



# The Exciter

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

No. 570

November 2017

## THE PASTOR'S PEN



“This is the Lord’s doing; it is wonderful in our sight.”  
Psalm 118:23

I was visiting a college campus recently when this verse caught my eye and dug itself into my heart. The Psalmist’s words were inscribed over a fireplace in a common area where students gather to study (or should I say, where students gather to fool around?!).

Psalm 118:23 is preceded by the repetitive declaration, “His [the Lord’s] steadfast love endures forever” and a recitation of the many ways in which the Lord showed his covenant love by protecting and liberating the Psalmist and seeing him through some very challenging times in the past and promising him a future that will also be covered by the Lord’s steadfast love. The past, present, and future are in God’s saving hands!

“This is the Lord’s doing; it is wonderful in our sight.” The Psalmist reminds us that the cornerstone of the Christian life is gratefulness. Everything we do as followers of Jesus Christ is born out of a grateful response for God’s goodness and grace to us; for God’s steadfast love.

“This is the Lord’s doing; it is wonderful in our sight.” This month, in which we celebrate the holiday of Thanksgiving, I would like to invite you to participate in a spiritual practice of giving thanks. Set aside a certain time of day, if only for a moment or two, for prayer. Look back on your life and be reminded of the ways that God delivered you. Look around you and give thanks for all that God has blessed you with: family, friends, material blessings, and a church family, to name but a few. You might even keep a journal to list and reflect upon the wonderful things that you have seen God do in your life. These memories will bolster you as you face current challenges.

What is it that is wonderful in your sight today? What has God done and is God doing in your life? God bless you as you take time to reflect and give thanks.

In the service of the King,

Pastor Gregg



Do you have a story to share about how God has delivered, protected and/or provided for you? 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.

**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.**

# CLERKS CORNER

Greetings to all of you! I hope that you are all doing well.

It is with mingled joy and sadness that I write to you today. As you may know, Patti Kuna has stepped down from Session and thus her position as Clerk of Session. I have been elected as your new Clerk of Session and will try my best to fill her large shoes, figuratively speaking. Patti has been such a wonderful and bright asset to our church juggling many hats in her various positions. We will definitely miss her competent efficiency and dedication on Session but are very happy and excited for her in her new role as Commissioned Lay Pastor to the First Presbyterian Church of Sugar Grove. Please continue to pray for Patti as she follows her faith journey. The good news is that Patti will continue as our church secretary and we will still get to see her in church at times as she maintains her status at FPCNE as an affiliate member.

Below is an update about what we are doing around the Session table and in the church:

The Capital Campaign is underway to pay for the improvements to our church property. The down spout/planter problem which caused water damage to the old Scout room and the brick work around the entire church and education wing have already been taken care of. The next phase of the plan is to shore up the ground around Baker Creek. Then finally, when everything is over, re-pave the driveway and parking areas. The Trustees have done an outstanding job of organizing all of the work to be done to our cherished property. If you haven't already, please prayerfully consider pledging towards this campaign.

The Membership Development committee hosted a committee fair in the Assembly room on Sept 10<sup>th</sup> in hopes of garnering interest in all things that our church has to offer.

Committees were highlighted but there are so many other ways to become involved through the various choirs, the Men's group, Presbyterian women or Square Circle.

September 17<sup>th</sup> was Back to Church Sunday, a nationwide campaign to invite people back to

church. The Membership and Development committee along with the Mission Committee called many people that we haven't seen in a while to see how their lives were going and invite them to come to church. For the callers, it was a wonderful way to re-connect and catch up with our members. I think that it's important for all of us to think about members that have not been to church in a while and not just on Back to Church Sunday. Statistics show that many of them want to reconnect but are looking for the right opportunity. Sometimes it's as simple as making a phone call. Think about who you might know that is looking for a connection or a place to belong and give them a call!

I also wanted to extend a great big thank you to Donna Banks, the Christian Education committee, and all of our Sunday School teachers for all the hard work and effort they have put in getting our Sunday School classes up and running! We are thankful for your dedication and service.

Please let me know if I can be of service to any of you, and I thank you in advance for patience as I learn the ins and outs of my new position of Clerk of Session. If you have any concerns or questions, please feel free to speak to me.

God Bless you and keep you,

*Marcia Regan*

*Clerk of Session*



## HELP WANTED!

The Trustees are looking for an individual to shovel the sidewalks and steps for the upcoming winter season. **This is a paid position.** If you are interested in learning more, please speak with Jeff Hinman, or call Patti in the church office: 725-8641.



# FPCNE MEMBER CELEBRATES UNIQUE MILESTONE



Lifelong member Bert Page became a centenarian on October 6, 2017. He was born at home on October 6, 1917, to Jessie and Robert Page. His younger sister is Betty Page.

Bert has been a member of this congregation since March 24, 1929, on which date he was also baptized. He was ordained as an Elder in January 1948 and served six years on Session. He served two more back-to-back terms on Session from 1992-1997.

Bert attended McCord School from First through Eighth grade. He is a NEHS graduate, Class of 1936. Bert has been a North East resident his entire life.

After high school, Bert attended Erie Business School. When his Dad passed away, Bert was compelled to take over the operation of the fruit farm on Brickyard Road. Originally, Page Fruit Farm was owned by Robert and his brother John Page. Upon Robert's death, Jessie inherited Robert's share and eventually gave it to Bert. Over time, Bert owned the entire farm.

The Page farm produced grapes, damson plums and prunes. During his adolescence, Bert, with the help of Betty, picked these crops after school. Their summer days were spent picking sweet and sour cherries. Bert and Betty were paid a bit more because their baskets didn't contain leaves or twigs.

On October 23, 1945, Bert married Frances Grabowski. They were married 63 years until Frances died on July 3, 2009. When Frances was the youth group leader, Bert was by her side assisting. He even went on retreats out of his devotion to the Lord, Frances, and the youth. Also memorable, was their annual "Fish Fry" Bert and Frances hosted at their house for those who attended the Greenfield Sunday school class.

At one point, Bert joined the Shriners. His Dad wanted to join too, but could not afford it. Nevertheless, his Dad supported and encouraged his son's participation.

Bert's favorite pastime used to be going to deer hunting camp (now it might be keeping current by reading the newspaper). He loved going to the camp, not to hunt, but to fraternize with "the fellas". Even so, he opted to bring along his gun in case he got lost in the woods. (Bert doesn't have it in him to shoot any sweet creature!)

Remarkably, Bert has never had the need for eyeglasses. He said they would just get in the way if he ever did need them. He doesn't consider himself much of a reader (except for newspapers), however, in the past several years, he has discovered the enjoyment of reading books.

Bert has many hours logged as a volunteer at the North East Railroad Museum and (again) enjoyed fraternizing with the guys there on Saturdays. He and his buddies gathered by the newspaper recycling shack, in all kinds of weather, to help people haul in their stacks of newspaper donations.

Today, Bert resides down the road at Brevillier Village in Ball Pavilion. He loves sitting in the hallway looking out the big glass windows. Betty also lives at Brevillier, in Barnabas Court South. On nice days, Betty takes him for walks outside to admire the manicured grounds and pristine lakeside views.

To celebrate Bert's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, our congregation participated in a card shower, and many congregants made personal visits.



## Happy 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Bert Page!



**BE SURE TO "FALL BACK" AT 2:00 A.M.  
ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5.**



Pastor Gregg D. Townsend

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

# SAMARITAN'S PURSE OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD



Our Mission Committee is once again promoting and participating in Operation Christmas Child sponsored by Samaritan's Purse. The campaign has already started and will end the week of November 13, 2017. As we approach the Advent season, the committee encourages you to give, as you are able, to the less fortunate in the world, many of whom are children.

Last year our congregation provided 65 boxes. This year the goal is just five more. We would like to get 70 boxes, which is one complete shipment. Won't you help? The boxes, pamphlets, instructions and name tags are in the Assembly room on the bell cabinet.

This year, there are a few wrinkles to the program. **NO toothpaste and NO candy** will be allowed due to customs regulations. Also, new this year are plastic boxes to pack, although the festive cardboard boxes are still an option.

Please join your church family in blessing a child with the hope and love of Jesus Christ our Lord.

## MISSION COMMITTEE NEWS

It's almost bell ringing season for The Salvation Army. What is The Salvation Army, and for what are the "red kettle" donations used?

For starters, The Salvation Army was established in 1865 as an evangelical part of the universal Christian church. Each year, almost 30 million Americans receive assistance from The Salvation Army. Assistance might be in the form of food for the hungry, relief for disaster victims, practical help for the disabled, outreach to the elderly and ill, clothing and shelter to the homeless, and opportunities for underprivileged children.



The Salvation Army's ministry is motivated by the love of God and its message is based on the Bible. Its mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in His name without discrimination.

According to their website, "The motivation of The Salvation Army is love of God and a practical concern for the needs of humanity. This is expressed by a spiritual ministry, the purposes of which are to preach the Gospel, disseminate Christian truths, supply basic human necessities, provide personal counseling and undertake the spiritual and moral regeneration and physical rehabilitation of all persons in need who come within its sphere of influence regardless of race, color, creed, sex or age."

It is important to know that whenever someone donates money into one of those highly recognizable red kettles, those funds support local services. The Salvation Army does not engage in national fundraising. Money collected in each community is dedicated to best serve the people in that community who are struggling with all kinds of personal disasters.

Here in our community, the North East Council of Churches has partnered with The Salvation Army to help it raise funds. Volunteers will be ringing the bell at Sander's Market during November and December.

Your mission committee is asking for your help in this effort. Our congregation's designated day to ring the bell is Friday, December 1, 2017 from 10:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. This day has been broken into one (1) hour blocks, so we are asking for you to give up one hour of your day to ring the bell. Also, we will be inside the lobby not outside. Eighty-seven percent (87%) of the money collected from this location will stay in North East to help those in need.

Do you have a heart to help others? This is a great use of one hour of your time! There is a signup sheet in the Assembly room on the bell cabinet waiting for you to "Ring the Bell!"





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## 2017 ANNUAL FAMILY ADVENT DINNER

As you are planning your Christmas holiday schedule, mark your calendar and plan to attend our annual Family Advent Program and Dinner on Sunday, December 3 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!



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## MUSIC MINISTRY NEWS

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

We need to rebuild most of our groups as we have lost members to college, moving, and other commitments. We hope you will prayerfully consider supporting and joining one of our music ministry groups. Please speak with director Jane Livingston for more info.

#### SING WITH THE CHANCEL CHOIR

We welcome and need more members, especially in our soprano and bass sections. The Chancel Choir sings in worship two to three times per month.

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 10:30 A.M. service on December 24. 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 7:30 P.M. We'd love to have some extra voices join us for Christmas.



#### RING WITH THE BELL CHOIR

**Bell ringing is fun!** We practice one hour per week, on Thursday evenings at 6:00 P.M. We welcome and need more members to help fill out our bell octaves. Our director and our experienced ringers will help you learn the ropes of ringing, and we'll start you out easy! The Bell Choir rings in worship once per month.

#### JOIN THE WORSHIP BAND.

College and moving has been tough on our worship band, and we need to fill nearly all our positions. We need a new drummer, bass player, and vocalist(s). And, we are always looking for new guitar players to add to our group. The Worship Band plays in worship each week. Please speak with Jane Livingston if you or if you know of anyone who might be interested.

#### HELP WITH KIDS' PRAISE

Are you good with kids? Come join us in the Sanctuary Sunday mornings at 9:00 A.M. We focus on teaching our children fun and upbeat "Sunday School classics" as well as exuberant, new songs. We plan to sing in worship about once per month.

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## 2018 PER CAPITA ESTABLISHED

The total apportionment per church member will be \$31.00 beginning in 2018. It is broken down as follows:

\$20.97	Presbytery
\$2.30	Synod of the Trinity
\$7.73	General Assembly



# PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN ACTIVITIES

The second Sunday of November (November 12), the Presbyterian Women will meet in the sanctuary directly after worship. We will discuss the disbursement of funds for a variety of mission projects. Please pray about the needs you might identify and come with suggestions.

We are also looking for a group of ladies who would like to learn how to utilize Shea butter brought from Ghana to make scented candles and soaps as a fundraiser for our mission in Ghana. Some experienced ladies from the Emmanuel Church in Erie are eager to show us! These women say it is an easy and fun project. Please let Billie know if you think this might be a nice opportunity for a small group to fellowship and make a significant contribution to our mission goal for the Wapuli Health Clinic. All the proceeds will help to bring the clinic up to the government standards that will enable them in turn to bring a physician to serve the needs of the people. What a worthy goal! This sounds like a perfect opportunity for some of our young mothers. Remember our children learn from us what is important in life, and to serve is doing God's work. Please consider this fun project!

We have also purchased Batik cloth from Ghana. Our hope was to take the fabric and make items for sale to raise money for the Wapuli Health Clinic. If you sew, have ideas, and are interested, let Pauline Fisher and Billie know.

We can do great things together. Can't wait to hear from several of you regarding these unique opportunities.

**The Presbyterian Women's Book Club** will meet on Thursday, November 9 at 2:00 P.M. in the conference room. They will be discussing *The Believers* by Janice Holt Giles. The Club will not meet in December, but will resume on January 11, 2018. If you would like to get a head start for the January club meeting, the book selection is *Beneath a Scarlet Sky* by Mark Sullivan.

## SERVICE SCHEDULE

DATE	USHERS	NURSERY
5-Nov	Dave Meehl, John Wilcox, Roger Meehl, Dianne Tyler, Sophie Tyler	Jenny & Pete Hirneisen
12-Nov	Bob & Sandy Nelson, Ron Blosser, Al Mohnkern	Bob and Mary Ann Reid-Boyd
19-Nov	Vern & Kitty Hurlburt, Joe & Sue Spacht, Garrett Connors	Jan Trojanowski and Kathy Taylor
26-Nov	Kathy & Lynn Peterson, Steve Seymour, Cole Elkin	Evelyn Daughrity and Carol Orton
3-Dec	Dave Meehl, John Wilcox, Roger Meehl, Dianne Tyler, Sophie Tyler	Barb & Harry Blount
10-Dec	Bob & Sandy Nelson, Ron Blosser, Al Mohnkern	Fred & Dianne Lucore
17-Dec	Vern & Kitty Hurlburt, Joe & Sue Spacht, Garrett Connors	Maddie & Debbie Hartner
24-Dec	Kathy & Lynn Peterson, Steve Seymour, Cole Elkin	Dave Meehl
25-Dec	NA	NA
31-Dec	Jerry Weinheimer, Bob Murray, Tom Schenker	Nancy Weinheimer

**THANK YOU FOR SERVING YOUR CHURCH!**



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