



What's Happening at Bluffton Presbyterian Church

April 2015

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Thursday, April 2 – Maundy Thursday

Sunday, April 5 – Easter Sunday

3 Cents a Meal Offering

Choir

Lay Reader: Carol Enneking

Greeters: The Talavinia Family

Acolyte: Avery Talavinia

Sunday, April 12

Food Pantry

Special Music

Lay Reader: Diane Winebar

Greeters: The Gillen Family

Acolyte: Wyatt Marshall

Sunday, April 19

Choir

Lay Reader: Lin Rumer

Greeters: Tom and Marilyn Edwards

Acolyte: Jacob Szabo

Sunday, April 26

Praise Team

Lay Reader: Clair Winebar

Greeters: The Marshall Family

Acolyte: James Freidenberg

Sunday, May 3 – Communion

3 Cents a Meal Offering

Lay Reader: Jay McCracken

Happy
EASTER!

Mark Your Calendars!

- April 2 – Maundy Thursday Service – 7:00 PM
- April 3 – Good Friday Procession of Cross – 11:30 AM at St. Mary's Catholic Church
- April 3 – Community Good Friday Service – English Lutheran Church at Noon.
- April 5 – Easter Breakfast – 8:30 to 9:45 AM
- April 5 – Easter Egg Hunt – 9:30 AM
- April 8 – Stewardship Committee Meeting – 7:30 PM
- April 9 – Session Meeting – 7:00 PM
- April 12 – Congregation Meeting – Following Worship
- April 15 – Deacon's Meeting – 7:30 PM
- April 19 – Spring Potluck – Following Worship
- April 22 – Praise Team Rehearsal – 7:30 PM
- April 26 – Newsletter Deadline – CEGillen@MarathonPetroleum.com
- May 1-2 – 30 Hour Famine – Bluffton Presbyterian Church



Announcement Procedure

If you have an announcement to present in church during the month, get it to the church office by Wednesday morning so it will be announced by our Lay Reader.

Coffee Talk

Wednesday – McDonalds at 8:30 AM

Small Groups

Tuesday – Church Library at 6:30 PM

The fabric of the faith story

This is the third time that I am writing to you when the faith story changes in a matter of days. In the closing days of December it was moving from Christmas into Epiphany, from the old year to the new. At the end of January it was moving from Epiphany into Lent, from an Annual Report into a new year. This time it is more than from one season to the next. This week it changes from one day to the next through Holy Week. It changes from the day when I am writing the article, to the day it is submitted, to the day it is published.

And in Holy Week the change is striking. It is the matter of whether Jesus is alive or dead. Or dying.

So I need to address this matter of time. The problem comes from trying to tie the faith journey to a **specific** day, as if there are separate issues. While there are striking differences, as striking as life and death, the issue that I would raise with you is that **faith** is this *journey* through the midst of the seasons and days. Disparate, painfully disparate days. As wildly disparate as the waving palms on Sunday and the crucifixion on Friday. But the key is not the days; the key is *the journey*.

I was trying to think of an image or metaphor which got at this difference.

The image is fabric. Faith is not discrete events, it is a fabric. Woven. The threads bear the substance and the color of events and seasons. But faith is not a blot of color, nor is it the thread which bears the event or the season. Faith is bigger than Christmas, bigger than Easter, broader than Palm Sunday or the specifics of Maundy Thursday, or the brutality of Good Friday. It is bigger than a birth or death. Faith is all of these things and more.

Faith is the relationship with God which bears us through all these seasons and challenges.

This conclusion is helpful because I see all these life issues coming at us. Birth for the pastor in Perrysburg; a young child's life for a Pastor friend in Washington; a driver's license for my granddaughter; Sam, Emily and Jane coming back

from college; Dusty and Leslie planning their wedding; the seasons of health and illness as I have wrestled with bronchitis this winter; personal journeys in our midst which meet chemotherapy or surgery; and Charles's 98th birthday within two weeks.

While an issue may assault us, a challenge springs up, or a trial may drag along for a season; faith and life are this journey **across the whole progression**.

And through it all **God is with us**; in fact **God is God-with-us** and sustains us with life **and** calls us to a purpose which is larger than our personal perspective.

Holy Week presents us with a bewildering profusion of events in one week. But faith is more than any one event or season. Join us for the journey.

This brings us **to the second story** I need to tell.

Joy...

Having made a Lenten journey which was not based upon penitence, but was founded upon repentance and the new life in Christ, and shaped by aspiration to the kingdom life, we now journey into unknown territory. The new life. The resurrection. The Risen Lord is the **joy** of newness in the face of death. The joy of **the new** in the face of the old.

After a long dragged out winter, punctuated for me with these bouts of bronchitis, I am ready for Spring and **joy**. But the journey into joy is different when I am **not** indulging in self-blame ("Ah Holy Jesus, how has Thou offended, that we to judge Thee have in hate pretended? Who brought this on Thee – Alas my treason hath undone Thee"). The faith journey into Joy and New Life – is different if it is **not** founded upon self-blame.

Yet even when it is set free from blame, joy still has its challenge. That challenge is change! Change and Uncertainty.

The resurrection does present us with Joy in that Death is Un-done. But there is uncertainty. The new life is NEW. It is unsettled. Jesus is not dead, but the Risen Lord is not the same Jesus who walked with us by the shores of the lake. The risen Lord calls us forward to be what we will, and to do God's will. This call is more striking than the call to **follow him** on the road. We are now **sent** on that road.

The new life is more than **what we are freed from** (sin and death); it is what we are **free toward** (life and the Kingdom).

But note that the new life is not just freedom. (Go where you want...Do what you want.) The new life is a gift, but it is here with guidance – of where to go and what to do. Live the good news. Share with others. Live in grace and compassion. The new life is freed from sin and death, AND free toward life and the Kingdom (grace).

I invite you to a profound joy. Joy which faces challenge. Freedom, not only freed-from, but free-toward God's purpose. This is joy. This is the resurrection. This is faithful life!

Which brings me to the third discussion: It is dark and rich and faithful.

The most significant (theological) day of the year which is never seen

Within a few days of receiving this newsletter the most significant day of the Christian year will slip by without notice. Without remark. **Unseen**. This is unfortunate. You should be saying: how did I miss it? (What day is it that is so important?)

It is Saturday of Holy Week.

Its theological significance is immense and it is un-noticed. It is the day that no one wants to face because it is the day when Jesus is dead. DEAD and gone. Not risen. Not yet. And yet God is with us. God with us. God is with us even when "all is lost". God bears us through.

Even after the resurrection – we will cheapen the victory, by minimizing the loss. By minimizing

the "Good Friday". We will pretend that Jesus never died – see he's still here. But Saturday – is the one day when God sees us through the loss into the new life. Let me provoke you with a thought: I could survive life without Easter, because God is with me Saturday. Saturday of Holy Week. Quiet. Unobtrusive. And profound. The day when God is with us – no matter the cost. No matter the upset. No matter death. God is with us.

Hidden within this silent day, is the kernel of the resurrection. God is with us. God will be with us.

New Beginnings: Begun and moving

What a morning we had last Sunday at the **New Beginnings** coffee hour. We had excellent conversations about "what may be next". Two ideas gathered quite a bit of energy. The development of "our" town square – with a place to share music and life (a gazebo/bandstand?) and interest in the community food pantry and the possible use of our land as a "victory garden" to support the food pantry.

Nothing is set. No decisions have been made. But we are actively exploring.

I found it interesting that we had 8 people under the age of 40 taking part in the discussion. I believe that's all the post college people under the age of 40. They were all there. "As they should be"; *the future is theirs*. Which is not to say that elders have no place. It is to say that life has its balance. And faith and church have too often been the province of the old guard, (old – like me) not the new life.

This is new life and what's next! It is New Beginnings.

We are exploring, actively, what God could make of us.

**Imagine what God could do with us!
Imagine what we could do! Where is God going through us?**

Pastor Dave

Highlights of March Session Meeting

- Letter and check was received from Presbyterian Foundation concerning money which Ropp and Mary Em Triplett had invested. The check (\$915.67) represented the charitable interest for their gift. This money will be added to the other money received from their trusts.
- Schnipke will be contacted concerning the door at the handicap entrance which is not closing correctly. Areas of sidewalk noted by the village will be evaluated.
- Clair Winebar and Darin Leugers met with the students from ONU who are completing the financial audit.
- Pleased with the sanctuary chairs which were recovered. Palms/flowers have been ordered for Palm Sunday/Easter. Wicks were replaced in the candles. Areas on the front sanctuary wall previously used for banners now have digital screens. Planning to place banners above doors on exterior edges of front sanctuary wall.
- Pastor Dave participated in the following in the last month – Worship services (Sunday, Ash Wednesday, and Mennonite Home), made visits at Maple Crest/Mennonite Home, weekly breakfasts, committee meetings, BAMA – shared information about community VBS in hard copy format and electronically, MVP work included hosting/leading event for Spiritual Transformation Leadership, Conflict Management work with a church in MVP is almost completed, preparing for Lent/Easter services, and led Officer Training.
- Approved calling a Congregational Meeting for Sunday, April 12 following the morning worship service for the purpose of electing Elder and Deacon to fill unexpired terms. Accepted Tom Edwards's resignation as Deacon to fill unexpired Elder term if elected by the congregation.

Did you know???

Did you know the church gets charged \$.50 for every transaction over 150 during a bank statement. You can help deflate this cost by writing one check whenever possible. Example: During the month of April, you know you are going to write a check for your monthly pledge, One Great Hour of Sharing, and Building Restoration; combine the amounts into one check and make a note at the bottom of your check/and on your giving envelope how much of the money goes to each of them.

Did you know the number on your giving envelope is specific to you and helps to keep track and make sure money you give gets credited to you? Please use your envelope whenever possible.

Per Capita

You are invited to help cover the per capita cost of your membership by making a special donation through our congregation as part of your discipline of stewardship. The per capita amount is \$ 28.57 per member in 2015. Thank You!

February Financial Report

| | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Beginning Balance | \$ 66,260.57 |
| Receipts | 17,824.63 |
| Expenses | (67,644.58) |
| Balance* | \$ 16,440.62 |

| | |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| Building Restoration: | |
| Balance 12/31/14 | \$77,115.50 |
| 2015 Receipts | 950.00 |
| 2015 Expenses | 42,200.45 |
| Ending Balance | \$35,865.05 |

Graduate Recognition

Please let Tenna Rhonemus or Carole Enneking know if you have a child graduating from high school or college this year. We would like to recognize them near the end of the school year. We would also like to highlight them and their accomplishments in the May newsletter. Please submit this information to Cindy Gillen by April 15. Thank you!

Youth Group

There will be no youth group meeting in April and the 30 Hour Famine will serve as our meeting in May.

Playgroup at Bluffton Presbyterian

A playgroup is starting at Bluffton Presbyterian! The playgroup is for children ages 1-4 accompanied by a parent, grandparent, or babysitter. The group meets in the nursery at BPC every Monday from 10:30 to 11:30 AM, February 3 through May 25. Please enter through the side door. No registration is necessary--just come! If you know of someone who might be interested, please share this information. If you have questions, you may call Jayne McGarrity (419-369-4216) or the church (419-358-5806).

Deacons Report

Mike Rhonemus is taking over as head of the BPC Prayer Chain. Please see the article elsewhere in the newsletter for more details about this ministry.

Read below for information about an upcoming fellowship opportunity!

Spring Potluck

Spring has sprung! Join your church family for a spring potluck after worship on April 19.



Please bring a dish to share. Everything else – including dessert and table service – will be provided! Hope to

see you there so we can all enjoy a meal and a time of fellowship together. Sponsored by the deacons.

Let a Deacon Bring You to Church

During inclement winter weather, deacons can provide or arrange rides for our seniors to Sunday worship. Please call a deacon the day before, if possible. Otherwise, please call a deacon before 9:00 AM Sunday morning.

Free Subscription to Presbyterian Today

Presbyterians Today, the monthly magazine of The Presbyterian Church (USA) is offering a free one-year subscription to any non-subscribers, no strings attached. This is a limited time offer. If you are interested, please call the church office at 419-358-5806 on Tuesdays or Wednesdays, 9:00 AM to noon. You may also email the church at bpcbluff@wcoil.com. **The office must have your name and address by April 28.** Consider taking advantage of the opportunity to receive this insightful publication free for one year!

30 Hour Famine

The youth group will be participating in the 30 Hour Famine on May 1-2. This event is sponsored by World Vision, the largest food distribution partner of the United Nations' World Food Program. They aid in times of disaster, offer education programs and work in community development for sustainable positive changes in the lives of those they serve. World Vision is a terrific steward of the money donated to their organization, with 85% of every dollar going directly to programs helping those in need. If you would like to make a donation to this event, please see one of the youth group members. All donations are tax deductible.

The youth will go 30 hours without eating, so they can gain a better appreciation of what hunger actually feels like. We will break our fast with a potluck meal on Saturday, May 2 at 2:00 PM, if you want to join us.

Another way of supporting the youth is participating in our "Prayer Drive". We will have a sign-up sheet that spans the 30 hours of our event. We would like to have someone sign up to pray every hour for us, the event, and especially for those who are in need in our community and around the world. The "Prayer Drive" sheet will be in the back of the sanctuary.

Please consider supporting our youth and the work of World Vision with your donation of prayers and money.

Our Neighbors in Need

Through the New Beginnings process we discovered we did not really know our neighbors or their needs. Our conversations revealed we have a passion for sharing music, fellowship, and food. We also agreed that we need to partner with others if we are to have a positive impact on the lives of our neighbors. To that end, we wanted to learn more about the Bluffton Community Assistance Corporation and those whom they serve. Jami Crawfis, the current director, was kind enough to share some details of their work and the needs that we might be able to help meet.

The Bluffton Community Assistance Corporation serves people in the Bluffton School District or those who regularly attend a church within the district. They currently have 109 client families signed up for services. This number has doubled in the past 5 years. These client families are made up of primarily single elderly adults and younger parents with children, though there are quite a few middle-aged couples. To qualify for assistance the client family must have an income less than the poverty guideline for the state of Ohio. The poverty figure varies based on the number of people in the household, but ranges from \$11,770 for a single up to \$40,890 for a household of eight, with additional guidelines for larger households. Those seeking assistance need to complete an application and provide a reference. The application process begins by contacting Jami Crawfis (Director), or Ed Yeager (Board President). Pastor Carol, at St. John's UCC, has also acted as a facilitator for those seeking assistance.

On the third Saturday of each month from 8:00 to 11:00 AM, the corporation offers a food pantry where fresh, frozen, and canned foods are offered along with paper goods and personal care products. They have 45-65 client families using the food pantry monthly. The number of items the clients are allowed to choose varies each month. The pantry tries to offer 1-3 fresh or frozen items monthly. The participants are allowed to select 15-20 nonperishable items. Special items like laundry detergent, dish soap, toilet paper, paper towels, canned meat, peanut butter, cookies, or candy are limited to one each. They also provide

gift cards for holidays or special occasions. The corporation has funds available to help with bills and disaster assistance.

When asked how we might help more, Jami mentioned paper products are always a need. Many of their clients, especially elderly individuals, come simply for things like paper towels, toilet paper, detergent, and soap. The clients have assistance cards, but only food is covered. Monetary donations are always appreciated. If they do not receive donations of items that are used each month they are purchased from our local Community Markets. The items that are frequently purchased include canned meat, fresh or frozen meat, cereal, canned fruit, laundry detergent, tuna, and peanut butter.

There are certain times of the year when the pantry receives donations from large food drives and needs assistance putting items away. They recently restructured in regards to the duties of operating the Assistance Corporation and there is now a committee in charge of organizing and stocking the pantry. Connie Maroscher oversees the distribution on the third Saturday of each month. If there is a way for us to support during these times, the information will be shared with the congregation.

Special Seasonal events that we can support include school supply distribution in the fall and the "Adopt a Family" program at Christmas time. The "Adopt a Family" program is a very big event and the number of client families that participate grows every year.

The needs of our neighbors are varied and perhaps greater than we imagined. As we move forward in a more focused response to God's call to love our neighbors, please prayerfully consider how we might support the work of the Bluffton Community Assistance Corporation.



Arts and Crafts Show

Bluffton Presbyterian Church will once again be serving a lunch during Bluffton's annual Craft Show held on Saturday, May 16. Items requested to be donated include pies, cookies, brownies, canned pop (name brands only), and bottled water. Workers are needed for various shifts: set up, kitchen crew, serving, cleaning up.

We are also looking for volunteers to coordinate kids' activities on the church lawn. If you are able to help that day by working or donating items, please either complete a bulletin insert or contact Sarah Brauen ([419-236-0099](tel:419-236-0099) or snbrauen@gmail.com).

Proceeds from this meal are designated for our general budget. Thanks in advance for your part in making this event a success. Prayers for good weather are always appreciated!

Thanks for helping fight cancer with comfort!

The *Giving Comfort* project collected \$125, which will be used to purchase caring kits for young girls and boys with cancer. Each kit provides items of comfort and encouragement and sends a message that someone is wishing them hope, strength, and healing (even a bear to hug). Thank you!



Prayers for Peace in our lives and in our World.

Prayers for our members and friends serving in the armed forces: especially Austin Begg, Kyle Begg, Dave Souders, Andrew Warner, and Lucas Woodward.

Prayers of Healing for Karen Long; Dusty Klingler; Michael Lee Bucher; Brenda Anderson; Sammie, Ava, and Lauren; The Fisher Family; Cindy Setty, Obia Shurelds, Wendy Fleming, Robin Todd, Charlotte Bell, Kory's father, The Saylor/Bell family, and Leland Garmatter.



BPC Prayer Chain

If you have a prayer request, please contact Mike Rhonemus ([419-358-8148](tel:419-358-8148) / rhonstar@juno.com), or call the church office ([419-358-5806](tel:419-358-5806)) with your prayer request, and they will pass along the information. If you would like to add someone to the prayer chain other than yourself, please be sure to get their permission first. Names and circumstances can be kept confidential, if desired. God knows for whom we pray. If you would like to be part of the chain or would like more information, please contact Mike or another deacon.



Happy Birthday!!

| | | |
|-------|----|-------------------|
| April | 1 | Megan Sycks |
| | 2 | Danielle Rhonemus |
| | 3 | Brian Edelbrock |
| | 4 | Beth Buist |
| | 5 | Helen Hawk |
| | 8 | Ashlin Gable |
| | 13 | Scott Parker |
| | | Avery Talavinia |
| | 14 | Marilyn Bullock |
| | 16 | Mary Barnett |
| | 23 | Pam Weisenbarger |
| | | Lynn Nowak-Sneary |
| | 24 | Will Neff |
| | 25 | Dorothy Hursey |
| | 26 | Cathy Carroll |
| | 29 | Kristi Fifer |
| | 30 | Sally Reeder |
| May | 2 | Patrick Rhonemus |
| | 3 | Paige McVetta |

Bluffton Presbyterian Church
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419-358-5806

Pastor: Rev. David Good
Phone: 765-993-7791
Email: mangendave@frontier.com
Office Hours: Wed. 11:00-1:00 and
Thurs.-Sat. 9:00-1:00

Secretary: Cathy Carroll
Email: bpcbluff@wcoil.com
Office Hours: Tues. and Wed. 9:00-12:30
Website: blufftonpc.org

Sunday School: 9:00 AM
Sunday Worship Service: 10:15 AM

2015 Church Officers

Session

Clerk of Session – Lori Schmidt
Buildings & Grounds – Tom Hursey
Christian Education – Tenna Rhonemus and
Carole Enneking
Finance & Stewardship – Cindy Gillen
Mission – Beth Buist
Nominating – Bob Angus and Cindy Gillen
Personnel – Bob Angus
Presbytery Commissioner
Worship – Jeanette Warren
Members at Large – Lori Schmidt, and Donnas
Stone

Board of Deacons

Moderator: Diane Winebar
Members: Tom Edwards, Barb Fett, Laura
From, Gayle Marshall, and Mike Rhonemus.