



The Exciter

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

No. 564

February 2017

THE PASTOR'S PEN



Instead of New Year's Resolutions this year, I've decided to make three New Year's Wishes! Each of them is a wish for our congregation. Each of them is commanded of us by God and when followed, they free us and give us joy.

First, I wish that you would attend worship services with uncommon consistency. It should be a very rare Sunday morning that we do not find ourselves in church singing the praises of our Lord Jesus Christ, listening carefully to the preaching of God's Word, and praying for one another. *Here's the reality of our situation:* Most of our members' attendance on Sunday morning is the exception and not the rule. Hebrews 10:24-25 says, "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, *not neglecting to meet together*, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near." I hope that if you are a regular attender that you will also encourage and invite friends and family to attend worship with you. They're not likely to attend unless you ask them.

Second, I wish that you would get actively and deeply involved in the ministry of our congregation. *Here's the reality of our situation:* not only do most of our members not actively attend worship, even fewer participate in the activities, mission efforts, and leadership of our congregation. God has given each of us gifts, talents and abilities. Everyone has something to offer and a duty to use what God has given to strengthen our congregation and extend its outreach to our community and the world. This is why the Bible, when it talks about these gifts and abilities says that, "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (1 Corinthians 12:7). You have something to offer! Your time and abilities are needed!

Third, I wish that everyone would make a generous financial commitment to our congregation. Every member should participate financially according to the Bible's instruction. God commands that we give 10% of our income. Malachi 3:10 says, "Bring the full tithe into the storehouse [the Temple]..." Jesus assumed that his followers would tithe. The practice of some members of the earliest church was actually to hold all of their wealth in common! (That verse from Acts scares me a little!)

Here's the reality of our situation: The majority of our members make no financial pledge commitment at all. Of those that do give, the average amount is about 1% of their income. [The Presbyterian Church (USA) average is 2%]. *The typical member in our congregation gives considerably less than just 1% of their income.*

It's not a matter of how much you make. Cash is tight for everyone! Just be faithful. Yet we can all give just one dollar out of every ten we make. Should we do so, the doors will open for us to carry out some astonishing mission and caregiving activities in Jesus' name. Also, if you need help in planning your finances we will be offering Financial Peace University again this year.

I hope my wishes come true this year. Will you help make that happen?

In the Service of the King,

Pastor Gregg



Pastor Gregg D. Townsend

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CLERK'S 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.

At our January 23rd meeting, committee chairpersons were assigned. Consider serving the Lord by lending a hand on one or more of these committees. Simply contact the new chairperson to express your interest. Getting involved is a very good way to deepen your faith. Here's the run down:

- Membership Development – Marcia Regan
- Nominating – Rodger Hazen
- Stewardship – unassigned at present
- Fellowship – Doty Wagner
- Mission – Scott Connors
- Worship & Music – Craig Carlson
- Personnel – Vern Hurlburt
- Christian Education – Bryan Lash
- Sustaining Gift Trust Fund liaison – Roy Orton
- Sub-committee on Building Needs – Joe Spacht
- Trustee liaison – Joe Spacht
- Deacons liaison – Doty Wagner
- Finance – Patti Kuna
- Preschool liaisons – Terri Lash, Debbie Hartner
- Presbytery Representative – Patti Kuna and vacant
- Auditors – Yvonne Peck, Abby Johnson and Jean Bahm
- Presbyterian Homes Representatives – Doty Wagner and Pauline Fisher
- Clerk of Session – Patti Kuna

As of this writing, Session has not yet passed a budget for 2017, but I expect a budget to be adopted within the first few days of February.

In other business, I'm excited to let you know of a neat opportunity coming up this summer. "Group Work Camp," a national Christian youth mission group that is coming to North East June 26-30, 2017. There are 455 youth attending from all over the United States, and they will be staying at the North East School.

While the camp itself is full, there are many ways that our youth and congregation can get involved and support Group Workcamp: Here are a few suggestions:

- Form a Welcome Committee
- Help the group move in
- Deliver popsicles to work sites
- Provide cookies, watermelon, lemonade etc. at the end of their work day
- Give financial support (\$19,000 needs raised, all funds stay local)
- Pray for the safety of the workers and chaperones
- Pray that hearts are opened to Christ through this experience

If you know of someone who might benefit from this opportunity pick up an application available in the church office. All approved projects are free, and 99% of applications are approved. Possible projects might include:

- Porch/steps
- Skirting/underpinning
- Winterization
- Painting
- Wheelchair ramp

There is a bit of a time crunch to apply. While there is no firm deadline yet, applications are already being processed, and material lists are being formed. I expect the window on this opportunity to close within the next few weeks.

Finally, I'm pleased to report that Jane Livingston has agreed to take over the Bell Choir Director position until a permanent candidate is found. Our church is very blessed because of this development, as our beloved Bell Choir will continue to ring and bring glory to God!

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please speak with me.

Blessings,

Patti Kuna
Clerk of Session



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.

The Library Board sincerely appreciates your Angel Tree book donations. Thank you to the following people and anonymous donors:

1. *Come Rain or Come Shine* given by Sue and Jeff Hinman in honor of their daughters
2. *Just Mercy* given by Marge Campbell
3. *When Breath Becomes Air*
4. *Arnold Palmer* given by Gordon Bemiss in memory of Meryl and Sara Bemiss
5. *Oh the Things You Can Think* given by Beth and Steve Seymour in honor of Brittany and Peter
6. *What Pet Should I Get?* given by David and Doty Wagner in memory of Edward Schultz
7. *The Secret Chord* given by the Tylers in memory of Kim Moor
8. *Grace*
9. *The Boys in the Boat*



LIBRARY PROMOTION MONTH IS HERE! Stop in and check out the library! There are books for everyone!

As we promote the church library, remember the following quote:

*"The more that you read,
The more things you will know.
The more that you learn the
More places you'll go."
~Dr. Seuss*

SAVE THE DATE: ANNUAL MEETING NEWS

Please join us for the Annual Meeting of the Congregation on Sunday, February 12. 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 2016 and a time to look and pray about where we are headed in 2017 and beyond. **THERE WILL BE ONLY ONE WORSHIP SERVICE THAT MORNING.** The Youth will host a luncheon following the meeting. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend.



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 OR office@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

▶▶▶ **ONLINE SERMONS:** You can catch up on Pastor Gregg's sermon series on Mark by listening to his sermons on our church website. Visit us at FPCNE.ORG.

NEWS FROM CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Can You Help Match the Weight of Your Favorite Super Bowl Quarterback?



The Youth, with the assistance of the Christian Education Committee, is currently challenging all members of our congregation to **Match the Weight of Your Favorite**

Super Bowl Quarterback! The Souper Bowl of Caring is a national food drive that our Youth and congregation participate in annually.

All canned soup (and non-perishable food) donated will go to the North East food pantry and will assist in feeding members of our community this winter. Can you help meet this challenge? We have already begun collecting and will continue until February 12th.

On the final day of this food drive, all of you (our congregation) get to "reap what you sow." That is, the youth will be feeding you a choice of two homemade soups - beef vegetable and cream of potato.

So, join us twice – first by helping to meet the challenge of matching the food weight to your favorite quarterback and then later by breaking bread and sharing a bowl of soup!

Spaghetti Luncheon: THANK YOU!

The Christian Education and Mission Committees are planning for the 2017 Mission trip, which includes Youth and adults from the congregation. Part of our preparation includes fundraising.

Our first fundraiser this year was a very successful Spaghetti Luncheon. You, the members of our congregation were greatly supportive. More than 80 members and their friends enjoyed a lunch that consisted of salad,

homemade spaghetti and meatballs, drinks and sherbet. The generosity of our members once again shined through with the Mission team raising more than \$500.00. **THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY AND SUPPORT!**

Start Gathering Your Gently Used Treasures

Speaking of fundraisers for the 2017 Mission Trip, here is a call for all Presbyterians to Unite – and start gathering your gently used treasures. The Christian Education and Mission Committees will be participating in the North East Community "Garage Sale" this May. We are asking that everyone begin your spring clean-up early; and begin gathering and **pricing** your gently used items that you no longer need.

In addition, if you have items but no way to get them to the church; we have committee members who are willing to pick up your donations. So, start gathering! Look for further information coming soon. Thank you for your support!



Sunday School Classes

It has been a meaningful, fun-filled Fall and early Winter in our Sunday School classes. We have many dedicated teachers who offer their gifts of teaching each and every week to our children, adolescents and adults. Everyone is enjoying learning and participating in the teachings and Word of God.

The Christian Education Committee will be making a few additions to our Christian Education programs over the winter months. Stay tuned for future announcements for upcoming Christian Education opportunities.



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 Bell Choir practices on THURSDAY EVENINGS at 6:00 P.M.** and rings about once per month. Bell Choir Director Jane Livingston would love to talk with you about ringing in the choir.
- **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 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.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN UPDATE

We are in those grey days of winter with the occasional sunny day! We need a little break from our busy hectic lives. Voila! A gift to yourself – for fellowship, laughter, an opportunity to learn something new and for spiritual reflection. I am talking about joining a CIRCLE.

We have the square circle that is meeting in various homes each month for a discussion from the book *Embrace Grace* by Liz Curtis Higgs. This is our more traditional circle with some very wonderful and fun people. You are welcome to attend. There is no age barrier!

This year we have added a Book Circle that discusses themes reflected in the chosen book in relation to our Christian values, the moral and ethical dilemmas of the characters and the many qualities of the presenting author. Everyone helps choose the books to be discussed. You are invited to join us in the study next to the Pastor's office each month. Our next meeting is February 9 at 2 PM and our chosen book is *Five Smooth Stones* by Ann Fairbairn. There is much to talk and think about.

The Knitting and Crocheting for Peace Circle also meets monthly on the second Wednesday at 2 PM. Many members are making preemie hats, prayer shawls and blanket squares. This month we are going to learn how to knit little dolls to be given to children who come into mission health clinics. It should be fun! If weather permits, we will meet at Billie Blosser's home and may be joined by women from the Harborcreek church. If you wish to learn to knit or crochet, we will show you! If you need a ride, call Billie (899-8575). Watch the bulletin to see where we will meet on February 8 at 2 PM. Join us for fellowship!

Another new and wonderful circle is the Quilting Circle. There are new-to-the-art-of-quilting members, a few old timers and our expert leader, Pauline Fisher. We meet twice a month on the second and fourth Tuesdays starting at 2:30 PM. We often share a bowl of soup. You will learn to cut and sew your project right there at Pauline's home. What could be better?

Ok Ladies! It's time to join in and give a circle a try! If you wish it were another time, please speak with Billie. Our hope is that you will find a circle that will enrich your spiritual growth and strengthen our fellowship!

God Bless You!

JOIN OUR BOOK CLUB!

Our next Book Club meeting will be Thursday, February 9 at 2 PM. We meet in the conference room next to the Pastor's Study. We will be discussing *Five Smooth Stones* by Ann Fairbairn. From there, we will select our next book.



SERVICE SCHEDULES

DATE	USHERS	NURSERY	READER
February 5	Dave Meehl, John Wilcox, Roger Meehl, Dianne Tyler, Sophie Tyler	Katie Gallagher and Ali Nagle	Becky Oyler
February 12	Bob & Sandy Nelson, Ron Blosser, Al Mohnkern, Vivian Daughrity	Barb & Harry Blount	Kyle Regan
February 19	Vern & Kitty Hurlburt, Joe & Sue Spacht, Garrett Connors	Jan Trojanowski and Leila Zorzie	Char Manison
February 26	Kathy & Lynn Peterson, Barb Blount, Steve Seymour, Cole Elkin	Debra & Scott DeVore and Taylor Alcorn	Don Tyler
March 5	Dave Meehl, John Wilcox, Roger Meehl, Dianne Tyler, Sophie Tyler	Beth & Steve Seymour	Christy Mayes
March 12	Bob & Sandy Nelson, Ron Blosser, Al Mohnkern, Vivian Daughrity	Lisa Kelly and Marissa	Dean Taylor
March 19	Vern & Kitty Hurlburt, Joe & Sue Spacht, Garrett Connors	Bob Boyd & Mary Ann Reid-Boyd	Bryan Lash
March 26	Kathy & Lynn Peterson, Barb Blount, Steve Seymour, Cole Elkin	Patti & Joe Kuna	Kathy Taylor

CHURCH OFFICERS		
2017	2018	2019
SESSION		
Vern Hurlburt	Rodger Hazen	Marcia Regan
Roy Orton	Craig Carlson	Bryan Lash
Doty Wagner	Scott Connors	Joe Spacht
<i>vacant</i>	Patti Kuna	<i>vacant</i>
DEACONS		
Barbara Blount	Sally Murray	Terri Andrews
Ashley Connors	Kathy Taylor	Charlotte Manison
Becky Oyler	Jean LaFuria	Leila Zorzie
Kathy Peterson	<i>vacant</i>	Barb Zorzie
Carol Ripley	<i>vacant</i>	<i>vacant</i>
TRUSTEES		
Bob Murray	Fred Lucore	Joe Kuna
Al Walz	Tom Schenker	Andy Knight
Jerry Weinheimer	Jeff Hinman	Al Mohnkern
AUDITORS		
Abby Johnson	Yvonne Peck	Jean Bahm
PRESBYTERIAN HOMES REPRESENTATIVES		
Pauline Fisher and Doty Wagner		

“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 in the Church Office at office@fpcne.org and we'll post it for you.

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Send some unexpected birthday love to this month to our beloved members.

John Sprague-----February 7

If you or a loved one would like to be included, please forward the pertinent information to the church office at: 814-725-8641 or office@fpcne.org. Thank you!

Happy Birthday!



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