



CIRCLEVILLE
Presbyterian Church

Pres-Line

Volume 16, Issue 3

134 E. Mound St., Circleville, OH 43113

Dec. 2017 Jan. 2018



A silent night, a star above,

a blessed gift of Hope

and Love.

Wishing you a

Blessed Christmas!



To our church family,

*Wishing you and your loved ones a
joyous Christmas season, and a new year
filled with hope and God's blessing.*

From your church staff.

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

It's here at long last, the most wonderful time of the year, and no, it's not Christmas...not yet at least. The most wonderful time of the year for me is Advent, the four weeks leading up to the celebration of the birth of Jesus in which God invites us to enter more deeply into longing. I confess I get a little cranky hearing all the Christmas music in coffee shops and retail stores the moment November 1 rolls around. But the reason I get cranky is not because I don't love Christmas. I do love it. I just want it celebrated at the proper time. By jumping past Advent to Christmas we do our hearts a disservice. It's like skipping to the climax of a movie, wanting the resolution of a story without the conflict it takes to get there. Yet the stories we love most are those in which the outcome seems impossible because the struggle is so great. Advent is the season in which God invites us to recognize and honor the struggle. Gifts are most meaningful when we have to wait for them, when we allow our hearts to long for that which we do not yet have. In our "buy with 1-click culture," to purposefully wait for unmet desires is both counter-cultural and profoundly freeing.

There's a painful freedom that comes from recognizing our unmet desires. We recognize that all things are not well. We express our grief in the Advent hymn, "O Come, O Come Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel that mourns in lonely exile here." Despite all that we have and the blessings we enjoy, God's promises of freedom have not been fully realized—certainly not for everyone. In this season God invites us into solidarity with those in exile, those who have suffered loss, those oppressed by the powerful, and those imprisoned by addiction and inequality. Recognizing this pain in our own lives and that of our neighbors drives us to prayer and invites us to hope that God might still come.

This Advent we will be following Israel in exile with the prophet Isaiah as our guide. Spend some time pondering Isaiah 64:1-9, 40:1-11, and 61:1-4, 8-11. Let these poems awaken in you the painful reality that so many of God's promises have yet to be realized here and now. Every hungry mouth attests to this fact. Every senseless act of violence is a reminder that we are a people still waiting for our long-expected Jesus. Let that pain awaken hope within you that God might fulfill the promise to "cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations" (Isaiah 61:11).

When we awaken to Advent hope, we find freedom. For in recognizing our unmet desires, we do not remain passive, leaving the world in the loneliness of exile. Instead in solidarity with the pain of the world, we freely join the struggle, and hasten the day when God's promises are a reality. I have been delighted to see in my first weeks as pastor of Circleville Presbyterian Church that you are not a passive people, sitting on your hands until Jesus returns. Three days a week, our church doors open to feed anyone who is hungry. What better testimony could there be that we are in solidarity with the needs our community? My hope this season and in the months to come is that as a church we might enter more deeply still into the longings of our hearts and the pain of this world. For when we do, I believe we will find Jesus who is always present with us in the struggle.

This Advent, don't jump too quickly to Christmas. God's gifts are coming. God's promises will one day be here. Until then, may we enter more deeply into the struggle, knowing that this is precisely where we will meet our Lord.

In Our Thoughts and Prayers

Caring Touch

Linda Stevenson

Clearmont Retirement Village

Doris Gruebel

Circleville Care & Rehab

Judy Palm

Glendora

Woody Jones

Logan Elm Health Care

Tom Cooper

Donald Maxson

Nancy Weitendorf (Sue Twining's mother)

Pickaway Manor

Mildred Dyer (Blaine Keckley's mother)

Doris Luna

Gwen Painter

Sharon Ryan

Convalescing

Bill Campbell

Carol Campbell

Lou Ann Clark

Scot Clydesdale

Martha Gearhart

Jim Hartley

Jack Hooks

Marcella Hostetler

Barb Hull

Lois Jones

Ron Knecht

Mitch McAlister

Jimmie McKelvey

Dorothy Sampson

Nancy Schneider

Frank Seimer

Jual Tucker

Kim Williams

Martha Wolfe

Also Convalescing

Eloise Beers (Kathy Studebaker's mother)

Charley Edgar & Corrine Edgar

Marty (Ward) Hart (Marcella Hostetler's sister)

Wendy Jordan

Betty Topliff (LibbyRushley's mother)

**We are sorry if we have missed anyone!
If you want someone added or
removed, PLEASE call the church
office.**

CAROLING

On Sunday, December 17, all church members, youth and children of every age are invited to go Christmas Caroling to our church shut-ins and sages. This annual event is sponsored by Congregational Care Team. We will meet at church in Campbell Hall at 4:00 p.m. to organize and then go in teams to various homes. Upon completion, we will rejoin at church for supper and decorating of Christmas cookies. Please wear any fun Christmas garb and accessories. The more the merrier!!

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM



"Let's go to Bethlehem! Let's see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

Luke 2:15 NLT. Mark your calendars for **December 17th** during the **11:00 service**.

The youth of the congregation will be presenting a Christmas program called "Come to Bethlehem and See". Enjoy familiar music and a story that is timeless. We are looking forward to sharing this special time with each of you.

SOME CHANGES

Rev. Joel Esala

circlevillepastor@gmail.com

614-440-2221

Steve Johnson

offthebeatenpathcoffee@aol.com

Bob Sneed

rbsneed42@gmail.com

Jennifer Sneed

jadsneed@gmail.com

13TH ANNUAL MOUND STREET CHURCHES' FOOD DRIVE

On **Saturday, December 16, 2017**, please consider participating in the 13th Annual Mound Street Food Drive to benefit the Pickaway County Emergency Clearinghouse Food Pantry. Please drive up and drop off non-perishable items or make a monetary donation at any of the four churches on Mound Street, in Circleville, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Any non-perishable item would be appreciated. Items on the most wanted list include: peanut butter; jelly; saltine crackers; cornbread; instant potatoes; hamburger helper; other boxed dinners; canned vegetables; canned fruit; canned meats; pasta; canned soups with meat; canned pasta with meat; and navy beans. Cleaning and personal products such as soap, detergent, shampoo, paper towels, and toilet paper also would be appreciated.

2018 COFFEE HOUR/FLOWER CALENDAR

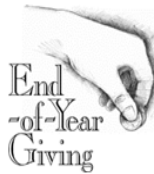
Sign-up sheets are available on the bulletin board in the office for 2018. Please stop by or call the office (740-474-4791) to reserve your special date to honor loved ones with fresh flowers for Sunday worship service (ordered from Wagner's Flowers by the office) and/or to volunteer as host or hostess for Coffee Hour. For flowers, please make a note if you are ordering flowers yourself. **DON'T WAIT FOR THAT SPECIAL DATE!**

CHRISTMAS CARDS

Once again we invite members and friends to send or bring their Christmas cards to the church to post on our window. Pictures are welcome.

2017 CONTRIBUTIONS

Contact the church secretary if you need to check on your pledge status to assist you in your year-end giving. To comply with the IRS report on your final 2017 Contribution Statement, only those gifts placed in the offering on Sunday, December 31, brought to the office through Thursday, December 28, or postmarked no later than Saturday, December 30 will be applied. January 2018 contributions will not qualify for 2017, even if your check is predated to 2017 or was actually written in 2017. Final Contribution Statements will be available for **PICK-UP here at the church** no later than the middle of January. Out of state statements will be mailed.



Christmas Eve
6:45 p.m.
December 24, 2017



28th Annual Cookie Walk
Saturday, December 9,
9:00 a.m.

Campbell Hall

Cookie Walk will soon be here. Presbyterian Women are having their annual cookie walk Dec. 9, 2017 from 9-12. There will be lots of homemade goodies for you to purchase. We hope that all you bakers will donate a batch of your favorite cookies to share. Donations can be brought to the church on Dec. 7th or 8th. If you would like to help with the cookie walk, please contact Meg Rorick 614-446-1741.

COOKIE GIFT CERTIFICATES

New to Cookie Walk this year are Cookie Gift Certificates. These are available for you to purchase 1, 2 or more pounds of cookies at \$8.00 a pound and give the certificate to a friend, neighbor, or co-worker to come on Saturday and choose their own box of cookies. If you are interested in purchasing one of these certificates, please contact Carla Mavis 740-418-4750.

ADVENT CALENDAR OF DEVOTIONS

The Discipleship and Spiritual Formation Team has purchased an advent gift for each family this year. Beginning on Sunday Dec. 3, 2017, copies of a calendar of devotions will be available for each family by a Presbyterian author, Donald K. McKim, who has written more than 30 books. This annual favorite includes a passage of Scripture, a short devotion, and a closing prayer for each day of the season. In honor of the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, the selections for 2017 reflect the writings of that time. It is our hope that these will encourage you to reflect and understand more deeply the gift of Jesus. Copies will be available on the tables in the back of the sanctuary and on the table in the entry. Pick up yours and enjoy!

ADVENT BRUNCH

Advent Brunch will be Dec. 3, 2017 at 10:00 between services. Come and have breakfast and begin the Advent season with your church family. There will be breakfast casseroles, muffins, sausage gravy and biscuits, drinks and fun! Stay after the early service or come early for the late service. We hope to see all of you there!!!!

HATS, MITTENS, AND GLOVES



It's time to warm the hands and heads of the youngest people in Circleville. Presbyterian Women are collecting children's hats, mittens and gloves for the Head Start program. Donna Solovey will take your donations and see that they are distributed to the children that participate in the program. There is a basket under the bulletin board at the top of the stairs in the main entrance for your donations. We will collect them until Dec. 3, 2017 so they can be given out during the holiday happenings at Head Start. Child sizes are important for the little ones, so the fit is proper and safe. If you have any questions, please contact Carla Mavis 740-418-4750.

THANK YOU

Dear Presbyterian Friends,
Thank you so much for all your cards, prayers, and words of comfort during George's long illness and his passing on Oct. 12th. Your generous gift of food was also very much appreciated. Our sincere thanks again.

In Christ's Love,
Wanda Butler and family

SCIOTO VALLEY PRESBYTERY MISSION TRIP

I have been asked to share some of my experiences from the Scioto Valley Presbytery Mission Trip to Gatlinburg, Tennessee. The trip was made in response to the wildfires that occurred in November, 2016. Thirty people were members of the Mission Team. We were told that the fires caused 14 deaths and destroyed 2700 structures in the Gatlinburg/Pigeon Forge area.

During the week, we divided into numerous groups for our work. All day Monday and on Tuesday morning, I worked with a group on a partially rebuilt house that was literally being built into the side of a mountain. Despite the fact that the house was only partially done and the roof was leaking, three adults and a child were living in the house. They had previously spent months living in an 8 x 10 shed. The house was cold and the outside temperature was in the 50's on the days we were there. I heard the phrase "Mountain Tough" and I definitely think it applied to these people and the others we met during the week. From this house where we installed windows, we could see three other properties across the hollow. On these three properties, you could only see the concrete foundations of the homes that were destroyed by the fire. We were told that the owners of one of these homes perished in the fires. This really brought the tragedy and its impact home for me. Despite the loss, we witnessed people who remained positive and determined.

Our group worked at another house the rest of the week. Again, the house was literally being constructed on the side of the mountain. The owner was a 71 year old gentleman named Noel. This gentleman had a great faith and was a gentle soul. He told us about a couple who had lost their home and who were mad at God and quit going to church. Noel stated that he was not mad at God. He did not understand why the fire had destroyed everything he owned, but he still believed that God had a plan. Noel truly knew that life itself was more important than things. Despite being at an age where most of us would not even consider starting over, Noel was working with a friend and volunteers (when available) to rebuild the house for his wife. During the days when we worked at Noel's, we sat on the deck that would become a sun room while we ate lunch. On that deck in the front of the house, with a wonderful view of the mountainside, I could truly feel God's presence.

The job at Noel's was described to us as a roofing job. When we approached his house on the first day, I immediately concluded that this was not a roofing job that I (or any other volunteer) would want any part of. The roof had an extremely steep pitch and if you fell off you would fall 20 -30 feet onto the side of a short steep hill that after you rolled three or four times you would drop off another 30 feet. Noel and his friend Sammy were working on this roof without any safety harnesses. Not only could I not get up on that roof to work, I couldn't even watch them work. Fortunately, they had OSB (it's like plywood only stronger) on site that we could use to put on the exterior walls. We spent the rest of the week putting up OSB. Part of our crew was comfortable enough to work off of ladders and scaffolding on the exterior walls. The first day we fixed a problem created because the trusses were not placed on the house correctly. It made our day when Sammy came over to look at what we had done and exclaimed, "Praise the Lord, that would have taken me a week to fix."

The people on the mission trip who I was lucky to work with during the week are all wonderful people. To give an example of how selfless they are, I will share a story. As we worked on Monday, it rained all day. We all got soaked and were pretty cold. Dave Lewis, one of the other men working on our crew, had planned ahead and brought an extra coat and a change of dry clothes. Dave was just as soaked as I was, but rather than put his dry clothes on, he offered them to me. I had to laugh and told him to put his own dry clothes on. Dave, who has been on all 20 of the Scioto Valley Presbytery mission trips, didn't think twice about putting my interests before his own.

I would invite anyone who would be able to spend a week in October taking this trip to do so. It is the most rewarding, selfless thing I could do. I have gotten so much more than I could ever give. The sleeping conditions are spartan, but the company and food are great. God's love that I have felt from the people who go on these trips and from the people who have allowed us to help them has filled my soul. Talking with Noel during a break one day when he shared with us pictures of the damage done by the fires and his great faith despite his suffering was one of the most meaningful and touching sermons I have ever received. Noel truly "took me to church". If you think that going on a mission trip would be too much work or would be too much of a sacrifice, let me tell you a secret. It's the easiest, most rewarding work you could possibly do.

Sam Wilson

JOY OFFERING

As you think about your list for Christmas gifts, remember all the pastors who have touched your lives and helped you in your faith journey. Your gift to the Joy Offering will help provide for retired ministers and help pastors who are serving now and facing unexpected financial needs. Your gifts will also help educate and provide leadership development to students at Presbyterian related racial and ethnic schools. Please use the envelopes mailed in this Pres-line or look for them in the pews and return them on Christmas Eve. PushPay is also an option, be sure to note your gift is for the Joy Offering. Thank you for supporting the past, present and future leaders of our church!

WINTER IS COMING!

If you read this before December 2nd it's not too late to donate a new coat or pair of pajamas for a child in our community. Any size or any style will be greatly appreciated. Bring your gifts to the portico doors between 9 and 11 on Dec 2nd and a Mission Team member will take it inside for you. Or you can take it directly to PICCA at 469 E. Ohio Street or mail a cash donation to PICCA and it will be used to buy additional items. Help meet this need and keep a child warm this winter!

HANDBELL CONCERT

The Lancaster Handbell Ensemble will perform a concert on December 10 at 3:00 p.m. at Circleville Presbyterian Church. The title of the concert is "Come To Your Senses" and will feature carols that remind us how our senses (sight, sound, smell, taste and touch) play an important part in the beauty of the Christmas season. The sixteen member auditioned ensemble play on five octaves of handbells and handchimes. Come and enjoy the ensemble as it plays familiar carols including "Carol of the Bells", "Do You Hear What I Hear", "Angels We Have Heard on High", "The Holly and the Ivy", "Comfort, Comfort Ye My People" and several other tunes which will appeal to your senses. A free will offering will be accepted.



134 East Mound Street P O Box 147 Circleville Ohio 43113
740-474-4791 Fax - 740-474-1404

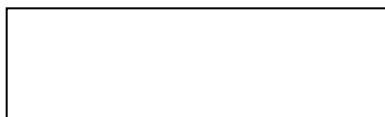
E-Mail - circpres@frontier.com

Website – www.circlevillepresbyterianchurch.com

Please remember to contact the church office with your new address. As bulk mail, the Pres-Line is not forwarded and is returned to the church for a fee.

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Looking ahead to.....February/March

February 14 Ash Wednesday
 18 First Sunday of Lent
 25 Second Sunday of Lent

March 4 Third Sunday of Lent
 11 Fourth Sunday of Lent
 18 Fifth Sunday of Lent
 25 Palm Sunday