



Corner of Beaver & Burrowes



A-B NEWSLETTER

• ALBRIGHT-BETHUNE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH •

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Blannie Bowen, Editor; Volume 25, Number 2, February 2018

From the Desk of Pastor Pamela Ford

FROM ASHES TO EASTER. When I traveled in Israel, I had to correct many of the mental images I have carried about Biblical times and places. Baby Jesus' manger, for example, was probably made of stone. Wood is not a readily available building material in the Middle East! The biggest, and most amazing, surprise to me was the Judean wilderness. Remember how Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness resisting Satan's temptations? I figured "wilderness" would look like the American Wild West! Lots of trees and bushes and few cleared paths to follow! Not so.

There's virtually nothing in the desert to sustain life-- beyond the wild jackals that make their homes in caves. Lots of rocks and sand. No water. I have no doubt that time spent in the wilderness would be a time of transformation that could only come from trusting THE Highest Power of the universe.

The season of Lent, the church's Great Forty Days, is a gift of time to move into the spiritual desert and experience *the joy of change* that comes of becoming more fully alive and open to God. Those are two words that we don't often put in the same sentence: *joy* and *change*! But Jesus walked this road. It's the road from ashes to Easter. This happens in our lives in a very real way as we learn to give up control of our lives and then find them again on the resurrection side of surrender.

Do you remember playing on the monkey bars? How we could travel over the ground below from the bars above? You had to have a kind of rhythm to the movement. Can you feel that motion? That motion enabled us to make the crossing. Well, there are monkey bars in the desert in the season of Lent. There's a rhythm to crossing the desert that will help us understand how to go with the desert and not fight against it. The good news is this: If we fully enter the desert, the hand-holds will appear just when we need them. If we fight the desert, they disappear.

I commend to each of us the practices of Lent. Traditionally, Christians are invited to observe a Holy Lent. Fasting, prayer, studying the Bible, Holy Communion, and sacrificial giving are the hallmarks of the season. They are our monkey bars in the desert. I invite you this year to think of these practices as invitations, as opportunities to grow close to the One who loves us in life, in death, in life beyond death. Thanks be to God!

Walking with you—**Pastor Pam**

- **S**OUPER BOWL SUNDAY - If you watch the Super Bowl on February 4, think about sharing your snacks. In 1993, a single prayer led a high school youth group in Columbia, SC, to create a simple, yet powerful idea to fight hunger in their city. The Souper Bowl of Caring calls youth to action. And individuals, civic organizations, and schools are making a difference through this movement. Various religious groups, including the UMC, promote souper bowls to share food with the hungry. On this day, give to the Food Bank, share with individuals who are less fortunate, or make a gift during our offering. Our children request that you bring a can of soup (or another non-perishable item) for the Food Bank and stay for some soup after our worship service. Contact **JoDee Dyreson** if you have questions about this activity. Also, on this day our Administrative Council is requesting that members of the congregation participate in a fellowship and discussion with Rev. Dr. Ford to enhance our church's functioning.
- **S**ERVICE WITH MENNONITE CHURCH – On February 11 our church will again worship with and share a meal with the University Mennonite Church during our 18th annual joint service. **NOTE:** This year the service will be held at the Mennonite Church on Norma Street near the Ramada Inn and will begin at 10 a.m. Albright-Bethune worshippers are asked to bring either a side dish or breads. This annual service was started in 2000 and is held during Black History Month to promote cross-cultural understanding of two religious traditions.
- **A**SH WEDNESDAY - We will have two Ash Wednesday activities on February 14. From 7:45-9 am, Rev. Ford will distribute ashes to students and others on the corner of Beaver and Burrowes. This is an excellent way to observe the beginning of the Lenten season on your way to school or work. Then at 6 pm, we will have a joint service with the Emmanuel Lutheran Church which rents space in our building. Ash Wednesday is named after the practice of placing ashes on the foreheads of faithful as a reminder of human mortality and as a sign of mourning and repentance to God. It is celebrated 46 days before Easter.
- **B**IBLE STUDY - On February 25, we will initiate a new approach to Bible Study. On the last Sunday of each month after our worship service and fellowship, we will have what is being called a Last Sunday Linger Bible Study. Please put this date on your calendar.
- **H**URRICANE HARVEY DINNER - The Wesley Foundation at Penn State and the Third Way Collective will hold a fundraising dinner for Hurricane Harvey relief. The dinner will be held at the University Baptist and Brethren Church on February 8 from 5:30-7 pm. This church is located at 411 South Burrowes Street and donations will be accepted for the dinner.
- **B**IRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES - Congratulations to these individuals who celebrate special days this month: February 7 – **AnneMarie Mingo's** Birthday; February 10 – **Amariah Holliday's** Birthday; February 11 – **Wally Richardson's** Birthday; February 16 – **Courtney Shilling's** Birthday; February 17 - **Aamen Shilling's** Birthday; February 23 - **D'Andre Wilson's** Birthday; February 24 – **Terri Schleiden's** Birthday; February 25 – **Kate Eburn Dyreson's** Birthday; and February 27 - **Huey Jones'** Birthday. Give Blannie Bowen your special dates so we can honor you (call 237-5131 or email blanniebowen@gmail.com).
- **M**EN'S DAY & MEN WHO COOK – On March 18, we will again have a special day for the men and boys of Albright-Bethune. After our Men's Day worship service, we will have an annual luncheon entitled *Men Who Cook*. Our men will share their best dishes that will please even the pickiest eaters. **Blannie Bowen, Mark Dyreson, and Wally Richardson** are chairing the planning committee. Please contact them if you will be preparing a dish.

- **FOOD BANK** - The State College Food Bank is being asked to provide more food for our community. To help meet this demand, Albright-Bethune will partner with the Emmanuel Lutheran Church to do monthly food drives. Each month our worshippers will be asked to donate specific food items. The focus for each month will be announced and listed in our weekly worship bulletin. February's focus will be cake, cookie, brownie, and muffin mixes (adding water only is preferred). Donations will be placed in our Peanut Butter Express Wagon that Terrell Jones started. This new focus will also supplement our annual peanut butter drive. October will be peanut butter month and even more jars should be collected.
- **GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE** - On March 30, our church will have a Good Friday service. The last seven words that Jesus spoke during his crucifixion will be featured during this service. Please plan to attend and bring a friend or colleague.
- **EASTER EGG HUNT** - On Saturday, March 31, our congregation will hold its annual Easter egg hunt. Hopefully, the weather will cooperate so we can have a warm and sunny day to search for eggs at the Bowen home. See Blannie or Cathy if you need directions to their home which is located at 2459 Chatham Court in the Saybrook Subdivision. All children, teens, and children at heart are welcome. **Carla Roser-Jones** and others will organize the event that will be lots of fun consistent with Easter's purpose.
- **CHOIR OPPORTUNITY** - Grace Lutheran Church is hosting its 7th annual ecumenical choir concert on the Wednesday before Easter (March 28). This choir will include about 40 singers from various denominations, congregations, and traditions. Some choir experience will be helpful but there will be no auditions. Rehearsals will be held on Sundays from 2-4 pm at Grace Lutheran starting February 18. For more information, contact Laurel Sanders, the Director of Musical Ministries, at lsanders@glcpa.org or call (814) 883-8484.
- **UMC SCHOLARSHIPS & LOANS** - UMC high school seniors and those enrolled in college who are active in their church and/or in the conference may apply for a Fall 2018 scholarship offered through the UM General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. Students must apply online between January 3-March 7 at <https://www.gbhem.org/loans-and-scholarships/scholarships>. Student loans are also available at interest rates as low as 3.75% (with a credit worthy co-signer). Funds for these scholarships come from offerings taken on UMC Student Day, World Communion Sunday, and Native American Sunday. Please share this information with students and families that qualify for this support.
- **INCOME Tax Assistance** - Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) is available by appointment from February 1 to April 12. No assistance will be provided March 3-10 during the Penn State spring break. Assistance is provided to families whose gross income is \$54,000 or less for the 2017 tax year. Sessions are held at Penn State in Room 10 Ferguson Building which is in the basement. To self-schedule an appointment, go to www.psuvida.org/. Also, you can call 814-863-4147 to schedule an appointment. If there is no answer, leave a call-back name and number. See **Cathy Bowen** if you have questions about VITA.
- **MLK PROGRAM** - During our worship service on January 28, our children presented a superb program on Martin Luther King, Jr., and other leaders who were featured via readings and photos. Kudos to our children and their teachers (JoDee Dyreson and Carla Roser-Jones) who organized this program. Also, thanks to Kenyan and Ayana Cattell and everyone who prepared the soup, sandwiches, and other foods served after the program.

- **S**TAFF ASSISTANT POSITION – Our Albright-Bethune church has a part-time staff assistant position available immediately. For more information about the position or to apply, please contact **Jackie Peagler** by email at jypeagler@gmail.com or call her at [814-237-8225](tel:814-237-8225).
- **B**ABY SHOWER - Congratulations to **Courtney Jo Shilling** and **Stanley Daughenbaugh** who are expecting a child this month. On January 28, the congregation held a baby shower after our worship service. Thanks to everyone who provided various gifts and participated.
- **A** CALL TO SERVE - Do you have a hidden talent or an interest in serving God through our congregation? Would you be willing to share your gift in music or serve as our liturgist? Do you enjoy baking or organizing? Would you be willing to spend time with our youth in Sunday School, either regularly or as a substitute? Do you enjoy communicating through social media? Are you handy with tools? Are you interested in serving as a lay speaker or lay minister for the UMC? There are many exciting opportunities for anyone and everyone to serve! Please contact Rev. Ford or Blannie Bowen with your ideas and interests.
- **M**LK BANQUET - The 43rd Annual Martin Luther King, Jr., banquet was held January 15 at the Penn Stater Conference Center. Our church again purchased a table. Thanks to **Michelle Torregano** for coordinating the table so our church was represented.
- **Y**OUR ITEMS – Send, email to blanniebowen@gmail.com or give your items to **Blannie** by the **20th** of the month. Send your birthday, awards, church presentations, writings, etc.

Calendar

February 1-28	Black History Month
February 4	Souper Bowl Sunday
February 11	Scouting Sunday
February 13	Albright-Bethune Administrative Council Meets, 7 p.m.
February 14	Ash Wednesday
March 2	World Day of Prayer
March 4-10	Penn State Spring Break
March 11	UMCOR Sunday (Formerly One Great Hour of Sharing Sunday)
March 11	Daylight Savings Time Begins
March 13	Albright-Bethune Administrative Council Meets, 7 p.m.
March 18	Men Who Cook & Men's Day
March 30	Good Friday
March 31	Church Easter Egg Hunt at the Bowen Home
April 1	Easter Sunday
April 10	Albright-Bethune Administrative Council Meets, 7 p.m.
April 15	Native American Ministries Sunday
April 27	Penn State Classes End
May 4-6	Penn State Commencement Exercises
May 8	Albright-Bethune Administrative Council Meets, 7 p.m.
May 27	Peace With Justice Sunday