



PRESBY BEACON



"Shining the Light of Christ in the Mon Valley"

January 2021

From the Pastor

A new day. A new month. A new year. They come even we're not sure they will. Yet, we often struggle in the waiting: waiting for the sun to rise during a dark night of the soul, waiting for a healing or release from a struggle of some kind, waiting for deliverance from COVID-19 fears and threats, waiting for restoration.

Mostly, we struggle because we cannot see past our pain, fears, or discomfort. Sometimes we struggle because we don't want to pass through the night to get to the morning. We want to morning to come NOW!

Things may not look much different at 12:01 a.m. on New Year's Day. It will be dark outside. We'll still be wearing masks and social distancing.

Yet, we are not alone or without hope. David knew this. He wrote in Psalm 139:

"¹ O Lord, you have searched me and known me. ² You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away. ³ You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord, you know it completely. ⁵ You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. ⁶ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it.

David continued in verses 11 and 12: *"If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become night,' even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you."*

Darkness, challenges, and fears need not control us. When we look to the One who will carry us through the night and the day, we control how we face them. All we need do is realize that God has "night-vision" as well as

day vision! God sees where we are and what we need no matter our situation.

The prophet Jeremiah knew about personal struggle and suffering. Because he followed God's call to speak the truth, Jeremiah was cast out, persecuted, imprisoned, tortured. He lost his opportunities, family, friends, and everything he held dear. And he suffered because of the choices that others made. But Jeremiah believed that he could count on God's mercies.

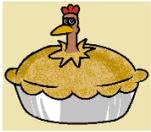
"²¹ But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: ²² The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; ²³ they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:21-23).

I hope you will take a few minutes to meditate on Lamentations 3:21-33 as you enter each new day, new month, and this new year. May the assurance of God's presence, strength, and love for you give you hope and strength to carry on, whatever comes your way.

Blessings,

**Remember:
New Worship Time:
10 a.m.**

The **Presby Beacon** is a monthly newsletter publication of the **First Presbyterian Church**
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Chicken Pies

We will be making our chicken pies on Friday, January 15th.

Please fill out an order form and place it in the offering plate or call the church office to order at 724-929-7616. Pies can be picked up between 4-6 pm on Friday, January 15th.

Donations of flour and Crisco are also needed. Contact Jane Bonari for information.

Communion Offering

On the first Sunday of each month, we take an additional, special missions offering. The Mission Committee schedules these offerings to support varied ministries throughout the year

January's Communion offering goes to **The Hands and Feet Project**, which is an outreach focused on meeting the needs of families by providing free clothing to those who could use a little help clothing their children. They can be found at @handsandfeetmonvalley on Facebook.

Tuesday Bible Study

Our Tuesday afternoon Bible study, held at 2 p.m. each week, will resume on Tuesday, January 19th in the Fellowship hall and on Zoom meetings.

The class has not chosen a new study yet, so if you have an idea for a book of the Bible or a subject you want to study, message the pastor so she can make a choice and find the materials and prepare.

A note from Pastor Mary Kay: "A few people have said they don't attend Bible study because they don't know the Bible well enough. Well, my friends, that is like putting the cart before the horse! The purpose of Bible study is to learn about the Bible, not show how much we know. I hope you will join us!"

Youth Group

FiPY (First Presbyterian Youth), our middle- and high-school students, meets Sunday evening at 6:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall—safe and socially-distanced. Join us! Contact the pastor for more information.

January Events

10	Installation of elders/deacons, recognition of departing elders/deacons
11-17	Pastor Vacation (Pastor will be in town)
21	Food Bank at FMC (8 a.m.)
21	Session, 7 p.m.
23	Presbytery Meeting: 1-4 p.m., online with Zoom meetings
31	Youth Sunday and Annual Congregational Meeting (after worship)

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"...we shouldn't put the Christmas Spirit away with them."

from JoyfulNoiseletter.com
Reprinted with permission of Bil Keane

Although we *will* keep Christmas in our hearts, we do have to put the decorations away. You are invited to join us on **Saturday, January 9th, at 10 a.m.**, as we take down the Christmas decorations for another year. We need people to pack everything and to carry it up to storage. If you have questions, call Sharon Zunic.

Thanks!



LITURGISTS AND GREETERS NEEDED

In these days, when many cannot attend because of fears of COVID-19 or other health issues, our worship committee is having trouble recruiting liturgists and greeters, so we are appealing to you for help. Here are a few guidelines:

Greeters:	Liturgists:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greeters must wear masks and gloves (provided). • Because of COVID regulations, we have a greeter at the entrance and at the top of the stairs. Before the weather changed, we asked the lower greeter to stand outside, but it's too cold now. Please stand inside the door but ask anyone who comes in, having opened the door, to use hand sanitizer to prevent spread of germs. • Also, if someone enters without a mask, ask them to take one supplied. All worshipers must have a mask. • When people reach the top of the steps, ask them to sign the book for attendance and contact tracing purposes; then, wearing gloves, hand them a bulletin. On the first Sunday also provide a communion cup for each person. • Let guests know that we can sit only in open pews without blue tape on the back. 	<p>Liturgists assist the pastor in leading congregational worship. You will receive the bulletin in advance, or can view it on the website before Sunday, to review what you will read. Responsibilities include reading announcements, leading the Call to Worship, offering pieces, and reading Scripture passages.</p>

It takes every part of the body to get the job done. Will you be a part of welcoming our friends and guests to worship? *Perhaps you have thought about being involved in these ministries but didn't know who to contact.* Here is your invitation: Will you please consider volunteering *at least once every two months?* We hope you will. Call Nancy Komlos, worship chair, for more information.



Just a note . . .

to thank all of you for your kind notes, gifts, and thoughts, not only during the Christmas season, but throughout this tumultuous year. I am blessed to serve with such a loving family of God.

Pastor Mary Kay

First Presbyterian Church
501 Fayette Avenue
Rostraver Twp. PA 15012

Return Service Requested

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We live and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ through worship, service, and witness. As a Christ-centered church empowered by the Holy Spirit, we seek God's plan for each of us and all of us. We welcome everyone to journey with us as we strive to grow in love, faith, trust, and discipleship.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Worship with us live or in person on

Facebook: First Presbyterian Church Belle Vernon

You Tube: First Pres BV

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