

The Focus

Forest Grove Presbyterian Church

March 2017

A Note From the Pastor

“Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter— when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?” Isaiah 58:6-7

Recently I saw the movie “Hidden Figures” that centers on three female African American mathematicians who overcame prejudice in the form of sexism and racism at the prestigious NASA space program during the turbulent 60s. It didn’t take home any Oscars but this film did have a profound impact on the lives of its viewers causing them to erupt into spontaneous applause at its conclusion. All those involved with its production did a magnificent job presenting this compelling story. The Academy did honor the film’s main character, Katherine Johnson, during the presentation for Best Documentary by Taraji P. Henson, Janelle Monae and Octavia Spencer, the lead actors in the film. Dr. Johnson is now 98, has written countless research papers, earned five honorary doctorates, received the Medal of Freedom and is a life-long Presbyterian.

It’s hard to remember just how rough the 60s really were, especially being a part of the privileged white majority living in comfortable Central Bucks County. But God was at work through individuals like Katherine Johnson changing the culture. The power of one can make a profound difference.

During this season of Lent, we are again made keenly aware of the power of one as we journey with *the One*, Jesus Christ, as he changed the world by journeying to Jerusalem and the cross. Jesus certainly has made the most significant impact on human history, but his message for all to hear was and is that everyone matters and should be treated accordingly. That’s what it means to love one another.

So as you go into this season of preparation for the celebration of Easter, remember the power of one in Jesus Christ who calls us to be a power of one, making a difference by reflecting Jesus’ light. During Lent we often think of giving up something in order to grow closer to God. Here are some suggestions on what you might give up that will help you be a power of one and will also draw you nearer to God.

Give up harsh words: use generous ones.

Give up unhappiness: take up gratitude.

Give up anger: take up gentleness and patience.

Give up pessimism: take up hope and optimism.

continued...

Give up worrying: take up trust in God.
Give up complaining: value what you have.
Give up stress: take up prayer.
Give up judging others: discover Jesus within them.
Give up sorrow and bitterness: fill your heart with joy.
Give up selfishness: take up compassion for others.
Give up being unforgiving: learn reconciliation.
Give up words: fill yourself with silence, and listen to others.

Have a blessed Lent.

Yours in Christ's service,

Pastor Su

Early Morning Communion

As we make our way through Lent, the Lord's Supper is being celebrated each Wednesday at the church. The brief half-hour service begins at 7:30 AM on Wednesday March 8, 15, 22, 29, April 5 & 12. This service is a way to take a mid-week pause to remember and share in God's steadfast love.

Blessing the Dust

A Blessing for Ash Wednesday by Jan Richardson

*All those days
you felt like dust,
like dirt,
as if all you had to do
was turn your face
toward the wind
and be scattered
to the four corners
or swept away
by the smallest breath
as insubstantial—*

*Did you not know
what the Holy One
can do with dust?*

*This is the day
we freely say
we are scorched.*

*This is the hour
we are marked
by what has made it
through the burning.*

*This is the moment
we ask for the blessing
that lives within
the ancient ashes,
that makes its home
inside the soil of
this sacred earth.*

*So let us be marked
not for sorrow.
And let us be marked
not for shame.
Let us be marked
not for false humility
or for thinking
we are less
than we are*

*but for claiming
what God can do
within the dust,
within the dirt,
within the stuff
of which the world
is made.*

Adult Education Class on Faith Traditions

We live in an increasingly religiously diverse society. We encounter people who worship God in ways that seem alien and foreign to us and whose ideas of God differ drastically from our own. We look at our neighbors who come from different religious backgrounds and are curious about their practices and faith tradition but are hesitant to ask questions.

Forest Grove is offering a class on different faith traditions that surround us so we can ask those questions. We'll spend time investigating and discussing the history and theology of different faith traditions and how these traditions relate to our own understanding of what it means to be a Christian. Mormonism, Islam, Christian Science, as well as the African American Christian tradition will be discussed. The class will meet after worship in Fellowship Hall, starting March 19th and continuing through April 2nd. All are welcome and we hope to see you there!

~ Led by Kate McShane, Seminary Intern

New Middle School Youth Program

It is a joy to have children running around the church and as a congregation we have promised to care for them and nurture them. Certainly that is happening on Sunday morning in many ways but we are starting a new initiative just for the turbulent middle school growing challenges. Led by Pastor Su with parental assistance, 5th – 8th graders will meet on the second Friday of the month, 6:00 – 7:30, beginning in March. This will be a time to deepen friendships with each other and God as well as addressing issues that are significant to this age group.

The schedule is as follows:

Friday, March 10, 6:00 – 7:30: Kick-Off. We'll meet each other, play some games and wrestle with some cooperative challenges.

Friday, April 14, 6:00 – 7:30: Mission Night. We'll engage in a fun mission project together.

Friday, May 12, 6:00 – 7:30: Rock Wall Climbing. We will meet at Doylestown Rock Gym, 3853 Old Easton Rd. Doylestown. Cost: \$20.

Friends are very welcome to participate!



Vacation Bible School: July 17-21

SAVE THE DATE

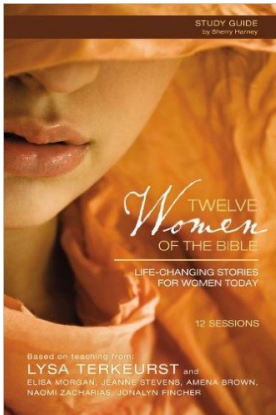
VBS 2017 is coming! Plans are already being made to explore God's amazing love with our 4 year olds through sixth graders. We will meet each day from 9:00 AM – noon when the children will experience an energizing, Bible-based program that will give them an opportunity to grow in their understanding of God and God's love for us in Jesus.

Once again Kim King is our VBS coordinator. She is looking for volunteers to serve as group leaders, snack helpers, recreation leaders, and story tellers. Contact Kim, Su Fall, or the church office if you are interested in helping.

Remember, we supply the resources, you supply the love for God and children! Registration will be available soon including online.



Church Women - Join Us!



The morning group of Church WOMEN (Women of Mission, Education, and Nurture) has been participating in Pastor Su's weekly Bible study. We meet at 10am on Wednesdays at Buckingham Springs. Our extra-curricular activity has been to set a schedule to visit our homebound members. The focus is to spread some cheer among those who are no longer able to attend our meetings. In the end we have found that we have received as much cheer as we have spread!

The evening Bible Study meets on the third Tuesday of each month at the home of Marge Turner. Our next meeting is Tuesday, February 21 at 7:30. Our meeting starts with fellowship over dessert and coffee and we then move on to the study. It is a mix of video and discussion and is called Twelve Women of the Bible. Each chapter is self contained and anyone can join at any time. All women are invited!

Phyllis Scarpill notes that a thank you note was received from the group's donation to Bethana Home made in December.

“Celebrate the Light” Auction

Saturday, March 25 at 6:30pm

You are invited to an evening of fun, fellowship, and mission...an auction to raise funds for the summer mission trip. We hope this will be a special night and that you'll put it on your calendar and invite your family and friends! The mission trip this year will be to Leeds, Maine where the group will work with *Rural Community Action Ministry*.

On the 25th, doors will open at 6:30pm and the Silent Auction will begin. There will be snacks and desserts to nibble on while you browse the items. The live auction will start at approximately 7pm.

If you have an item or a talent or skill that you are willing to donate, please see a member of the Auction Committee.



We also want to let you know that we will be accepting payment in the form of cash or check, as well as credit card for this special event.

The Auction Committee: Carol Eckmeder, Martha Greenwood, Linda Bowers, Dee Tori, Marilyn Cook, Kim Wertz, Su Fall.

Donations received so far:

Peacock feather “bouquet” in a vase
2 New Vera Bradley Bags
2 Hours Help/Training-Microsoft Excel
Homemade Easter Eggs
Hand Knit Infinity Scarf
A long weekend at a
 Pocono Vacation House on a lake
Toolbox filled with useful items
Children’s Book “Basket”
 focused on sharing
A cookbook “Basket”
Shortbread Cookie Baker
Tickets to the Michener Museum
Coupons for free water-ice
 from Annie’s
Help to get started with Geneology

A loaf of Kate’s Homemade Bread
A “Basket” of children’s games/toys
Vintage Pins
Party Light 5-candle holder
 with candles (new)
Signed photograph of Debbie Reynolds
Beautiful throw (new)
An art coffee-table book
Ceramic Fountain
Gift Card-Outback Steakhouse (\$50)
Marion Foster’s Award Winning
 Pound Cake
Carol Eckmeder’s Famous Cheesecake
Decorative Garden Flag
A Kitty Fountain and “Basket”
A “Summer Day” Basket
“Fair Trade” Goods Basket



SPECIAL OFFERINGS

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

One Great Hour is a Christian effort to empower, provide water, supply food, and give relief from disasters.



Water Projects

Currently there are projects in over 20 countries around the world.



Hunger Relief

The hungry are being fed around the world.



Disaster Relief

Not just immediate responses, but long-term commitment.



Empowerment

Helping men & women provide for their families.

Feeding the hungry, helping people build up their own livelihoods, responding to disasters—these are all ways that your gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing are changing lives, changing communities, and changing the world. Since 1949 Presbyterians have followed Jesus' command to care for others by joining with millions of other Christians sharing God's love with our neighbors-in-need around the world through this special offering. Every gift made to One Great Hour of Sharing will meet the needs of people. Coin banks are available in Fellowship Hall. The offering will be collected on Easter Sunday, April 16, during worship.

Per Capita Apportionment Sunday

March 26, 2017

In essence, per capita is a set amount of money (apportionment) per member that congregations pay to the larger Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Every Presbyterian shares in the benefit of the PC(USA)'s system of government, so every Presbyterian is asked to share the expenses associated with coordinating and performing the functions of that system.

Why Per Capita?

**Per Capita
is part of the glue
that holds
Presbyterians
together.**

Per capita exists as a way for all Presbyterians to share costs that belong to the whole church, specifically the administrative costs, to give meaning to the interdependent nature Presbyterian polity. Per capita is part of the glue that holds Presbyterians together. It exists to allow the whole church to share equitably in those things that make us Presbyterian:

- our theological identity
- our connectedness
- our system of mid councils that allow elders and ministers together to discern the mind of Christ
 - our ecumenical connections that make us part of the church universal
 - our core structures that keep us together as a church
 - our call to work for full participation in decision making

Per capita allows us to work with other churches to further the mission of Jesus Christ around the world.

Exod. 30:11-16 – "...the rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less, than the half shekel [for the sanctuary]...."

1 Cor. 12:7 – "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good."

This year's per capita apportionment is \$27.10 per member.

64% to support the Presbytery of Philadelphia

8% to support the Synod of the Trinity

27% to support the General Assembly

Per capita apportionment contributions may be made to the church at any time. March 26 is the Sunday when we will dedicate these gifts.

God's Garden

For six years God's garden has been producing vegetables that have fed the hungry in Bucks County. It was a labor of love begun by the Mission Committee under the direction of Walter Cullerton and then taken up by Pastor Su. Several others have come to the garden to lend a hand with planting and harvesting. The Mission Committee is now looking for someone new to step into responsibility for the garden. The hundreds of pounds of produce don't just happen. It takes a great deal of work in order to bring it to harvest. Until someone feels God's call into this important ministry, the garden will remain covered. It has been suggested that the garden responsibility be divided so that the whole garden doesn't fall to one person. There are currently 14



rows that can be planted. Perhaps you would like to take responsibility for one or more. Perhaps you would like to lead a coordinated team. Responsibility includes planting, weeding, watering and harvesting. The time for planting is almost here. Please contact Pastor Su if you are interested in using your gifts to pursue this ministry. The garden has been an inspiring asset but what will it become?



Sunday, March 12

Benevolence Fund	
Balance @ 12/31/16	4,714
Receipts/Disbursements	
Balance @ 1/31/17	\$4,714

Operating Fund 1/31/2017	
Collections & Income	\$ 32,080
Large Fund Income	<u>1,625</u>
Total Income	33,705
Expenses	
Pastor Compensation	7,267
Staff	5,047
Office	1,079
Music & Worship	90
Christian Education	6
Property	1,436
Stewardship/Finance	20
Parish Life	
Other	
Total Expenses	14,946
Operating Surplus	18,759
Fund Balance @ 12/31/16	32,919
Fund Balance @ 1/31/17	51,677

The Still Small Voice

One of my favorite Bible verses is Isaiah 6:8: “Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?’ And I said, ‘Here am I. Send me!’” It is this verse that caused me to come across a couple of my other favorite verses recently. My Epiphany “star word” was TIME. I don’t have much, but I have time. “Send me!” During the last snow storm four of us, myself and three teenagers, bundled up and headed to Buckingham Springs with church directory in hand and a trunk full of shovels and salt. As we finished our fourth driveway, a neighbor stopped by. “My driveway is finished, but my neighbor, she is 92 and on oxygen. If you had the time I would be grateful if you would help her.” (Matthew 25:40 “The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’”) This felt like a no brainer. Obviously, we were compelled to help someone who needed it so badly. As we finished the driveway of that wonderful lady, she came out to thank us and asked “Would you please check on my neighbor? She has only just moved in and I don’t think she knows anyone nearby who can help her.” We looked at each other and nodded together. Of course, we can. This continued for 11 driveways! We were struck that day solidly by Matthew 22:39 “And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” Each person we touched that day was grateful, but first each person was more concerned for their neighbor than they were for themselves. We came home with very full hearts, deeply touched by a community so filled with the love and compassion that I want my children to experience and aspire to share. And it all started with TIME. *~Missi Dell’Orefice*



March Birthdays

3/1 - Dolores Albert	3/22 - Craig Jencks
Mary Bode	3/27 - Eloise Hyndman
3/2 - Duke Ripp	Shane Ledyard
3/6 - Hailey Guarracino	3/28 - Rick Wiggins
3/10 - Brad Sanders	3/30 - Regina Guarracino
3/11 - Dick Wright	3/29 - Evan Peters
3/12 - James Conner III	3/31 - Evin Kimbel
3/14 - Ava Closterman	Florence Hurst
3/15 - Sally Thiessen	
3/20 - Terry Holton	

March Schedules

Ushers

3/5 - Mike & Mitch Guarracino
3/12 - Paul Wachtendorf
Michael Myers
3/19 - Tony & Laura Visco
3/26 - Rick Wiggins
Dale Borneman

Nursery

3/5 - Sarah & Chris Lucera
3/12 - Carice Ledyard
3/19 - Kara Holton
3/26 - Kim Shvanda

Faithful Giving

Have You Considered Online Giving?

Looking for one less thing to think about when it's time to get ready for church? Online Giving can help! Our church offers this service and your contribution is debited automatically from your checking or savings account at whatever interval you'd like. Electronic giving offers convenience for you and much-needed donation consistency for our congregation. We currently have 6 families using this convenient service. Will you consider signing up?

Getting started is easy! Go to our church website (www.ForestGroveChurch.org). Click "Online Giving" near the top right of the screen. The page that opens will give you a full description of how online giving works. When you're ready, click the "Give Online Now" box and you'll be directed to the webpage where you'll enter your donation, frequency, and then your bank account details. You'll need the information that appears on your checks to complete the sign up process. We are not accepting credit or debit cards.

If you have any questions at all, please call Kim in the church office (215-794-8575) and she can walk you through the steps. We hope that you'll find this an easy and convenient way to fulfill your commitment to the church.

Your Own Bank's Bill-Pay System

Almost all banks have a bill-pay system that is free to use. Simply add "Forest Grove Presbyterian Church" to your list of payees, and you can have your bank send us a check directly! It's easy and we deposit these checks every week with our regular Sunday offering.

Giving Envelopes

Many in our congregation use cash and check to fulfill their commitments to the church. Some use traditional "Giving Envelopes" and some simply put their check in the plate. If you would like a box of weekly giving envelopes, numbered and assigned to your giving record, just let Kim in the office know. Boxes are available.

Whatever Works Best FOR YOU!

In the end, we are grateful for the faithful giving here at Forest Grove. We hope that these options make it easy and convenient for you. And, no matter how you give now, know that there are all of these options available. Some give weekly, some monthly, some once a year. Some give through their bank, some online, and others bring their offering in during the week. There are many options, and if you have any questions about these options, please feel free to contact the office.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5 9am- Jr./Sr. High Sunday School Confirmation Class 10am- Worship Service 10:15am- Sunday School	6	7	8 7:30am - Communion Service 10am Bible Study @ Buckingham Springs	9 9:30am - Worship & Music Meeting 7pm - Bells	10 6pm - MS Youth Group	11
12 9am- Jr./Sr. High Sunday School Confirmation Class 10am- Worship Service 10:15am- Sunday School 5pm - Confirmation/Mentors 7pm - Youth Group	13 1pm Auction Meeting	14 7pm - Property Committee Meeting	15 7:30am - Communion Service 10am Bible Study @ Buckingham Springs	16 10:30am - Deacons 7pm - Bells	17	18 8:30am Leadership Meeting
19 9am- Jr./Sr. High Sunday School Confirmation Class 10am- Worship Service 10:15am- Sunday School 11:30 - Adult Ed	20 9:30am - Mission Meeting	21 7pm - Stewardship	22 7:30am - Communion Service 10am Bible Study @ Buckingham Springs	23 6pm - Bells 7pm - Task- force Meeting	24	25 6:30pm - Auction Fundraiser
26 9am- Jr./Sr. High Sunday School Confirmation Class 10am- Worship Service 10:15am- Sunday School 11:30 - Adult Ed	27 10am - Mission Committee Meeting	28 11:45 - CE Meeting 7pm - Session Meeting	29 7:30am - Communion Service 10am Bible Study @ Buckingham Springs	30 7pm - Bells	31	1

March

Forest Grove Presbyterian Church

1856 Forest Grove Road

PO Box 462

Forest Grove, PA 18922

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

10am Worship Service

Church Office Hours

9am-2pm (Monday-Thursday)

Phone 215-794-8575

Pastor: Reverend Susan L. Fall

Email: pastorsu@forestgrovechurch.org

Administrative Assistant: Kim Wertz

Email: office@forestgrovechurch.org

www.ForestGroveChurch.org