



The Exciter

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

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PASTOR'S PEN

Jesus said, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." (Matthew 9:37).

Over the past decade, I've prayed regularly (well, just about every day) for increased spiritual vitality and depth in our congregation's walk with God. God has set us in this place at this time to make devoted followers of Jesus. This can seem like such an arduous task. We are tempted to think of all that we don't have that we think we don't have all we need to complete our mission. After all, when hasn't the congregation said that it needs more time, more money, and more people? If we are not careful, we can become paralyzed by the thoughts of just how big the field is and how feeble and few we are. What difference can we make, we wonder?

Jesus, however, looked at the situation in the exact opposite way! Doesn't he always do this? To begin with, he saw the great needs around him as a "harvest" ready to be taken in. He didn't look at the world as if it were an empty lot covered with rocks, trash, and weeds. He saw a harvest just waiting to be gathered. The crops are there for the taking! Jesus' view of our task is completely optimistic. It is not an impossible challenge, but a great opportunity that is set before us.

The number there are of us and the amount of our resources matter little. When Jesus spoke the words of Matthew 9:37 he was talking to twelve very ordinary men, one of whom would later betray him. If Jesus could work with them, then he can certainly work with us!

The fact of the matter is that our congregation is doing a great deal of harvesting; we have been for over two hundred years now. Rather than lament any supposed defeats or worry about any possible obstacles, what would happen if we focused on the many ways that God is using us as instruments for his glory, channels of his grace, and witnesses who keep pointing others to Jesus?

Here are just a few of the ways I've been watching the harvest come in: We are giving gently used and new clothing to care for disadvantaged families. (Boy, are we ever giving! The room is overflowing!) We contributed backpacks filled with clothes and essentials for the children of our community. In late September we will participate in the Crop Walk which feeds the hungry. We will box up presents again during Advent to bring Christmas cheer to dozens of children in a developing nation. We make cherry pies by the thousands and this year our amazing Presbyterian Women used some of that money to send youth to a Christian summer camp. This winter we will make and serve meals to the homeless yet again. Next summer we will hopefully send another mission team to West Virginia to help build essential housing for those in serious need. Each Sunday the Word of God is preached and taught. The sacraments are regularly administered. We sing and ring praises to our Lord each Sunday led by remarkably talented musicians and singers. The homebound and sick and grieving are visited and cared for. Transient men and women are cared for and sometimes housed for a night or two. Those who are discouraged and depressed are encouraged (this has been a big part of my pastoral care over the past few years). We are openly talking about our financial giving and becoming a more generous and financially faithful congregation. Not only did we give \$35,000 during the Erie Gives day but our giving patterns are slowly changing as a congregation and some among us actually take seriously God's command that we joyfully give a tenth of our earnings.

I don't know for sure what you think when you read the above list, and perhaps you're one of those folks who likes to dwell on what isn't happening or isn't happening well enough to meet your standards. As for me, well, it all sounds to me like we are bringing in an abundant harvest. We are experiencing an answer to our prayers: increased spiritual vitality and depth in our congregation's walk with God. We are making disciples. Thanks be to God.

Pastor Gregg



VISIT US ONLINE AT WWW.FPCNE.ORG

CLERK'S CORNER



Greetings to you my church family!

I hope that the summer has been a pleasant one and that you all have enjoyed the slower pace that sometimes accompanies it. Autumn is quickly approaching and with it the start of a new year in the life of our church.

Speaking of new beginnings.... if you are not already engaged in the active life of the church now would be an excellent time to get involved! God is truly working within our church! There is so much happening and so many ways to become involved! Extend your faith journey by trying out one of the adult Sunday school classes. Perhaps you enjoy music. The Chancel Choir, the Bell Choir, and the Worship Team are always looking for new talent. Join the Men's group or attend a meeting of the Presbyterian Women or Square Circle. Join a church committee. Join the prayer chain. Maybe you'd even be interested in a leadership position as an Elder or a Deacon! There are so many ways that you can help out your church family! I hope that you will consider expanding your horizons and maybe trying something new as you glorify God in all that you do. Who knows? You might just discover your own personal niche within the church!

May God bless you and keep you,

Marcia Regan

Clerk of Session



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

RALLY DAY AND SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES BEGIN SEPTEMBER 9 AT 9:15 A.M.!

It's that time of year again - new beginnings, fresh starts and another exciting year of opportunities with your church family. On Sunday, September 9, a new Sunday School year will begin at the First Presbyterian Church of North East. Classes will begin at 9:15 A.M. for youth in Grades 6-12 and adults. Children in grades Pre-K – 5 will have class starting at 10:45 A.M.

The theme for Rally Day is **"SPICE UP YOUR FAITH LIFE WITH JESUS!"** Plan to stay for lunch after worship, as a special themed menu is planned for you and your family.

RALLY DAY MENU: "Kahlua Pig" pulled pork; BBQ ham; salad; cookies and drinks

Sunday School Schedule is as follows:



****NEW SCHEDULE CHANGE FOR YOUNGER ONES****

Grades Preschool – 2nd, and Grades 3rd – 5th will have class during the church service. The children will leave after the Children's Blessing and go to class. Classes will end at 11:45 A.M.

Teachers for Grades Preschool – 2nd will be: Kitty Hurlburt; Judy Schenker; Beth Seymour

Teachers for Grades 3rd-5th will be: Bev and Al Walz; Jenn McClure; Jenny Hirneisen

Grades 6th through High School and Adult classes will continue to meet at 9:15 - 10:15 A.M.

Decide to enliven your faith in Christ by taking advantage of the enriching Christian Education opportunities available to you and your family members.

PLEASE NOTE NEW SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

BEGINNING SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9:

9:15 A.M. – 10:15 A.M. – SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR GRADE 6 - ADULT

(Two classes: Grade 6 through 12; Adult)

10:00 A.M. – 10:30 A.M. – CHOIR PRACTICE

10:00 A.M. – 10:30 A.M. – FELLOWSHIP / COFFEE / REFRESHMENTS

10:30 A.M. – WORSHIP

10:45 A.M. – 11:45 A.M. – SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR PRESCHOOL - GRADE 5

(Two classes Pre-K through Grade 2; Grades 3-5)



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PASTOR'S BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS 9:15 A.M. BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 9

Bring your Bible and join adults of all ages for a time of studying God's Word. Specifically, the class will continue its study of Isaiah. If you do not have a Bible, please let Pastor Gregg know and one will be provided for you.

EVERY WEDNESDAY AT 10:00 A.M. FROM SEPTEMBER 12 THROUGH NOVEMBER 28

Join Pastor Gregg in the conference room Wednesday mornings for an up-close look at the Old Testament Prophetic books. Pastor Gregg will be your guide in making sense of some of the difficult portions of the Bible. He will be using some fun and exciting new materials!

EVERY THURSDAY AT 7:00 P.M. FROM SEPTEMBER 13 THROUGH NOVEMBER 29

Plan to attend this class called, "Hip Happenin' Theology!" Group members will dive into *The Screwtape Letters* by 20th century lay theologian and Christian apologist, C.S. Lewis. Participants are required to bring their own copy of the book.



Mark your calendars for September 16. You don't want to miss Bible Sunday. During the 10:30 A.M. service, children in Godly Play, Second Grade, and Sixth Grade will receive a new Bible from the Christian Education Committee.

CHURCH SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

Congratulations to the following students who have been awarded scholarships from the Carol Barber Holmes/Douglas Holmes Scholarship Fund and the Alice Hall Burrows Scholarship Fund:

- Amber McKenery** – SUNY Buffalo
- Brent Moore** – Villanova University, master's program
(Brent is the great-nephew of Alice Hall Burrows)
- Zach Rogers** – Slippery Rock
- Mark Townsend** – Calvin College

The interest earned annually from the two funds is used to provide these scholarships. Since 2004, when they were both set up, we have awarded over \$16,000 to our church family. These students have continued their education beyond high school in college, nursing, medical and master's programs. What a wonderful and blessed way to recognize their ambition and future endeavors!

Anyone at any time may donate to the principal of these scholarship funds to continue the mission of education. If you have any questions, please contact Sue Moore or Steve Seymour of the Church, Community & Mission Committee.

LIBRARY SPOTLIGHT: FALL INTO READING



Come visit us in the library! Take a minute to browse through the variety of books, DVDs, CDs and sermon recordings. Feel free to check them out for two (2) weeks. The ladies of the library look forward to seeing you!

The Library Board

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.



MUSIC MINISTRY NEWS

Our Music Ministry is gearing up for another terrific season, and we hope that you will prayerfully consider joining one of our choirs this fall. We have a core group of very dedicated members, but we'd love to add some new folks this year.

We have a variety of ways you can get involved in the FPCNE Music Ministry to serve the church and glorify God through music. Come join in the fun! Speak with our Director of Music Ministry Jane Livingston for more information.



SING IN THE 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 about two to three times per month. Speak with any choir members — they are great ambassadors and can give you many reasons to join the choir! Chancel Choir practice will resume on September 6 at 7:30 P.M.

RING IN THE BELL CHOIR

We are very fortunate at FPCNE to have a talented Bell Choir. But, it's difficult to play bell selections without enough ringers. We are really in need of additional members. We will teach you everything you need to know, and we'll start you out with the "easy" bells. It takes a little practice, but you'll soon get the hang of it. The entire choir will help you out! They are great teachers. The Bell Choir rings about once per month. Bell Choir practice will resume on September 6 at 6:00 P.M. with a bell cleaning party.

JOIN THE WORSHIP TEAM

Do you like to sing contemporary Christian music? Do you play drums, bass guitar, acoustic guitar, electric guitar or other instruments? We need to find a new drummer and bass player and would also like to add a vocalist or two to our Worship Team. The Worship Team practices on Sunday mornings at 9:30 A.M.

HELP WITH 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 four dedicated members who run the sound and audiovisual equipment at our worship service, 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.

MEN'S GROUP



The Men's group will resume at 8:00 A.M. on Sunday, September 9. Join a great bunch of men for meaningful conversation about the Bible and what it means for a guy to follow Christ in the 21st century.

NEW OFFICE HOURS

THE CHURCH OFFICE HOURS HAVE CHANGED with the start of the new Preschool year.

New office hours are:

MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY 9:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.



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GROW YOUR FAITH: GET INVOLVED WITH THE PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Greetings all Presbyterian Women of North East!

Cherry pies are now a grateful memory of our church community as many of us came together to roll, poke, fill, crimp and bake some 1,057 pies! Husbands, grandkids, friends and cousins were all a part of this successful project to raise mission dollars! Thank you to all who gave their time and found some joy in being a part of this very worthwhile undertaking. Also, we extend a special thank you to Ashley Connors who directed the project! **



This fall we have the same four circles that will meet monthly. These circles are:

- › Square Circle led by Dianne Ott
- › Book Club led by Margery Campbell
- › Quilting with Pauline Fisher
- › Knitting and Crocheting for Peace led by Billie Blosser

Look for the starting dates in the church bulletin or call the leader if you have any questions or plan to give one or more a try. We want to grow this fall in our participation of these faith-based opportunities for devotion, and service. Please make an effort to join or try all four!!

We have material from Ghana and hope to find some willing sewers to decide on a pattern for a carrying bag we might sell to raise monies for the clinic in Ghana. We are committed to seeing this clinic completed.

Might this be the year you join a circle? Study, fellowship, service in mission – these are the goals of Presbyterian Women. Be a part of the action – come on!

Billie Blosser

**** Note:** The cherry pie project caught the attention of our Synod. Following is a link to an article spotlighting our congregation found within the Trinity of the Synod's newsletter:

<http://www.syntrinity.org/featured/cherry-pie-sale-tasty-option-for-first-church-of-north-east-pa/>

A TIME TO CELEBRATE



Join us on September 16th at church as Jane Livingston celebrates her 25th year of music ministry to our congregation! Her role has evolved through the years and as a result Jane, wearing many hats, now orchestrates our entire music program! Her devoted efforts add joy and meaning to our worship services.

We will honor Jane during our worship time and celebrate with a tea afterwards. A letter concerning this should have been mailed to your home but if you have forgotten the details of how you might participate, see Dianne Tyler or Marcia Regan. (Jane is aware of the recognition but not the details!) This is an event you will want to share in! Hope to see you there!

*"Next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise.
The gift of language combined with the gift of song was given to man
that he should proclaim the Word of God through music."*

~ Martin Luther



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REMINDER FROM THE TRUSTEE BOARD

Our Trustees remind the congregation it is necessary to fill out a “CHURCH USE APPLICATION” form if you want to use any part of the church (e.g. wedding showers, family parties, etc.), or if you wish to borrow tables and/or chairs for personal use. This required form may be obtained from the church office. The Trustees will then review your application and follow up with you as soon as possible. Thank you.



MANY THANKS FROM THE TRUSTEES



A shout out to all the folks who gave their time and energy to help at the Trustees’ Work Day in May! Together, we were able to repair the parking signs, fill in ruts, reseed the front yard, patch holes in the driveway, raise the garden, replant the planter by the ramp, work in the front gardens and plant a new, beautiful tree. Does all this sound fun? (It was!) You may have a chance to volunteer at a future Trustees’ Work Day. Watch for information this fall.

A special THANK YOU goes out to those who volunteered:

Congregation members:

- Kathy and Lynn Peterson
- Cindy Lilly
- Bob Murray

Trustees:

- Andy Knight
- Vern Hurlburt
- Fred Lucore
- Al Mohnkern
- Tom Schenker
- Jeff Hinman (President).

Thank you, too, to Jeff Hinman for the coffee, juice, water and donuts, and for organizing this productive day!

SERVICE SCHEDULE

DATE	USHERS	NURSERY
September 9	Ron Blosser, Al Mohnkern	Jenny and Pete Hirneisen
September 16	Vern & Kitty Hurlburt, Joe & Sue Spacht, Garrett Connors	Jan Trojanowski and Kathy Taylor
September 23	Kathy & Lynn Peterson, Steve Seymour, Cole Elkin	Barb and Harry Blount
September 30	Jerry Weinheimer, Bob Murray, Tom Schenker	Fred and Dianne Lucore
October 7	Dave Meehl, John Wilcox, Roger Meehl, Dianne Tyler, Sophie Tyler	Maddie and Debbie Hartner
October 14	Ron Blosser, Al Mohnkern	Dianne Tyler and Sophie Tyler
October 21	Vern & Kitty Hurlburt, Joe & Sue Spacht, Garrett Connors	Tom and Jenn McClure
October 28	Kathy & Lynn Peterson, Steve Seymour, Cole Elkin	Krissy Cole-Lane and John Luchs

“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.



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