the choir!

## 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. Speak with Jane Livingston.

## 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 about six 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. You are typically only scheduled about once per month so it's not time consuming. Speak with Jenn McClure or Jane Livingston for more information. We are especially in need of help for the 8:30 A.M. worship service. It really is easier than you think.

## STAY TUNED FOR INFORMATION ON OUR BELL CHOIR.

We are currently recruiting for a new director.

# LIBRARY SPOTLIGHT: HARVESTING GOOD BOOKS

**Come in and visit the ladies of the library.**

**We have a great selection of fall books for your reading pleasure. Sermon CDs are also available to check out. Enjoy your church library!**



# PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN NEWS

The Fall Gathering for the Presbyterian Women Association will be held on Saturday, October 15 at the Wayside Presbyterian Church in Erie. This year's workshops are centered on "Mission Matters." These are the highlights for this year's program:

- *Keynote Speaker Emma Haas, 2015-16 Northern Ireland Young Adult Volunteer (YAV)*
- *Crafting: Make a card for yourself and one to send to a YAV*
- *Bible study: Introduction and discussion on the PW Bible study "Who Is Jesus?"*
- *Mission Matters: Learn about mission opportunities*

The cost for lunch is \$6.00 and the registration deadline is October 5. Please sign up in the Assembly Room, or contact Charlene Baird (725-8424) or Billie Blosser (899-8575) to register. It will be a nice fall foliage drive and a wonderful morning of sharing and learning. We're asking the husbands, grandfathers, and other men of our congregation to offer to watch the children and encourage the women in your lives to attend this enriching time of fellowship.



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





# THE PRAYER CHAIN

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.



## Looking Ahead: Advent begins November 27.

We are putting final plans together for a meaningful Advent and Christmas season at FPCNE. Mark your calendars for this special date, as well as December 4 at 4:00 P.M. for our Annual Family Advent Program and Dinner. This year's Music Ministry Christmas Program will be held on Sunday, December 18 during the 11:00 A.M. worship service. Our annual Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be at 7:30 P.M. on Saturday, December 24, and our Christmas Day worship service will be held at 11:00 A.M. only on Sunday, December 25.

## FLOWER AND COFFEE HOUR CHARTS

Please take a few moments to stop by and sign up to bring flowers in honor of an occasion, in memory of a loved one, or just to praise God. Also, please consider signing up to host coffee hour. Both charts are posted on the bulletin board outside of the church office. Speak with Patti Kuna in the office for more information.



**“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 Patti Kuna in the Church Office at [office@fpcne.org](mailto:office@fpcne.org), or Jane Livingston at [jlivingston@neo.rr.com](mailto:jlivingston@neo.rr.com), and we'll post it for you.

If you missed some of the sermons in Pastor Gregg's series on Mark, catch up online at [FPCNE.ORG](http://FPCNE.ORG) or check out a sermon CDs from the church library.

## SERVICE SCHEDULES

Please note the service schedules on your calendar and contact another church member if you are unable to greet, usher, read, or volunteer in the nursery on your scheduled Sunday. In addition, we ask that you notify the office (725-8641) of any changes.

DATE	USHERS	READER
October 2	Dave Meehl, John Wilcox, Roger Meehl, Dianne Tyler, Sophie Tyler	Beth Seymour
October 9	Bob & Sandy Nelson, Ron Blosser, Al Mohnkern, Vivian Daugherty	Mary Ann Reid-Boyd
October 16	Vern & Kitty Hurlburt, Joe & Sue Spacht, Garrett Connors	Deanna Ott
October 23	Kathy & Lynn Peterson, Barb Blount, Steve Seymour, Cole Elkin	Katie Gallagher
October 30	Jerry Weinheimer, Bob Murray, Tom Schenker, Peggy Walsh, Evelyn Daugherty	Sue Spacht

IF YOU HAVE A PRAYER REQUEST, speak with Pastor Gregg, call the church office (814- 725-8641), or email our prayer chain ([jlivingston@neo.rr.com](mailto:jlivingston@neo.rr.com)).

