



The Stepping Stone

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“WRITINGS FROM OFF THE SANCTUARY WALL”

Conquering What?

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28)

A story is told regarding former heavy-weight boxer, James "Quick" Tillis, a cowboy from Tulsa, Oklahoma, who fought out of Chicago in the early 1980's. Tillis recalls how, on his first day in Chicago, after getting off the bus, he stood outside the Sears building and putting his two suitcases down, looked up at the Tower and said to himself "I'm going to conquer Chicago." When he looked down, his two suitcases were missing!

Something like that ever happen to you? If so we can empathize with Tillis.

We can be confident, excited, and positive one moment and be disillusioned the next. That's life. We live in a broken, sinful world and disappointments come to us all. We put our trust in people and get ripped off. We get hurt deeply when someone we love turns against and attacks us. We get our hearts broken when we are abandoned, rejected, or have lost one through death.

Pain comes to us all. The important thing is that we don't allow these circumstances to make us resentful and bitter. God wants to use these situations to help us grow and make us better persons. Satan wants to use them to discourage us and make us bitter. Indeed, the negative circumstances of life can make us bitter or better. The choice is always ours.

Remember no matter what happens in our lives while it rains on the just as well as the unjust our lives are ultimately in God's hands, and that all things do work together for good to those who love and put their trust in God.

Blessings,

Pastor Chuck

Pastor Chuck

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I believe we are all children of a loving and gracious God who invites us to journey with him on a road called life. As we travel on that highway from time to time regardless of our physical age we shall experience something called transition. A transition often brings a change to our pattern of living and usually generates emotions of joy or sorrow.



I believe children of God trust their heavenly Father, especially when we face transition. The Scriptures tells us God is always with us. God's ways are not our ways and God's thoughts are not our thoughts, but if we believe we are children of God and Disciples of Jesus Christ, God's Son, we trust God because of his unfailing love.

Carol and I are now preparing for transition. As a family of faith we ask for your prayers.

After forty-two years of ministry, I shall retire July 1, 2012. Both Bishop Bickerton and Superintendent Meekins have been informed in writing of my request for a change of Conference status. Our superintendent will meet with the Pastor Parish Committee of Leechburg First UMC. This is in preparation for the Bishop and Cabinet members to begin their discernment in appointing pastors to serve congregations within our Conference and those to serve in extension ministries beyond the local church. We need to pray for our Bishop and Cabinet members during this appointment season. There are nine hundred congregations and six hundred clergy presently serving, plus those graduating from seminary seeking their first appointment.

Since our 2011 Church Conference Carol and I have spent time in prayer and conversation with our children and superintendent regarding my decision to retire. Do we have any anxiety? Of course we do. But God is good all the time, and God has never failed us. We trust and have never doubted, He has always led us out.

If any of you have questions about our decision please feel free to speak with us. Should you have questions regarding the appointment process I will gladly answer any inquiries.

Perhaps you have anxieties about transitioning as a congregation. I want you to remember why an automobile has a large windshield and a small rearview mirror. The past is not as important as the future. The Bible teaches Disciples of Jesus Christ to look forward and move ahead. Carol and I believe many of you will welcome a new pastor and desire to work with him/her to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

We give thanks to God to have lived among you and to have shared in ministry. I am grateful to be your pastor and look forward to our time together as we journey with our Lord into transition.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Chuck





WALK TO EMMAUS

During Lent Christians usually give up something. Why not this season add something. Our Conference Health Team is encouraging: Walking to Emmaus, a program of walking, eating, etc. You can go to the Conference website, click on "Walking to Emmaus".

ENDORSEMENT

Our delegates to Jurisdictional Conference have endorsed two pastors from our Conference as potential Bishops. They are William Meekins, Jr. and Eric Park currently serving the Greensburg and Washington districts. In June representatives at Annual Conference will vote on recommending one or both. Three Bishops need to be elected this July.

DISTRICT LAY SPEAKING SCHOOL

The Greensburg district school for lay speaking begins on Sunday, Feb. 26 and will conclude on March 25. Irwin Community UMC will host the 2012 school. Participants will begin at 2:00 p.m. and conclude at 5:00p.m. Registration is \$30.00.

Participants need to fill out a registration form and have Pastor Chuck sign it. Registration closes on Feb. 15th. Classes include: Basic lay speaking, Care for those who grieve, worship, leading small group Bible studies, History of the UMC, Welcoming ministry and hospitality. Our Lay Leader Dan Sherbondy can answer questions regarding the Lay Speaking School.

Scholarship reminder:

Information was published last month regarding Conference scholarships for one academic year to graduating high school seniors and current students attending colleges. To seek information or apply, contact Sara McLain 800-886-3382, ext. 237 at the W. Pa. Conference Center. Apply before May 15th. Students also remember Leechburg First also provides scholarship help. Contact Terry at the church office for information and application. (If you missed last month's information... it is reprinted below☺):

HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS!!! - CONFERENCE SCHOLARSHIPS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Our Annual Conference makes available scholarships for one academic year to graduating high school seniors and current students attending college. All income is sent directly to the educational institution. For the school year of 2011-12:

Conference Scholarship: awarded to students attending a college related to our W. Pa. Conference i.e., Allegheny, Mt. Union, Otterbein, W. Virginia Wesleyan.

Merit Scholarship: Awarded to students attending any United Methodist college or university.

Ruth Zitzman Schall Scholarship: awarded to a female student entering higher education for the first time. The institution need not be a UM related college. Criteria based on financial need.

Christopher Smith Memorial Scholarship: awarded to students with financial need at any college or university in either an associate degree or baccalaureate degree.

To apply for any of the scholarships, contact Sara McLain 800-886-3382 ext. 237, at the United Methodist Conference Center. Apply **before** May 15th. Scholarships are announced before the end of June. All applicants will be notified in writing of the decision.

2011 CHURCH AUDIT

By Church Discipline all organizations, committees, church school classes, youth groups are required to present checkbooks and year-end bank statements for audit. Reminders have been in the bulletin about this matter. All checkbook and year-end statements must be into the church office by February 23rd. Thanks.

HELP SOUGHT: MISSIONS

The Western PA Conference has been in a partnership for several years with the United Methodist Church in Nicaragua. Work teams from our conference have gone and built churches, taught VBS, and local pastors' school. We have an opportunity to help a church in Nicaragua. The Roberto Clemente Methodist Church has a growing children and youth ministry with an emphasis on music. Used flutes and recorders are needed. If individuals, church school classes would like to gather these items for use I ask that you contact Mr. Richard Schall at 814-755-4908. Richard has led several work teams to Nicaragua and will do so this winter and summer. Your gifts can be sent with him or perhaps you would like to participate as a volunteer with the work teams. He can answer your questions regarding that opportunity also.

Pastor Chuck

COULD YOU TRY?

Stewardship is a major ingredient of our discipleship. As we grow in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, we seek to grow in our ability to do God's work of mission and ministry. Scripture teaches the tithe is the minimum, the beginning of honoring God with the fruit of our labors. Lent begins this month. During the Lenten season I encourage you to step out in faith and tithe. Read Malachi 3:8-12, and put God to the test.

Pastor Chuck

SUMMER CAMPING

Remember our Conference summer camping program will soon begin. Brochures are available in the literature rack in the vestibule. Adventure and horse/pony weeks tend to register quickly. Remember our church provides camperships up to \$100.00 per-event. Camperships are also available through the Conference Center and the individual camps. If a parent is an LPN, RN, or EMT, if they volunteer for a week at camp, children and youth of that person go for free! Terry is available to answer questions about camping registration or any of the camping programs offered.



SPRING PREPARATION WORK DAY AT CAMP

This spring adults and youth can volunteer for a Saturday at Camp Allegheny to help prepare the site for summer. A variety of tasks involving skilled and unskilled labor needs to be done. This is a good opportunity to do hands on mission work for a day. The camp will provide breakfast and lunch to participants. Workers can come for the entire time or give what hours they can. The event is generally late April. If adults or youth from the parish would like to share in the day let Pastor Chuck know. Norma Ewing has offered to transport a group to the camp in her van. Let's NOT send an empty one!!!

ACT OF KINDNESS

By an act of Congress February is Random Acts of Kindness Month. Perhaps you didn't know this.

With all the random acts of nastiness in our world and communities, Christian churches are being asked to extend an unexpected kindness to strangers as well as people they know, including spouses, parents, children, and clergy.

Have I missed something? Doesn't the Bible instruct us to do this every day?

Pastor Chuck

PRESIDENT'S DAY

This month we celebrate President's Day. Did you know that there is a law still in effect, and a story regarding George Washington and Abraham Lincoln? Here goes...

Kansas City Local Ordinances: "Saying the name George Washington, without adding the phrase 'blessed be his name', may result in a fine of 50 cents.

When President Abraham Lincoln was in office he shared this story:
A King wanted to go hunting with some friends and consulted the court's minister to see if it was going to rain. The minister assured him it would be a sunny day.

When the royal party set out for the hunt, they met a farmer riding a jackass. The farmer warned the king not to make the journey into the countryside because it was going to rain. The king laughed at the farmer and went on his way. Soon a torrent drenched the king and those in his party. He returned to the castle, fired the court minister and sent for the farmer.

He asked the farmer how he knew it was going to rain when the sky was sunny and cloudless. "My jackass has a way of knowing these things. He puts one ear forward when it is going to rain." The king bought the jackass from the farmer and appointed the jackass as his court minister.

Lincoln then remarked: "That this was a great mistake on the king's part because ever since that time, every jackass was a public office."



WHAT THE DOCTORED ORDERED:

The Memphis-based Methodist Le Bonheur hospital system is working with 400 churches to ensure that its patients have a support system while in the hospital and when they are discharged. Hospital staff called "navigators" work with liaisons in each congregation that is a part of the Congregational Health Network to arrange visits, transportation and follow-up care. The mortality rate for those in the program from 2007 to 2009 was fifty percent lower than for those not in it, and readmission rates were 20 percent lower. The hospital system says 70percent of its patients belong to churches. (Christian Century)

HER WITNESS

The poet Annie Johnson died in 1932. Born in Vineland, New Jersey, she was orphaned at age 6 and severely afflicted with arthritis in her teens, so that before reaching adulthood, she was unable even to walk. She had wanted to be a composer and concert pianist, but when illness deprived her of the ability to play the piano, she turned to poetry instead, pounding out the words on a typewriter with her knuckles after the disease rendered her unable to open her hands. She eventually came to see poetry as her calling from God. Here's her witness in one of her poems:

He giveth more grace as our burdens grow greater, He sendeth more strength as our labors increase. To added afflictions He addeth His mercy. To multiplied trials He multiplies peace.

When we have exhausted our store of endurance, when our strength has failed ere the day is half-done, when we reach the end of our hoarded resources our Father's full giving is only begun.

His love has no limits, His grace has no measure, His power no boundary known unto men; for out of his infinite riches Jesus He giveth, and giveth, and giveth again.

(Hope that is strength for your journey – Pastor Chuck)

REFLECTIONS

"Christianity without discipleship is always
Christianity without Christ."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer



"Only a disciple can make a disciple."

A. J. Tozer



DATES IN FEBRUARY

February 12th **Boy Scout Sunday**. We encourage scouts and those serving as leaders to worship with us. **At the 11:00 am service** scouts will be recognized and honored for their work projects done to the church this past year.

Presidents Day – In observance of Presidents Day the church office will be closed Monday, Feb. 20th. The church office will re-open, Feb. 21st. Should you have an emergency please feel free to contact the parsonage 724-845-9561.

Ash Wednesday Worship – Lent begins Wednesday, February 22nd. Join us for our Ash Wednesday service of worship 7:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. This service will include the imposition of ashes for those who wish to receive them.



Ash Wednesday

RECOMMENDED READING

Margaret Starbuck, "Justice is Little: Small things with Great Love", Intervarsity Press.

(A book to open your eyes to people around you and the huge impact you have on them through small acts of love. She is a fun, creative and sassy author. I believe her words will challenge you to connect your gifts to the brokenness of this world and do something beautiful for God.) Stanley Hauerwas, "War and the American Difference", Baker Academic.

(This is a collection of essays not for the faint of heart or mind. Although the reading gets somewhat dense at times, it is ultimately rewarding, a beacon of Christ's peace in an age of endless war)

HELP AND PRAYER

As our U.S. combat troops return home from Iraq, a call from chaplains goes out. Religious communities need to reach out to returning veterans to make sure they have the physical, emotional, and spiritual support they need. No matter what our view of the war, it is our collective responsibility to be healers for those who have come home. Presently more than half a million U.S. troops have come home with post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injuries. 1,000 suicide attempts are attempted by veterans per month. That should take our breath away and drive each of us to pray for lives that have been so painfully and irreparably damaged. If you have a family member or neighbor now home from Iraq, reach out to them, pray for them, and invite them to worship with you.

Pastor Chuck

NOTICE

TO: Members of the Administrative Board & Members-at-Large:

REMINDER!!!

By Action of the Administrative Board at the September 7th meeting and approval by our Plan for Ministry at Church Conference 2011 so that members would be more closely informed to the financial status of the church, and whatever actions needed to be taken to resolve any problems handled in a more timely manner... The Administrative Board now meets the first Tuesday of each month, 7:00 p.m. Members elected at the 2011 Church Conference to serve on the agency are reminded of the change and urged to start to attend.

We met on January 3, 2012 in the Fellowship Hall with only eight members present. The only item of business that could be taken care of that evening was that there would **not** be any meetings held during the months of June, July, and August (unless a special meeting had to be called).

Our next meeting will be February 7th at 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall, and **three** of the items on the agenda that will be discussed are:

1. How to make Mission Share payments for 2012...send in 12 equal monthly payments to meet the 100%, or send in only designated giving to Mission Share again?
2. June through September 2, 2012 – That church school will not meet and that there only be ONE service of worship held beginning at 9:30 a.m.
3. At the September board meeting have the Worship Committee bring a recommendation regarding whether or not to have two worship services each Sunday. (The average attendance for the past 5 years has been 30...half of that number now worship at another UM church).

Your presence at these meetings is vital. YOU are the representatives of your fellow-church members. Please make every effort to attend.

*Thank you,
Terry L. Snyder, chairman*

You are invited to attend the...



Annual Lenten Lunches
sponsored by the Leechburg Ministerium
Fridays – 11:45 a.m.
February 19 thru March 26
at Cross Roads Community Presbyterian Church
The cost is a free-will offering!
(If school closing – Luncheon is cancelled.)



The 2012 Confirmation Class will begin study during the Sunday school hour beginning the first Sunday in Lent. They will meet in the upstairs Chapel classroom, and Pastor Chuck will be their instructor.

This year's class will consist presently of Nicholas Albert, Ally & Daniel Johnson, and John Miskinis. They will be received into the church on Easter Sunday at the 11:00 Worship Service.

On Friday, March 16, the Confirmation Class will set out on a Field Trip to the Western PA Conference Center to meet with Bishop Bickerton, and take a tour. They will meet at the church at 8:15 AM, leaving from here, and returning back at the church "around" 3:30 or 3:45 that afternoon. Included in this trip is a stop at the Cokesbury store in Cranberry Twp. and lunch at Quaker Steak & Lube. Any Mentors or parents that might be interested in going along are asked to please contact Terry at the church office (724-845-8761). Others in past years have found the excursion to be quite informative, as well as a good time with the kids.



The Art of Marriage

Community Church, a United Methodist congregation, is pleased to invite the entire community to attend The Art of Marriage February 10-11, 2012. The Art of Marriage is a new one-and-a-half day video event from Family Life that is designed to help couples communicate better, love deeper and have a better perspective on their marriages.

The Art of Marriage brings together some of the most respected and influential pastors and experts on marriage and family all in one setting. It also brings a fresh approach to a video event to help couples fully experience God's design for marriage through expert teaching, engaging stories and real-life testimonies to help strengthen relationships. No matter what shape a marriage is in, this honest look at the challenges every marriage faces will offer the hope that any marriage can be a work of art.

The cost of the event is just \$50 per couple, which includes event manuals as well as lunch and a romantic dinner on Saturday. Scholarships are available as needed.

For more information or registration, call Community Church office at 724-744-3413 or please visit Community Church's website at www.sharechristwithothers.org.

The Coffeehouse Experience

Join us at Monroeville UMC, 219 Center Road, Monroeville, for "MUM's Coffeehouse Experience," **on the last Sunday of each month!** This is an informal, less structured worship time with a coffeehouse feel - coffee and other refreshments provided. The emphasis is on wonderful music provided by talented area musicians. We may have a taste of jazz, a dollop of gospel or even a dab of folk music. We will have piano, saxophone, clarinet, or guitar instrumentalists as well as vocalists. Each month will be different, but an inspirational message along with fabulous music will always be part of the service. We invite you all to try this experience on January 29 or February 26!!

(For those who have attended our Worship with a Taste of Jazz service, this is the slightly revamped service.)



February 5 – Holy Communion (pews)
“Sometimes It’s Good to Get Lost”
 (Mark 1:29-39)

February 12 – Boy Scout Recognition
“The Wrath of Jesus and Wrath of God”
 (Mark 1:4-45)

February 19 – “A High Altitude Encounter”
 (Mark 9:2-9)

February 22 – Ash Wednesday Service
(Imposition of Ashes)
“How a Thing Became a Sin”
 (Matthew 6:1-12)

February 26 – “All In”
First Sunday of Lent
 (Mark 1:9-15)



February 2012

Ushers

Jim Wright	Mark Morrill
Duncan Morrill	Terry Morrill
Robert Pastva	Bill Ridenour
Beryl Carney	Dennis Hrivnak
Matt Ward	

Acolytes

5) Nicholas Albert
 12) Destiny Senjan
 19) Julia Cominos
 26) Emily Duncan



Memorial Gifts

Memorials have been given to the Renovation Fund in loving memory of:

- ❖ ***My Mom & Dad, Lorraine & Bill Schreiner***
by Susan Schreiner

Memorials have been given to Current Expenses in loving memory of:

- ❖ ***Jessie M. Snider***
by Pat Daugherty

A memorial has been given to the Abiding Memorial Fund in loving memory of:

- ❖ ***Jessie M. Snider***
by Immanuel White Shrine Club
- ❖ ***My Brother, Harry W. Butler***
by Betty Busler

Memorials have been given to Mission Share in loving memory of:

- ❖ ***Jessie M. Snider***
by June Womer

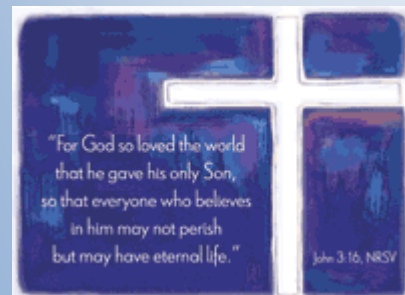
A memorial has been given to the Food Bank in loving memory of:

- ❖ ***Lena Smith & H. Eileen Jewell***
by June Womer

Honorariums

An honorarium has been given to the Renovation Fund in honor of:

- ❖ ***Pastor Chuck & Carol for their ministry at FUMC***
by Gloria Womer



Words of thanks...

- ♥ To everyone for their cards, visits, phone calls and prayers of concern during the past month and a half. Special thanks to Pastor Chuck for all his visits and prayers. God has blessed me with many friends and a loving family, and I appreciate you all.

Isabel Coyle

- ♥ Our thanks to everyone who participated in anyway with this year's cantata presentation. Our special thanks to Lori for her direction, to the children and choir members for their talented voices, to Courtney and Clay for reading, to our sound technicians. It takes the determination and dedication of a lot of people in order to make such a presentation.
- ♥ Today, we give thanks to Eric Anthony, Clay and Colt Kalmar for their portrayal of the Wise Men.

A special thank you...

- ♥ First of all, to everyone for their cards, gifts, and "goodies" during the holiday season. They were all very much appreciated.

Secondly, my sincere thanks and appreciation to EVERYONE who has shown their kindness by helping me with various tasks throughout the year that I am no longer able to do on my own. You truly have no idea how much you are loved by me and how deep my gratitude is for you. I love my extended family here at First Church very much and have been so blessed.

God is good... ALL THE TIME!! All the time... GOD IS GOOD!!!

Happy New Year, Terry

- ♥ To the choir, our youth, the drama players, those assisting with the "Hanging of the Greens", those who stayed last week and helped with the un-decorating of the church, and all those on our Worship Team that did so much to make Christmas so blessed by us all.

Pastor Chuck

- ♥ To the ladies who furnished the funeral dinner on Wednesday for a member of Christ the King Parish, and to those who furnished the cakes for that dinner.
- ♥ To the ladies who furnished the funeral dinner on Saturday the 22nd for a member of Christ the King Parish, and to those who furnished the cakes for that dinner. Also, to those who came in and helped clean up afterward. And, as always to Chris VanDervort for setting up tables for all of these dinners & events.



On January 4, 2011 at the meetings of the Administrative Board and the Council on Ministries, there was a policy adopted for the church dealing with inclement weather conditions:

- **CANCELLATION OF WORSHIP DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER** – In the event of inclement weather such as a bad snow storm (as in the snow of February 2010), the decision to cancel the worship service shall be that of the Pastor and the Administrative Assistant. And, to the best of their ability, post notice on the local news networks, as well as the sending of a mass email to members who have made their email addresses available to the office.

Spaghetti Dinner

Sponsored by our
YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

Saturday, February 11th

4:00 to 7:00 PM

Dinner includes:

Salad, bread, spaghetti, coffee/tea/punch, & dessert.

Children have their choice of salad or applesauce.

Take-outs will be available.

Prices: \$7.00 for adults

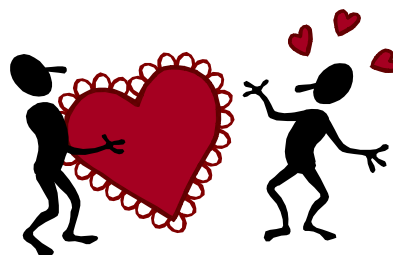
\$4.00 children 12 & under

Children 4 & under - free

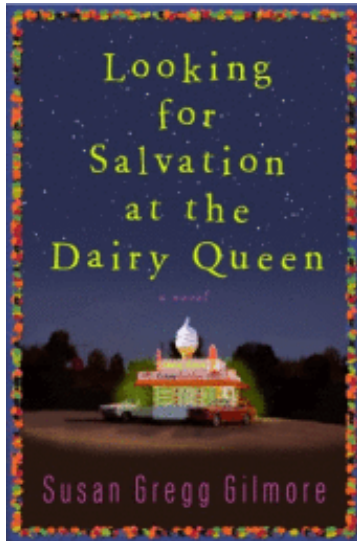
See a member of the Youth for tickets!

Lay Speaker School

Pamphlets for District Lay Speaker school are available on the table in the Main Vestibule. There are five classes starting Sunday, February 26, through to Sunday, March 25. The classes will be held at Community UMC, 3483 Route 130, Irwin, PA 15642, and the time is 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. This year's courses include: Basic Course, Let's Preach, Care for Those Who Grieve, Worship, Leading a Small Group Bible Study, History & Affirmations of the UMC, Spiritual Gifts, and Welcoming Ministry & Hospitality. There is a \$30.00 fee. Registration forms MUST be signed by the pastor and are due NO LATER than February 15, 2012. If you have any questions, please contact our Lay Leader, Dan Sherbondy. If you need a pamphlet, contact the church office.



Women's Book Club



Dilly Bars and a Good Book. Everyone is invited to meet at the church on Tuesday, March 27 at 7:00. Our book club will enjoy DQ dilly bars while discussing ***Looking for Salvation at the Dairy Queen*** by Susan Gregg Gilmore.

"Sometimes you have to return to the place where you began, to arrive at the place where you belong.

It's the early 1970s. The town of Ringgold, Georgia, has a population of 1,923, one traffic light, one Dairy Queen, and one Catherine Grace Cline. The daughter of Ringgold's third-generation Baptist preacher, Catherine Grace is quick-witted, more than a little stubborn, and dying to escape her small-town life.

Every Saturday afternoon, she sits at the Dairy Queen, eating Dilly Bars and plotting her getaway to the big city of Atlanta. And when, with the help of a family friend, the dream becomes a reality, Catherine Grace immediately packs her bags, leaving her family and the boy she loves to claim the life she's always imagined. But before things have even begun to get off the ground in Atlanta, tragedy brings her back home. As a series of extraordinary events alters her perspective—and sweeping changes come to Ringgold itself—Catherine Grace begins to wonder if her place in the world may actually be, against all odds, right where she began." (Amazon.com)

Discussion will center on sisterhood, redemption, religion, salvation and forgiveness. For more information check out the book trailer at <http://vimeo.com/4875932>.



United Methodist Women: The Greensburg District United Methodist Women will have their Ash Wednesday Communion Prayer Breakfast, February 22nd, at Monroeville United Methodist. Women of the parish that would like to attend should speak to Sharon Riffer.

SEEDS OF FAITH

“Whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.” Galatians 6:7

A woman has a dream where she wanders into a shop at the mall and finds Jesus behind the counter.

“Jesus says, ‘You can have anything your heart desires.’”

Astounded but pleased, she asks for the fruits of peace, joy, happiness, wisdom, and freedom from fear. The she adds, “Not just for me, but for the whole earth.”

Jesus smiles and says, “I think you misunderstand me. We don’t sell fruits, only seed.”

It is true, what we sow is what we reap. If you and I sow seeds of bitterness, we will reap bitterness. If we sow seeds of disharmony, we will reap disharmony. But if we sow seeds of joy, we will reap joy, and if we sow seeds of love, we will reap love.

So whatever you do, be sure to plant seeds of whatever it is you want to reap.

Blessings,

Pastor Chuck



Skating Party

The Annual ALL-Church Skating Party will be held on Sunday evening, **February 19th**, 5:30–7:30 PM at the Valarena Skating Rink in North Apollo. Everyone is invited to attend. Admission and skate rental are FREE! Anyone wishing to make a financial contribution toward this event is welcome to do so. Please mark “Skating Party” on your check, and place it in the offering plate or give your donation to Terry Snyder. For further information, contact Paula Kalmar. **There is a signup sheet in the Main Vestibule.**



FUND RAISER FYI...

The following has been received in the Renovation Fund, as of 1/22/2012:

..... \$ 243294.09

The unpaid balance on the loan as of 1/18/2012 is:

..... \$ 13,606.89

We ask for your continued support through prayer and giving.

Trustees' Expenditures Report - 2011

Insurance	\$ 4,021.71
Taxes	4,076.03
Copier payments	1,235.52
Renovation Loan payments	24,648.72
Boiler Loan Payments	5,417.50
Carpets	780.80
Church Building	78,740.41*
Church Building – Outside Painting	10,514.00
Parsonage	11,983.69**
Monitoring services – Security System	828.80
Piano maintenance & tuning	260.00
Organ maintenance & tuning	<u>320.00</u>
 Total.....	 \$ 142,827.18***
(see below).....	<u>-82,079.95</u>
Working Balance.....	\$ 60,747.23

* \$ 72,130.52 of this amount is Insurance Claims
 ** 9,949.43 of this amount is Insurance Claims
 *** \$ 82,079.95 of this amount is Insurance Claims

CHOIR PRACTICES for February



- February 1 – NONE
- February 8 – 6:45 p.m.
- February 15 – 6:45 p.m.
- February 22 – 6:45 p.m.
- February 29 – NONE



*The following is a summary of our giving to the
WPA Annual Conference for 2011*

Mission Share (paid 69.3%)	\$ 15,373.47
Media Membership Fee	40.00
Human Relations Sunday	35.00
Workers' Compensation Premium	938.16
RS 404 Short Term Incapacity	25.00
One Great Hour of Sharing	35.00
Pacific Emergency	345.00
Peace with Justice Sunday	81.00
Native American Awareness Sunday	38.00
Spring Storms 2011	512.00
901670 Disaster Response Hurricane	25.00
World Communion Sunday	<u>12.00</u>
	\$ 17,459.63

The following is a summary of our remittances to the Greensburg District

Special District Offering	\$ 201.21
Project Happy Feet	<u>25.00</u>
	\$ 226.21

Report of membership:

This is a recap of the membership rolls since our November 1, 2011 Church Conference meeting at which time the following 22 people were put on the slate for recommendation of removal from the membership rolls. They will be notified by letter that their names are on this list, and that it will be presented at the next two church conferences (making a total of three times). If there is no response after the third time they **will be removed**:

Farmer, (Gail, James, & Myriah), John Heltion, Jeffrey & Jennifer Hill, Ladik (Audrey, Bradley, & Gene), Mike & Sherri McCleary, Barb & Frank McDermott, George & Jane Miller, Petracca (Andrew, Judith, & Matthew), Chad Sekscinski, Williams, (Alan, Deborah, & Harry).

The following 20 members have officially transferred their letters of membership to Delmont: Faith during the months of December 2011 and January 2012:

Wilbur & Martha Ashbaugh; Paul Batchelor; Russ, Lisa & Amanda Fair; Fran Farbishel; Paul & Karen Klanica; Lynn Prunty; Jeff, Verna, Justin & Jared Retter; Elaine Smail; Robin & Alan Tarr; and, Larry & Janice Vovaris.

Theses 3 transferred theirs in 2010: Helen Kosanovich, and Cindy & Sarah Raptosh.



(These will be from Harbison Nurseries in Natrona Heights)

I wish to purchase the following to be used to adorn the Sanctuary for the Easter Worship Service. The plants cost **\$7.00** each. Please fill out the form below and return it with the money to Mary Anne Hrivnak or the Church Office by **March 7, 2012**.

Once again, we will NOT be ordering any extras!

(PLEASE PRINT)

I would like the following information in the bulletin:

I would like to purchase _____ lily(ies) in memory/honor of

_____ by _____

I would like to purchase _____ lily(ies) in memory/honor of

_____ by _____

The DEADLINE to order plants is March 7th, 2012.

I am ordering _____ lily(ies) and enclosing \$_____.

I will

pick up my Lilies following the Easter
Worship Service.

I will not

Name _____ PHONE: _____

GENERAL CONFERENCE

General Conference for our denomination will begin April 24th and conclude on May 4th. Delegates from the globe will be in Tampa, Fla. for this session. General Conference meets every four years and is the "Voice" of the denomination in terms of polity. Let us seek in our daily devotions to pray for the delegates, God's Spirit to be at work, and travel mercies. Two major items to be decided the restructure of boards and agencies of the general church, decreasing to only 12 and creating a 15 member overseeing committee. Secondly, the Board of Higher Education is recommending that guarantee appointments will not be offered to pastors in full connection with an Annual Conference.



by Madolyn Hyde

MISSION NEWS

God allows us to have disappointments, frustrations, or even worse because He wants us to see that our joy is not in such worldly pleasures...our joy is in the fact that we have a relationship with God. Catherine Marshall

How many times have we asked ourselves why God, why me? I know I have and I talk to God all the time, believe in that his Will shall be done.

We read a book for our book club, one which I didn't like. If the author doesn't grab me in the first five to ten pages, I'm done with it. I've also been going through something that has been very stressful. Here we go again, why me!

So, I researched the writer and to quote her on there: "What does Sovereignty mean in a man's relationship with God. If he is in control of everything, what does that say about the bad things that happen to people?... Both (the characters) face the same issues. Who is in control of your life? Do you fight for control or surrender to God?"

Well, as Oprah says, that was another AHA moment. I realized that I was trying to control what was happening and not letting God do it. I kept saying to him it was in His hands. I trusted him, but for that one instance that little devil came out. But, God showed me in His own way (by me researching the writer) I've got this handled, now get off your butt and get back to your writing. We've had this discussion before, NOW JUST DO IT.

So, I did and a few days later the problem seems to be getting better. Sure, it will take more time, but I listened and began my writing again.

How many times do you go through this? I think the quote from Catherine Marshall says it all. I'm proud of the relationship I have with God and he's the Captain flying my plane.

Now, for some lighter talk... We know that February has many special days in it. But, did you know that there is National Carrot Day, National Fettuccine Alfredo Day, National Gumdrop Day and National Dog Biscuit Day? Plus, this year is Leap year. It comes every four years. Can you imagine having that birthday, you never really get old. So, if any of you have February 29 as your birthday, have a Happy Birthday!

KUDOS

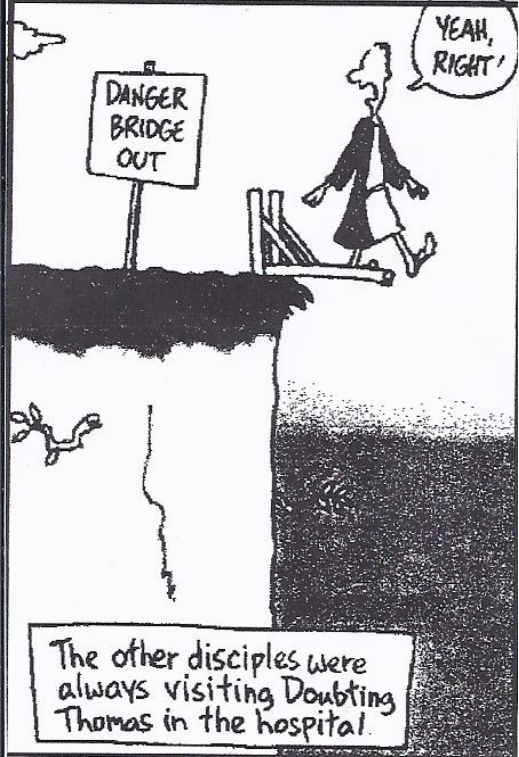
CAROL LANGFORD – You are one of the strongest women anyone knows and you have such a strong faith in God.

Blessings to my Church Family,

Madolyn



Inherit the Mirth by Cuyler Black



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Walking with God

The essence of the Christian life is knowing God and walking with him. It's about sticking with him when the sky is blue and also when it's filled with clouds or choked with smoke. It's about walking with the Lord through thick and thin, and pressing on through every heartache and trial that happens to come our way.

—Greg Laurie

STATISTICS DON'T LIE!!! How to stay safe in the World today!

Where IS the Safest Place?

1. Avoid riding in automobiles because they are responsible for 20% of all fatal accidents.
2. Do not stay home because 17% of all accidents occur in the home.
3. Avoid walking on streets or sidewalks because 14% of all accidents occur to pedestrians.
4. Avoid traveling by air, rail, or water because 16% of all accidents involve these forms of transportation.
5. Of the remaining 33%, 32% of all deaths occur in Hospitals. So, above all else, avoid hospitals.

But.

You will be pleased to learn that only .001% of all deaths occur in worship services in church, and these are usually related to previous physical disorders. Therefore, logic tells us that the safest place for you to be at any given point in time is at Church!

And . . . Bible study is safe too! The percentage of deaths during Bible study is even less.

So, attend church, and read your Bible...IT WILL SAVE YOUR LIFE!



GOD BLESS YOU!!!

Pack well



During Lent, as we focus on Christ's journey to the cross, let's also examine the journey of our lives. The first task when leaving on any adventure is packing. What have you placed in your bag? Are you weighed down with temptations, self-doubt, money worries, relationship troubles? Have you overlooked any important items? Maybe your bag feels too empty for the challenges ahead. Remember to pack mercy, grace and forgiveness.

Thanks to Easter, we know that our journey in Christ continues, even when the road becomes difficult. So as you prepare for Lent, carry with you the hope made possible by Jesus' sacrifice on our behalf.

—Based on the "Journey to Hope" sermon series, www.rethinkchurch.org/lent

"To love another person is
to see the face of God."

—Lyrics from *Les Misérables*,
Claude-Michel Schönberg

"Faith is a knowledge
within the heart, beyond
the reach of proof."

—Kahlil Gibran

+ Christian Symbols +



This number appears many times in Scripture, often indicating a time of trial or testing, or simply marking something significant. It rained 40 days and nights during the Great Flood. Israel wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. Jesus fasted for 40 days and was with the disciples for 40 days between his resurrection and ascension. Taking this symbolic number to heart, the Christian church has long observed 40 days of Lent (not counting Sundays).

"O Love That Will Not Let Me Go"

O Love that will not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee;
I give thee back the life I owe,
That in thine ocean depths its flow
May richer, fuller be.

George Matheson (1842-1906) wrote the words to this much-loved hymn while feeling intensely lonely and afraid.

Years back, his fiancé had broken their engagement upon learning he was going blind. Despite that challenge, Matheson had followed God's call to a fruitful pastoral ministry — with his sister's assistance. Now his sister was getting married, and Matheson worried about who would take care of him and if anyone would ever want to marry him.

Amid such despair, Matheson later shared, God gave him all four verses of this hymn in five minutes. It's a poignant reminder that God's love sustains us even when human love falls short.

Transfiguration

All over this magnificent world, God calls us to extend his kingdom of shalom-peace and wholeness — of justice, of goodness, of compassion, of caring, of sharing, of laughter, of joy, of reconciliation. God is transfiguring the world right this very moment through us because God believes in us and because God loves us.

What can separate us from the love of God? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. And as we share God's love with our brothers and sisters, God's other children, there is no tyrant who can resist us, no opposition that cannot be ended, no hunger that cannot be fed, no wound that cannot be healed, no hatred that cannot be turned into love, no dream that cannot be fulfilled.

—Desmond Tutu, *God Has a Dream*

Disability awareness

A friend tearfully shared how an usher asked her to leave a church service because of her squirmy toddler. But the boy wasn't just having a bad morning; he was born with a genetic disorder called Fragile X, which makes it nearly impossible to sit quietly.

It was nearly a year before that mother attended a church again. Then she found one with a shepherd program, where trained volunteers help children with special needs participate in worship, Sunday school and church activities.

As we look for ways to reach out to people with disabilities, remember that God's love has no limits. How can we, as God's church, reflect that love?

Refocus for Lent

Give up complaining — focus on gratitude.
Give up harsh judgments — think kind thoughts.
Give up worry — trust God to provide.
Give up discouragement — be full of hope.
Give up bitterness — turn to forgiveness.
Give up hatred — return good for evil.
Give up anger — be more patient.
Give up pettiness — become mature.
Give up jealousy — pray for trust.
Give up gossiping — control your tongue.
Give up sin — turn to virtue.
Give up giving up — persevere.
—Author unknown

FORGIVENESS Game

Try this twist on musical chairs.

What you need:

- 28 large index cards
- Black marker
- Two teams of people
- Radio or CD player

What you do:

1. On index cards, write out *forgiveness*, one letter per card. Make two sets (two F's, two O's, etc.).
2. Mix up the cards and form them face up in a circle on the floor. (You'll have six blanks mixed in.)
3. Have teams mix themselves up and stand in a circle around the cards. Ask an extra person to turn the music on and off.
4. As the music plays, teams walk around the circle. When the music stops, players each pick up the card nearest them.
5. Team members take their cards to a designated area and try to spell forgiveness. Any double letters or blanks go back to the "music person," who reorganizes remaining cards, spacing them evenly into a fresh circle.
6. Play continues until one team spells *forgiveness*.

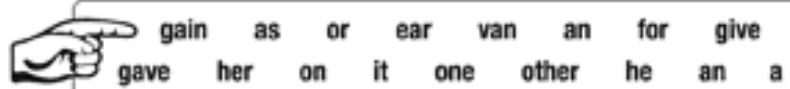


FOLLOW GOD'S EXAMPLE

In a letter to the church in Colossae, the apostle Paul wrote about the importance of forgiveness.

•••• DIRECTIONS ••••

To complete Colossians 3:13 (NIV), use the smaller words to fill in the larger words.



B _____ w _____ h each

ot _____ d _____ give

_____ e an _____ if _____ y

of you h _____ grie _____ ce

a _____ st some _____ .

For _____ as t _____ L _____ d

for _____ you."

COLOSSIANS 3:13, NIV

Answers: "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you." Colossians 3:13, NIV

