



The Pastor's Searchlight—February, 2018:

The story is told of a wedding reception disc jockey who was polling the guests to see who had been married the longest. Finding a couple who'd been married more than 50 years, the entertainer asked the wife, "What advice would you give to the newly married couple?" "The three most important words in a marriage are, "You're probably right,"" the woman replied. The DJ then asked the same of her husband. "She's probably right," he sighed.

In the past couple of months, I've been inundated with wedding requests for 2018, and so I've begun the often-exhausting process of pre-marital counseling with couples. Always a joy to journey with a couple through that process of getting to know each other deeply and looking long and hard at their relationship strengths and weaknesses and being able to come away with the renewed determination to invest in each other and nurture their relationship over the long haul!! In my marriage relationship, Marcy is the strength and I'm the weakness! When I think of God's grace in my life, Marcy is at the top of my list just after Christ's gift of salvation. As we celebrate Valentine's Day this month, I am reminded of God's grace all over again! I ask often, "Why would Marcy want to choose me?" And that's exactly what I repeatedly ask of God, "Why Lord, would you choose me?"—when I so often feel like I've failed Him! Marcy has chosen me because it says something of the quality of her love, not my worthiness! And so it is with God, He has chosen us because His love is amazing...not because we are worthy. And yet, receiving His love transforms us into worthwhile objects of His love! Praise God for His indescribable gift! *God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners (His enemies), Christ died FOR us.* (Romans 5:8) Happy Valentine's Day!!

Yours In Christ, Pastor Dave (reved87@verizon.net)

Don't forget! The Deacons have special gold envelopes in the pew racks for those who wish to donate to their caring & assistance ministry on communion Sunday each month. **Please be aware** that we now have **children's activity bags** for any children who aren't interested in using the nursery or children's church programs during worship. These bags include crayons, coloring pages, story books, & snacks. These bags should be returned after worship for continued use, but the snack and coloring pages can be kept by the child.

Worship

Feb. 4 (communion; Feb. birthday off/coffee hr./annual mtg.; "Souper Bowl" off/g): "Second Chances" series—The Freedom of Emancipation (Philemon & Onesimus)

Feb. 11 (Sunday Suppers mission event): "Second Chances" series—The Freedom of Doubt (Timothy)

Upcoming Lenten/Holy Week Worship Series:

"Thy Will Be Done"—"Not as I will, but as You will," Jesus prayed to his Father the night before he went to the cross for our salvation. And that is our prayer as well this Lent as we seek to do God's will in our lives, as we draw near to the observance of Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection during Holy Week. Each service in this series focuses on a different aspect of God's will at work among us. Biblical characters are used as insightful reference points each week to guide us in following our Lord more nearly day by day. Once again there will be lots of extra devotional materials for children and adults available for your Lenten journeys, and special tokens for the kids each Sunday for the children's message. There will also be a special Lenten study shared by Belle Valley and Elmwood Ave. Churches on Tuesdays, from 6:30-8pm (w/snacks & goodies)—**see the accompanying announcement.**

Feb 14: Ash Wednesday "God's Will and God's Promise" (Abraham & Isaac)—7pm @ Emmanuel Presbyterian Church—a shared service with Belle Valley, Elmwood, and Emmanuel; including communion, the imposition of ashes, a joint choir anthem, and a sermon dialogue with Revs. Rick Cepsis and Dave Edmunds.

Feb. 18 (Sunday, Lent I): "God's Will and My Inadequacy" (Moses)

Feb. 25 (Sunday, Lent II) (Penny Sunday): "God's Will and My Dreams" (David)

Mar. 4 (Sunday, Lent III) (communion; Mar. birthday off/coffee hr.): "God's Will and My Identity" (Mary)

Mar. 11 (Sunday, Lent IV) (Deacons' pasta dinner fundraiser): "God's Will and My World View" (Paul)

Mar. 18 (Sunday, Lent V): "God's Will and My Response" (Lydia)

Mar. 25 (Palm Sunday) (Penny Sunday): "God's Will When We Are Not Willing"

Mar. 29 (Maundy Thursday): "God's Will and Joyful Service"—7pm @ Elmwood Ave. Presbyterian Church—a shared service with Belle Valley, Elmwood, and Emmanuel; including communion, a joint choir anthem, and a sermon dialogue with Revs. Rick Cepsis and Dave Edmunds.

Mar. 30 (Good Friday): "God's Will Is Done"—Men's Communion Breakfast @ 6:30am @ Belle Valley Presbyterian Church—join in the fellowship and sacredness of beginning this Holy Weekend with a special focus. We'll enjoy a catered breakfast buffet (\$10/each), and a brief devotion with communion. This event is open to the entire Erie area (of at least Presbyterians—though all are welcome)! RSVP to Dave Edmunds (397-1861, reved87@verizon.net) by Monday, Feb. 26.

April 1 (Easter Sunday): "God's Will for the New Creation"—Please feel free to join with Belle Valley in the 68th Annual Community "Sonrise" Service @ the Wintergreen Gorge Cemetery (by the gazebo at the top of the hill) @ 6:30am. We will worship together as the sun, and the Son, rises. Then remember our Service of the Resurrection @ 11am, with communion, chancel choir, the glory of the lilies, and the Glory of the Son! Followed by an Easter Egg Hunt for the kids @ 12:15pm. *(Stay tuned for more info about purchasing Easter flowers for our chancel.)*



Praying for: *(Please contact us with any changes to or removals from this list)* The Leube/Mitchell/Leasure families, Rusty Kerr,



Marlene Nunemaker, Maxine Fields, Joan Ragen, Robert Agnew, Zach Napierkowski, Corey Poulson, Jacquie & Dave Phillips, Bev Hopkins, Ruth Ridgeway, Ralph Acker, Kathy Feidler, Jack Donovan, Adam Muse, Dale Albert, Mary Ann Laskey, Cathy Marshall, Jim Glass, Dave Tanner, John Campbell, Liv Jordan, Jeremiah Murosky, Kristina Humes, Kristina Hines, Deb Gerlock, Elaina Wilcox, Kirsten Smit, Paul Tirpak, Pam Ames, Mary Nelson, Mindy Tayler, Billy Federowicz, Leslie Day, Riley Balcita, Stevie Proborse, Tracy Simpson, Brian Gibbs, Bruce Harvey, Jim Bojarski, Don Mennini, Pat Kocher, Tim Vincent, Don & Judie Shrubbs, Larvetta Mokwa, Don Bigelow, Delilah Gregory, Marcie Azzerello, Anna Aponte, Carla Witt, Marie Altadona, John Fischer, Ina Gordon, Amy Robertson, Bill Collins, Karen Clarke, Tammy Knapp, Jay Miller, Linda Obrochta, Becky Smith, Joe Rosario, Robert Moskel, Ralph Butler, Tim Sameki, Ellie Poulson, Betty Mendez, Mary Lou Joyce, Lynn Eller, Tony Friday, Sonja Bemis, Deb Smolinsky, Mike Sokalski, Linda Clinger, Sam Mattocks, Rick Grzelak, George Wellsby, Kim Warzbaugh; the victims of storm, flooding, tornado, fire, and earthquake across the US, Caribbean, Mexico and Iran, the victims of senseless shootings around the world, a fair resolution for the Dreamers (DACA), Erie's growing epidemic of heroine & opioid addictions, Isis terrorism tragedies around the world, current military services personnel (*especially Jared Marzka*), the Ghana mission partnership (*We pray especially for the Chereponi District: 11 churches, 528 members, and District Pastor M. L. Agbovi*), Josh Heikkila (*our PCUSA W. Africa Liaison*), Salome Mansa Oye (*newly ordained pastor serving in the Katiejeli district for whom we provided educational scholarship*), the Wapuli Health Clinic, the Bindati Family; **Presbytery preayers:** Revs. Rick Cepsis, Jim Moelk, Rachel Johns, Jim Haas, Jim McCormack, and Jeff Fowler.

****Don't Forget:** During the fall/winter, the church is on a zoning heat process, therefore, be sure to close all doors behind you when finished! This saves heating costs!

Upcoming Events: Sunday Worship—11am

- ***Recycling:** drop-offs anytime (newspaper in west property trailer/aluminum cans) ***Communion**, 1st Sun. ***Penny Sunday**, Last Sun.
***Deacons**, 2nd Sun. ***Annual Cong'l. mtg.**, 2/4 (after worship) ***Joint Session/Deacons mtg.**, 2/12, 6:30pm
***"Souper Bowl" off'g**, 2/4 (after worship)—for the 2nd Harvest Food Bank ***Adult Study Group**, 2/6, 10:30am @ Harborcreek Perkins'
***Joint Ash Wednesday Communion Svc.**, 2/14, 7pm @ Emmanuel Presby. Church ***Sunday Suppers @ 1st Covenant**, 2/11 @ 3:15pm
***Joint Confirmation Classes begin Feb. 7**, 5-6:30pm @ Elmwood Church (2816 Elmwood Ave.) ***Lenten Study**, begins 2/20, 6:30pm

"Per Capita" Giving: For those who are able to pay their Per Capita for 2018 (\$31 per member) there are envelopes available on the table in the foyer. Your "Per Capita" giving supports many significant mission efforts throughout our presbytery and the world-wide Presbyterian Church. Pray about your gift to our larger church mission efforts!

Please Minister to Members Challenged by Chronic Health Issues (cards, calls, visits, and prayer):

Bill Bullock: Elmwood Gardens, 2628 Elmwood Ave., #E-6, 16508; **Janet Crain:** 1417 E. 31st St., 16504 (616-0114);
Rusty Kerr: Sarah Reed Retirement Ctr., #139, 227 W. 22nd St., 16502 (737-1372); **Jean Moorhead:** 1023
Rasperry St., 16502 (459-9077); **Marge Parker:** Independence Court, 41 W. Gore Rd., #252, 16504 (864-4867);
Harold Keefe: 4322 Pine Ave., 16504 (315-9594); **MaryAnn Stein:** 919 E. 8th St., Erie 16503 (520-5082); **Doris**
Feeney: St. Mary's-East, 607 E. 26th St., #114, 16504 (528-0108); **Dan & Diane Horton:** 643 Elk St., Franklin, PA, 16323 (860-9173, 282-9944),
email: 2525@gmail.com.



Financial Secretary Notes:

1. Anyone that wants tithing envelopes for 2018 please let Gwen Ebert know (825-2989 or 860-4477).
2. Anyone (member or non-member) that wants/needs a printed record of their giving to the church must have a number in order for their giving to be recorded. If you do not have a number and would like one please contact Gwen Ebert.



Upcoming Confirmation: If you are ages 11 to 15 or have not been confirmed and would like to be, we will be having a Confirmation class beginning Feb. 7, 5-6:30pm @ Elmwood Ave. Presbyterian Church. We will meet Wednesdays through May and then plan for Confirmation Sunday on June 3. Please contact Pastor Dave for more information.

Any Church Family Needs... sickness, hospitalization, funeral reception after the loss of a loved one, financial need, etc. Please contact the Deacons thru Kim Ragen (392-5831)—confidentiality is maintained! **Are you or anyone you know in any kind of emotional crisis or grief over loss** (loved one, employment, mobility, independence, etc.)? We have access to trained Stephen Ministers: gifted listeners, free, and confidential. Call Pastor Dave (397-1861).

Food Collections: Please keep up all the good work of your ongoing support of canned goods and staples for the Mt. Carmel food pantry. There is also a list of suggested food staples that are most welcome at that receptacle (for example: peanut butter, spaghetti sauce, pasta, tuna, chicken, etc.). We also continue our City Mission food pantry collection. Both receptacles are in the foyer.



Belle Valley's Recycling Ministry Needs YOU! Unloading the newspaper trailer onto a delivery truck will take place (check w/ Charlie Blanchard first: 825-3925). **New recycling criteria** please take note: only aluminum cans, newspaper (and old phone books). **We also recycle printer ink cartridges** from your own personal computer systems—the collection bin is in the foyer by the phone (we receive funds for this recycling!). **We also recycle cell phones!!** We are asking you to donate any old cell phones, and those of family/friends. The collection bin is in the foyer.



Interested in Exploring Membership? What exactly does it mean to become a member of Belle Valley Presbyterian Church? Why would I want to take that step of commitment? What do I need to know about this congregation (its history, design, and vision) to help me decide? If you'd be interested in further discussion (no strings attached!), please contact Pastor Dave to RSVP (397-1861)

2018 Rummage Sale Rescued! We are excited agreed to take on the coordination of the Rummage Smolinsky, Joyce Sampson, Becky Cousins, Darlene nearer, we will need everyone's help in whatever ways items for donation to the sale.

Thanks!

to announce that we have a group of volunteers who've Sale in May: Sandy McConahy, Fred Marshall, Patty Leasure, Patricia Potts, Debi Johnson. As we draw you can be involved. And continue to put aside your

WE 
VOLUNTEERS

Would You Like to Join the BVPC Nursery Care* or Custodial Teams? If you're able to serve BVPC by participating in a rotation of volunteers who help serve the needs of younger families at worship, or to keep the facility clean from week to week, then contact Chris Tombaugh (882-8932). We will provide the training and answer any questions you have. *You need to have your PA clearances (but those can be obtained free of charge via the internet, and we can help you do that).

2018 Worship Schedule! Please register your interest in participating in this year's worship tasks as a volunteer (liturgists, ushers, acolytes, nursery help) by contacting Chris Tombaugh (882-8932).



Mar. 11 Deacons' Pasta Dinner Fundraiser! Sunday, 3/11 from 11:30 – 2pm. Home-made sauce, meatballs and pasta w/ Italian bread, salad, choice of desserts (donated by you, of course). Adults: \$8; kids 5-12: \$5 (kids under 5 FREE); families: \$25. Containers of sauce will be sold @ \$5 each. Please RSVP w/ Kim Ragen (392-5831).

Sunday, Feb. 11, Elmwood & Belle Valley will join to cook/serve the Sunday Suppers at 1st Church of the Covenant. We are serving spaghetti, meatballs, salad & Italian bread. Volunteers are needed from 3:15-6:00 to help prepare food, serve food/drinks/dessert, wash dishes and clean up. Donations of cookies, cakes, brownies, fruit desserts would be appreciated (They can be home baked). Donations can be brought to church that morning, 2/11, and we will transport to the dinner. We are planning to serve 150 people. This meal is served every Sunday to those in the community that are less fortunate or facing difficulties. Doug Ebert is looking for volunteers to help. Simply sign up in the foyer or contact Doug (860-4477). Also, we'll be looking for volunteers to help at the winter overflow homeless shelter, also at 1st Church of the Covenant, in March.



Our Mission Partnership with the Upper Northern Presbytery of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ghana:

As you pray for this partnership, our church has been partnered with a cluster of LEP churches in prayer for a district of churches in the Upper Northern Presbytery of EPC-Ghana: Seeking to be faithful to God we encourage faithful prayer for each other. While it is good to pray for all churches, your Ghana Mission Team encourages prayer for specific groups of churches. You can certainly pray whenever you desire but you are especially encouraged to pray at least once a month for your sister congregations.



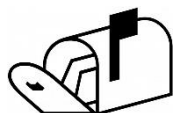
Chereponi District

11 churches
126 male members;
183 female members;
219 children
District Pastor:
Rev. Joshua Nabuer

Lake Erie Presbytery

Ripley, NY
North East
Harborcreek
Erie, Eastminster
Erie, Emmanuel
Erie, Belle Valley
Erie, New Hope
Erie, First Covenant
Erie, Elmwood Avenue

Having Trouble Controlling the Way You Eat? Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous is based on the 12 Steps of AA. It is a fellowship of women and men who are recovering from the disease of food addiction. There are no dues, fees, or weigh-ins. Weekly mtgs. take place at: Erie Church of Christ, 2317 W. Grandview Blvd. (Tuesdays, 6:30-8pm); St. Augustine of Canterbury Episcopal Church, 427 Plum St., Edinboro (Thursdays, 6:30-8pm). Visit our website at: "foodaddicts.org."



Recent Correspondence: *The Alstadt family sent a Christmas letter with their card to the congregation: Rich, Stephanie, & Valerie traveled to Germany this past year to visit friends and family, as well as cruising out of Miami to Key West, FL and Cozumel, Mexico. Jason & Valerie moved into their own apartments this past year. Rich continues to work at Bloom Engineering Co., and hopes to retire in 2 yrs. Jason works for JP Morgan in Newark, Delaware. Valerie earned her PhD in Analytical Chemistry, and works with the US government in the Aberdeen Proving Grounds. She currently lives in Abingdon, MD. They send their best wishes for a safe and Happy New Year!*

Are You a Junior or Senior in High School? Would you have interest in attending Westminster College? They are accepting nominations for scholarships from our congregation. Contact Pastor Dave (397-1861) for more information.



OPPORTUNITY TO CELEBRATE ASH WEDNESDAY! Ash Wednesday is February 14, and this year we will be joining the good folk of Belle Valley & Emmanuel Churches at Emmanuel Presbyterian Church at 3520 Perry St. for this service beginning at 7 pm. For those needing a ride, please call the church office by Sunday, Feb. 11th (825-4433). In future years, we will trade off locations for this service. This is an attempt to combine with like-minded Presbyterian churches and conduct joint services with traditionally low attendance at any one church. Thank you in advance for your participation!

The Lenten Study Group will begin on Tuesday February 20th at 6:30 pm. The first three will be at Elmwood Church and the last three will be at Belle Valley Church. The studies will follow the themes of our worship series ("Thy Will Be Done") in Lent, and light refreshments will be provided! Please come and join in the fun and fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ!



The Presbytery of Lake Erie invites you to "The Big Event: Discovering Joy Right Where You Are" March 10th from 9am until 3pm, @ 1st Church of the Covenant, Erie. Registration forms are available in the foyer. Our keynote speaker will be Rev. David Hansen, retired Presbyterian pastor (having served congregations in Montana, and Cincinnati, OH). He is also an accomplished author (*The Art of Pastoring: Ministry Without All the Answers* and *Loving the Church You Lead: Pastoring with Acceptance and Grace*). David is also a contributing editor for *Leadership Journal* (a publication for clergy/church leaders, published by Christianity Today Institute). It will be a day filled with workshops and worship, and lunch, and will leave you feeling encouraged, refreshed and ready for joyful service to our Lord! Cost is \$15 each (includes lunch)—payable online, by mail or at the door. Please register by Feb. 28 @ www.pbylakeerie.org or by mail. Babysitting will be available (call 456-4243).