
THE BELLRINGER



December 2019



I have a wonderful neighbor. She is loud, fun loving, and has a zeal for life that is contagious. She's a quilter, an avid church-goer, a total fan of her children and grandchildren, and a neighbor you can rely on. When she turned 70, she bought a bright red car, because she always wanted one and she could. Her husband had a stroke about 18 months ago, and she'd often come over and vent her frustration, or just cry. If she needs something, she'll call and say, "Can you come down" or "Can I come over?" She never hesitates to speak the truth, or to say what she needs, or to hold back something she can offer another.

And so when I sat down next to her at a neighborhood Christmas gathering, I should not have been shocked in the slightest when just moments after I had greeted here she abruptly said, "I had a Botox treatment on my bladder!" It wasn't really that it was offensive; it was just about the last thing I would have expected to come out of anyone's mouth, including hers. We'd really not even exchanged the usual "Hi, how are you?" kind of conversation, and with this near conversation starter, it felt like we had rapidly moved past personal boundaries of information into some other zone.

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She went on to share a few more details and as I listened to her I was thinking, "How do I respond to this? What does one say?" I thought about the woman who had suffered from hemorrhages for 12 years and just touched Jesus' cloak and was healed (Matthew 9:20-21). I thought about the lame man begging at the gate of the Temple who Peter and John healed (Acts 3:1-9). My neighbor had been waiting 40 years for a solution to a problem, and this was it. She was experiencing joy in her healing, and just couldn't help but share. I realized she was, in a way, made new, and being the larger-than-life kind of person that she is, she wanted to tell someone else the good news. "Good for you," I said. "Good for you."

While I have to confess that I had a "Way TMI" moment, I also appreciate my neighbor for her honesty. Many times we have

something in our lives that is broken - - physically, emotionally, or spiritually, and it takes a lot of courage and trust to share. I've known my neighbor for many years and never knew of this thing from which she was healed until now. It is hard at times to share our burdens.

I also appreciate my neighbor for her hope and her joy. This woman never ceases to see what is possible, and what might be. It reminded me of our amazing God and how, even when we may not realize it, God is making all things new. God is making all things new. And she didn't keep her newness to herself, but shared the good news everywhere.

As we enter this New Year, I pray for your burdens and worries, that they would be lightened in the New Year. Please know that we as a faith community can help carry one another's heavy loads, and know that others care. And I pray also for what God is doing to make all things new in you, and me, in the congregation, the community and the world. May we see all that God is doing, receive the healing and the blessing God offers, and share our joy with others.

What a mighty God we have. A God of every New Year. A God who is making all things new. Here's a little prayer on God's newness from the International Presbytery of the Church of Scotland to help us as we enter this new year.

*In the beginning God created all things,
and God saw that they were good.*

*At our beginning, God created us
unique and irreplaceable,
loved and wanted by God,
known and treasured by God
even before He created us.*

*In all our new beginnings,
God creates something new
Lord God, King of Creation,
open our eyes to see your presence,
open our souls to sense your presence,
and open our hearts to love your presence,
here in this life,
and beyond it in eternity.*

Amen.

Christ's peace- Diane 

Stewardship Moment

Our stewardship season was completed in October and this information was shared with you then. We are including this information in this month's Bellringer as a reminder and with the hope that you will find the information helpful.

Stewardship is a lot like Stone Soup. When we start out, it might seem like we don't have very much - - or even anything at all - - but when we put our gifts together we end up with something really good - - Church Soup!
IT TAKES A CONGREGATION!

- Our church budget is based on the contributions we receive. In the last couple of years, we have had increases in our annual expenses. Pastor Diane was hired from June through December of 2016 for 25 hours per week and then full time on a yearly contract basis for 2017 and 2018. The secretary was promoted to an Administrative Assistant position and her hourly rate and hours worked have also increased. We were blessed to hire two professional and highly skilled accompanists as well as a very professional and experienced choir director. These gifted staff help us to glorify God and enhance our worship at each service.
- Your pledge is a good faith commitment. It is not a binding contract. It is something that the Session, in good faith, counts on to meet the budgeted expenses that this church incurs each month. Just as you have monthly bills to meet your housing, food, fuel and other expenses, we, your church has similar obligations. When you commit to a quarterly, monthly, or weekly pledge, the amount that you pledge is multiplied by 4, 12, or 52 and that is the amount that the Session uses in the annual budget planning.

We have busy families and traveling members and friends. If you are going to be absent, please consider paying your pledge ahead of time or make up missed weeks once you are home again. Several members have established an electronic payment from their bank account. Some retirees with various investments/IRA's have RMD's (Required Minimum Distribution's) and can have their yearly tax-free pledge sent directly to the church and this is accepted by the IRS as a tax deduction.

I, as Treasurer, am working on electronic giving through our web site to increase access and ease of giving.

- If you have a life changing event or issue that makes it difficult for you to meet your pledge, we understand.
- Please pray about your pledge and realize that your gifts are used to continue the work of this church and the mission to serve this community and those who we serve outside our doors.

There is a lot to do. We have many wonderful programs and opportunities that have been added in the last couple of years. We look forward to the fruit they bring to our lives and our community. We pray for this congregation and its growth to a worshipping community of a size that is self-sustaining. This would ensure that our reserve funds can truly be reserve funds and provide increased stability for our church now and in the future. In the fall of 2018, for the first time since 2013, I had to take \$10,000.00 from the reserve funds to meet the church expenses.

- Together, We Are THE Church. To give you an idea of how our gifts make up the Stone Soup of the church, Diane and the Stewardship Ministry put together a Narrative Budget for you to review. This is a document that gives you a breakdown of our budget in terms of our church mission and provides some examples of how dollars are used. If you would like a copy, please let me know. If you prefer an electronic copy, let me know and I will gladly email it to you.

If you have questions or need more information, I would be happy to talk with you. There will be more opportunities over the coming weeks to gather information and ask questions also.

Thank you. Mike Seiler 

January Happenings



Book club is back in session this month. They will be meeting at the church at 10:00am on January 8th. They will be discussing the book, I Still Dream About You by Fannie Flagg.



Sunday, January 13th is our next session of Movies That Matter with Rev. Ed McNulty, nationally recognized film critic. Our movie for this session is a documentary on Rev. Fred Rogers, titled "*Won't You Be My Neighbor?*" This wonderful documentary tells the story of a children's television programming star who touched the lives of thousands of children through *Mr. Rogers Neighborhood* as well as his education and wellbeing advocacy for children. In addition to telling the story of Fred Rogers, the documentary poses some important faith and life questions. And, we'll find out the true scoop on some rumors about Fred Rogers. Pastor Diane has seen this and gives it two thumbs up, as well as confesses to shedding a few tears while watching it. Join us! We meet at 2:00 p.m. and refreshments are provided.

The Third Thirty

January 20th is our next meeting of The Third Thirty! Join us for nourishment of body and mind after worship. Our topic is decluttering. Bring ideas, lessons learned, suggestions and resources to share. Sue Seiler will facilitate our discussion and provide valuable information and ideas to all of us. In addition, there will be soup and sandwiches to strengthen us for the journey. We will meet about 11:45 in the CE room.

Annual Meeting- The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held Sunday, January 20th, 2019 immediately following worship. Please plan to attend this important part of the life of our congregation. The 2018 Annual Report will be available Sunday, January 13th so that you have time to read the information prior to the meeting.

Beans to Go- will take place February 2nd. We will be making our famous Ham and Beans for carry out. Orders will be taken January 17-25 with pick up Saturday February 2 Price: \$7.50 a quart and \$4.00 ½ quart. To place an order call the office at 937-848-2378 or see Sue Seiler.

Announcements



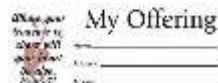
Just a reminder: All Committee annual reports are due into the office by January 6 to be included in the annual report. Please email the secretary at sallys@bellbrookpc.org or drop it in the office.



The directory will be completed by the end of January. Please contact the office with your contact information, your phone number, address and email address. sallys@bellbrookpc.org or by calling the office at 848-2378.

If you would include your birthdays and anniversaries we can get our special days lists undated as well.

Per Capita for 2019 will be \$48.20 per member and is due by the end of January. Please note there is an envelope specifically for your per capita payment in your box of offering envelopes.



Offering envelopes are ready for pick-up on the table in the back of the sanctuary.



Weather Closings and Delays: During the winter season the Church will be closed whenever a Level 2 or Level 3 Snow or an Ice emergency has been declared for the local area. At all other times when the church is closed due to questionable travel conditions a message will be posted on the church answering machine. A closing announcement may also be seen on WDTN-TV Channel 2 or on its web site at <http://wdtn.com> under *Closings and Delays*. Whatever the situation, members should judge for themselves whether or not it is safe to travel to church services or activities in adverse weather conditions - even if they have a role or responsibility in that service or activity.



Reading through the Bible Scriptures for January

- Day 1 - Luke 5:27-39; Genesis 1:1-2:25; Psalm 1
- Day 2 - Luke 6:1-26; Genesis 3-5; Psalm 2
- Day 3 - Luke 6:27-49; Genesis 6:1-7:24; Psalm 3
- Day 4 - Luke 7:1-17; Genesis 8-10; Psalm 4
- Day 5 - Luke 7:18-50; Genesis 11; Psalm 5
- Day 6 - Luke 8:1-25; Genesis 12; Psalm 6
- Day 7 - Luke 8:26-56; Genesis 13:1-14:24; Psalm 7
- Day 8 - Luke 9:1-27; Genesis 15; Psalm 8
- Day 9 - Luke 9:28-62; Genesis 16; Psalm 9
- Day 10 - Luke 10:1-20; Genesis 17; Psalm 10
- Day 11 - Luke 10:21-42; Genesis 18; Psalm 11
- Day 12 - Luke 11:1-28; Genesis 19; Psalm 12
- Day 13 - Luke 11:29-54; Genesis 20; Psalm 13
- Day 14 - Luke 12:1-31; Genesis 21; Psalm 14
- Day 15 - Luke 12:32-59; Genesis 22; Psalm 15
- Day 16 - Luke 13:1-17; Genesis 23; Psalm 16
- Day 17 - Luke 13:18-35; Genesis 24; Psalm 17
- Day 18 - Luke 14:1-24; Genesis 25; Psalm 18
- Day 19 - Luke 14:25-35; Genesis 26; Psalm 19
- Day 20 - Luke 15; Genesis 27:1-45; Psalm 20
- Day 21 - Luke 16; Genesis 27:46-28:22; Psalm 21
- Day 22 - Luke 17; Genesis 29:1-30; Psalm 22
- Day 23 - Luke 18:1-17; Genesis 29:31-30:43; Psalm 23
- Day 24 - Luke 18:18-43; Genesis 31; Psalm 24
- Day 25 - Luke 19:1-27; Genesis 32-33; Psalm 25
- Day 26 - Luke 19:28-48; Genesis 34; Psalm 26
- Day 27 - Luke 20:1-26; Genesis 35:1-36:43; Psalm 27
- Day 28 - Luke 20:27-47; Genesis 37; Psalm 28
- Day 29 - Luke 21; Genesis 38; Psalm 29
- Day 30 - Luke 22:1-38; Genesis 39; Psalm 30

Per Capita

*This information was shared with you in December.
We are sharing it again with the hope that you find it informative.*

This season of advent is one of hope, blessing and expectation for us and other Presbyterian churches throughout our country. It is a time for thanksgiving and gratitude for all that we have and continue to receive from God.

It is a time when churches formalize their budgets for the coming year. The Session, Boards, Ministry Teams and Treasurer of TBPC have been working hard to create a budget to present to you at the Annual Meeting on January 20, 2019.

A time when we are asked to provide financial support (Per Capita) to the General Assembly of the PCUSA, the Synod of the Covenant and the Miami Valley Presbytery. The following is a reminder of the role and importance that each of these provide to our church:

The General Assembly consists of commissioners elected by the presbyteries. Half of the commissioners are ruling elders and half are teaching elders or pastors. Few will have ever been commissioners to the General Assembly before, but most will have served in one of the other governing bodies or our church such as the session, presbytery or the synod.

Diane is currently a commissioner to the synod and I serve on the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery of the Miami Valley.

****In 2001 this church had been served by a part time pastor for the previous 15 years. The elders at that time stepped out in faith and made a prayerful decision to seek a fulltime pastor. The General Assembly provided a grant of \$50,000 to support that decision.**

The Synod of the Covenant:

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) organizes its many congregations into presbyteries and then into synods. Presbyteries are the district governing bodies which are made up of various congregations. Each presbytery also belongs to a regional governing body, known as a synod. Synods act as a form of administration between presbyteries and the General Assembly.

The Synod of the Covenant is one of 16 synods of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Our Synod consists of 11 presbyteries and nearly 700 congregations in Michigan and Ohio.

****The Synod of the Covenant supports various mission requests and in 2016 BPC received a grant from them in the amount of \$4,910 for mission and building repairs and space improvements. In 2019 TBPC will be seeking another grant from the Synod in the amount of \$5000.**

The Presbytery of the Miami Valley:

We are 8400 Christians who live in the Miami Valley of Ohio and are members of 49 congregations called "Presbyterian Churches." We hold beliefs that are central to our Christian faith – namely that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that, through Him, salvation is offered to all persons. We believe that the Bible is God's word to us, recording and conveying God's acts in human history and giving instruction for how we should live. We believe that the Church is where God's people worship, learn, work and are in fellowship together.

Presbyterians are characterized by a particular form of church government in which churches elect their pastors and also elders who, together, form a body called the "session" which directs the life of a particular church. Each of the congregations in an area send their pastors and some elders to a body (called the presbytery) which oversees the life and work of the congregations and provides support and

encouragement. The Presbytery of the Miami Valley covers twelve counties in southwestern Ohio.

****In 2019 TBPC will seek a grant from the Northminster Mission Fund of the Presbytery of the Miami Valley for \$5000.**

The Financial support that we are asked to contribute this year is the following:

General Assembly: \$8.95

Synod of the Covenant: \$3.25


Presbytery of the Miami Valley: \$36.00

TOTAL PER MEMBER: \$48.20

These funds are in addition to your annual pledged amount to TBPC. I ask you to prayerfully give to these ministries and missions so that the work and support that they provide to all of the churches within the national and local Presbyteries may continue. This is a responsibility for all of us as members.

Please remember that we have benefited from financial support from each of these ministries in the past, and we are applying for grants in the coming year.

The Bellbrook Presbyterian Church's total Per Capita support will be \$2,544.

(53 members X \$48.20). Thank you. Sue Seiler 

Now's a Great Time to Join a Bible Study!

If you have been thinking about joining one of the two Bible studies offered each week, now is a great time to do so.

The Monday noon Bible study is working through a video series titled Great Figures of the New Testament. This video from The Great Courses presents twenty-four lectures taught by Professor Amy-Jill Levine, Professor of New Testament Studies at Vanderbilt University Divinity School. The lectures are independent of one another, so you can watch one or all. The lecture is followed by a time of discussion, and then we pray for concerns and joys. This group meets next on Monday, January 7th, with a video on "Martha, Mary, and Lazarus" and then January 14th's video will be on "Doubting' Thomas".

The Wednesday evening study group (meeting at 6:00 p.m. each week) will finish a study of Redeeming Scrooge on January 8th. Our next study will begin on January 16th, with the book A Bigger Table (January 16th – February 27th). This award-winning book asks the question, "How can we who claim the faith in Christ expand the table and embody the community Jesus envisioned?". For Lent, our study will be Because of This, I Rejoice, a study on Philippians from The Upper Room. The Wednesday evening Bible study is full of wide-ranging opinions and life experiences, and abundant conversation.

Both studies are open to all. If you would like more information, please see Pastor Diane.



- 4- Glen Janus
- 12 - Andrea Contestable
- 26- Dave Van Pelt
- 28 - Kim Hensley
- 31- Betty Blose



- 5 - Larry and Doris Dumford *65 years 2017
- 15- Glen and Kelly Janus



Special dates

- New Year's Day, *January 1, 2019*
 - Epiphany, *January 6, 2019*
 - Baptism of the Lord, *January 13, 2019*
 - Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, *January 18-25, 2019*
 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day, *January 21, 2019*
-



Thanks to everyone who contributed to or helped with our Christmas mission and outreach to the Alternative School and our local Bellbrook family (served in connection with the Family Resource Center). Thanks to your generosity and a lot of effort by many people, including members of the community, we were able to provide over \$ 1,200 to the School, an SUV full of shelf-stable foods for students over the holiday break, holiday treat bags for the students, and a luncheon for the school staff! WOW! The local family that we provided gifts for received an abundance of gifts, including mattresses for family members who had been sleeping on the floor. Thank you, thank you to all who helped! A special thanks to Alice and Bill Wiseman, Kathy Beleny, Tammy Hodson, Candy Garrison, and Sue and Mike Seiler for making this happen. What a wonderful gift to the glory of God and the joy of the community!

January

		1	2	3	4	5
			6:00 pm Bible Study 7:15 pm Choir Church Office Open	Session 1pm		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Communion 8:45 am Keystone Class 9:30 am Choir Practice 10:00 am Worship 10:20 am Children's Sunday School 11:00am Fellowship hour	10:00am Deacons Noon-Bible study	Book Club 10:00am Winter's Library 4:30-5:30	11:00am Bellcreek Seniors 6:00 pm Bible Study 7:15 pm Choir 7:00pm Troop 75	Trustees 7:00pm Worship 7:00pm		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Birthdays 8:45 am Keystone Class 9:30 am Choir Practice 10:00 am Worship 10:20 am Children's Sunday School 11:00am Fellowship hour 2:00pm Movies That Matter	Noon-Bible study 6:30 Historical Society		11:00am Bellcreek Seniors 6:00 pm Bible Study 7:15 pm Choir 7:00pm Troop 75	Beans to Go orders being accepted		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Anniversaries 8:45 am Keystone Class 9:30 am Choir Practice 10:00 am Worship 10:20 am Children's Sunday School 11:00am Annual Meeting 11:30am Third Thirty	Noon-Bible study	 Men's Breakfast 8:30 (BBC)	11:00am Bellcreek Seniors 6:00 pm Bible Study 7:15 pm Choir 7:00pm Troop 75		Final day to order Beans to Go orders	
27	28	29	30			
8:45 am Keystone 9:30 am Choir Practice 10:00 am Worship 10:20 am Children's Sunday School 11:00am Fellowship Hour	Noon-Bible study	Winter's Library 4:30-5:30	11:00am Bellcreek Seniors 6:00 pm Bible Study 7:15 pm Choir 7:00pm Troop 75		Beans to Go pick up February 2	

MISSION AND OUTREACH

I am amazed at the amount of giving and extending of the hand of Christ that this church does and the variety of folks that are served by the generosity of all of you. Following is a list of the giving that is and has been accomplished. Please let me know if I have left any off the list. They are in no particular order:

Clothes That Work, The Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Resource Center, the Alternative School, Christmas families, school supplies and backpacks, Interfaith Hospitality Network, Spring Valley Library, Winter's Library, the Scouts, Kirkmont, Xenia Food Pantry, Bean Supper, Tyke Shop, One Great Hour of Sharing, Pentecost donations for Youth, Presbyterian Disaster Fund, Computer classes, transportation for members and food donations for those in need. Say AMEN! for we are a mighty force doing God's work!

In 2019, I and some from Session would like all that are interested in Mission and Outreach to attend a meeting, DTBD, so that we can better organize our efforts and develop a plan to prioritize and agree upon new projects. This initial meeting would be to share information on our current mission and outreach initiatives, help determine who is interested in being part of a Mission and Outreach Ministry team, see if from the group that is interested we can elect a Chair of Ministry, and then identify a date for a next meeting. From there the Team will need to form a plan for going forward, including looking at mission/outreach efforts for the coming year, and seeing what the congregation feels the Ministry will then serve as the coordinating point for all of our Mission efforts, increasing communication, streamlining effort, and ensuring that we are focusing our time and talent as best as possible.

Forming this Ministry team is an essential part of laying the foundation for the growth of our church, and our service to the world. I hope you will prayerfully consider being part of this team and/or sharing your ideas for Mission and Outreach for the future. I also hope that the children and youth of our church will participate. For this first meeting, we will meet on either of the following dates:

January 27th at 11:30AM (after worship)

February 10th at 11:30AM (after worship)

Please suggest additional dates and times. Susan




The Confession of 1967

Over the next few weeks, our confession in worship will come from The Confession of 1967. This wonderful confessional statement includes beautiful language, thoughtful insight, and theological guidance. Here's a little bit about this confession.

For most of our history, American Presbyterians looked to the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms for theological guidance. The Confession of 1967 challenged the church to think in new ways about authority and the role of the confessions. The Westminster Confession and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms were not eliminated, but were placed in the context of a book of confessions that included creeds and confessions from throughout the church's history.

The Confession of 1967 lifts up key insights of the Protestant Reformation and emphasizes faith primarily "as trust in Christ, to whom Scripture witnesses, rather than a mastery of a theological system" (Book of Confessions, Study Edition, Revised, page 361). At the same time, the Confession of 1967 insists that the confessional standards are relevant to the church today in understanding scripture. The Confession of 1967 focuses on the theme of reconciliation. "Forgiveness is not just a matter of words; rather, it opens us to a new way of life. Forgiveness is not just a legal transaction between God and individuals; rather it restores community between them, as well as among individuals and groups that have been alienated from one another." (Ibid, pg. 363-364).

If you would like more information on the Confession, or to read it in full, it is available electronically and also in the office. May we be enriched and blessed on this Confession of 1967 journey! 



Sharon Berryhill
Allene Rader
Andrew Berryhill
Declan
Betty Blose and all of Megan's family
Will Wiseman
Family of Karen Collins
Family of Joe Gilmore
Doris Dumford
Barb Wagner
Ray Aldrich
Eva Sexton
Family of Bud Steuver
Don and Shirley Hall
Wilma Harvard
Capt. Edward Boncek
Alzheimer patients and caregivers
Cancer patients and caregivers

A prayer of new beginning.

... this is a time to be born.
So we turn to you, God of our life
God of all our years,
God of our beginning....
We dare pray that you will do for us
and among us and through us
what is needful for our newness.
Give us the power to be receptive,
to take the newness you give
There is a time to be born, and it is now.
We sense the pangs and groans of your newness.
Come here now in the name of Jesus. Amen.
by Walter Brueggemann



Terry Allen- 620-4811
Dorothy Evans 317-5008 or 287-7219
Kim Hensley 848-4756
Allene Circle-Rader 848-8218
Donna Ruschau 429-2107
Sue Seiler 848-2043. 478-1426 or
604-1426
Call with assurance of confidentiality,
love and prayer



Virginia
Darlene
Betty
Bud
Barb
Larry and Doris
Ben and Charlotte

To visit or send cards please check
with office for addresses.



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