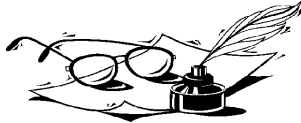




Corner of Beaver & Burrowes



From Pastor Paul's Desk.....

Lent is almost here!

How prepared are you to face the temptations in your wilderness? In scripture, we know that after the baptism of our Lord, he was led into the wildering solitude by the Holy Spirit where he experienced everything that we experience in our own lives. He became hungry and he was tempted to derail.

Scripture attests to that fact. *"After Jesus had gone without eating for forty days and forty nights, he was very hungry."* Matthew 4:2. Jesus was physically hungry like any of us. The difference between Jesus and us is that we don't only get physically hungry, we get spiritually and even morally hungry.

After his temptation, he regained the power to come down from the mountain and start something new. He began the formation of his disciple-making team. Jesus along the way directed the disciples to *"Go to the people of **all nations** and make them my disciples."* Matthew 28:19. You and I have become who we are today because of this Great Commission. We also have been made into disciple-making machines.

The challenge that we face today is looking inside of ourselves, checking into our hearts and souls and evaluating ourselves if we truly are fruitful in our own disciple-making process. Do our engines function properly? Have we our bearings in place? Do we even have the gas to run our Jesus engines?

Living in such a time as this, challenges are thrown at us every day of our lives. Temptations have become the order of the day. Our world is broken and it has become a breed of uncertainties.

The good news is that in times of our trials and tribulations, the Lord stands with us and strengthens us. James, a servant of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ, boldly proclaims that *"God will bless you, if you don't give up when your faith is being tested."* James 1:12.

What are your plans for the coming days and weeks as we journey during this season of Lent? During Lent, we apprentice to Jesus in his forty-day sojourn in the desert. This coming Lent, the Spirit will be taking you into your personal desert. You are going to be hungry, thirsty, challenged, frustrated, burned out, angry, uncomfortable and you will be tempted.

Will you stay strong, counter misinformation, speak truth to power, set the records straight and fight evil power that is swallowing us up? My brothers and sisters in Christ, we are warned to *"Put on*

A-B NEWSLETTER

• **ALBRIGHT-BETHUNE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH** •

Rev., Dr. Paul C. Amara, Pastor

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Blannie Bowen, Editor; Volume 27, Number 3, March 2020

all the armor that God gives. Then when that evil day comes, you will be able to defend yourself.”
Ephesians 5:13.

This Lenten season as you journey through your wilderness, I encourage you to get yourself ready, pray at all times, love your enemies, feed the hungry, provide shelter for the homeless, give drink to the thirsty, cloth the naked and most importantly, become a true disciple of Jesus Christ by making disciples for the transformation of the world. It's only when you act this way that you will make Jesus the element of your experience.

My prayer for you: May the season of Lent fill you with the Holy Spirit and blot your transgressions. May you be led in the right direction to gather vital and fruitful resources for the betterment of humanity. May you live in peace with one another. Amen!

- **NOTHING BUT NETS** – Since 2006, the UMC has been fighting malaria as a founding partner of a group called *Nothing But Nets*. The UMC, the United Nations Foundation, and various partners have built this grassroots movement to end malaria and over 13 million bed nets have been sent to families in Africa. Just \$10 buys a bed net, distributes it to a family, and provides education on how to use it. The partners have raised over \$70 million. See **JoDee Dyreson** about how you can contribute to this project during college basketball's March Madness.

- **FOOD BANK DONATIONS** - During March, we are asking individuals to donate hot tea bags (traditional black or herbal) and coffee (regular and decaf) to the State College Food Bank. Please place your donations in our Peanut Butter Express Wagon and check to be sure the “best by” date has not expired.

- **STAFF ASSISTANT VACANCY** - Kat Boynton, our church's staff assistant, provides excellent service to our church but she must leave the position. This part-time position is now available. For more information about the position or to apply, please contact Jackie Peagler, the chair of our Administrative Council. You can reach Jackie by email at jypeagler@gmail.com or by phone at [814-237-8225](tel:814-237-8225).

- **FREE TAX PREPARATION SERVICE** - The VITA program (volunteer income tax preparation) established and operated for more than 10 years by recently retired parishioner **Cathy Bowen** continues to operate at Penn State. If your 2019 income was \$56,000 or less, your income tax return can be prepared and filed electronically at no cost by PSU VITA. Returns are prepared by student volunteers who have passed an IRS (Internal Revenue Service) certification exam for VITA volunteers. Appointments can be scheduled online at www.psuvida.org. Please note the new location of this program: Penn State VITA, 325 Boucke Building (across from the HUB).

- **RACIAL JUSTICE ALLIES** - The Racial Justice Allies group will meet on March 11 at 7pm at the State College Presbyterian Church on Beaver Avenue. The group is currently discussing the 1619 Project about the start of slavery in the US. Also, Nikole Hannah-Jones, a *New York Times* journalist and creator of the 1619 Project, will speak at Penn State on March 24, at 7pm in the Pasquerilla Spiritual Center. All are welcome to participate in both the Allies meeting and the presentation by Hannah-Jones.

- **MEN WHO COOK** – On April 5, 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*. **Blannie Bowen**, **Mark Dyreson**, and **Wally Richardson** are again co-chairing the planning committee. Please contact them if you will prepare a dish or have questions about Men Who Cook or Men's Day.

- **C**ONDOLENCES - Please take the time to extend condolences to Cathy Bowen whose brother-in-law died on Valentine's Day in Durham, NC.
- **B**IRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES - - Congratulations to these individuals who celebrate special days this month: March 7 – **Tonya & Michael Black's** Wedding Anniversary; March 7 - **Joseph C. Torregano, Jr.'s** Birthday; March 9 - **Braden Dyreson's** Birthday; March 9 – **Tara & Krystaufeux Williams'** Wedding Anniversary; March 10 – **Olivia Nembhard's** Birthday; and March 13 – **Michael Black's** Birthday. Give Blannie your special dates so we can honor you (call 237-5131 or email blanniebowen@gmail.com).
- **U**MC SCHOLARSHIPS & LOANS – United Methodist Church high school seniors and those enrolled in college who are also active in their church and/or in the conference may apply for a Fall 2020 scholarship offered through the United Methodist General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. Students must apply online between January 3 - March 5 at <https://www.gbhem.org/loans-and-scholarships/scholarships>. Student loans are also available at low interest rates (with a credit worthy co-signer). Funds for these scholarships come from offerings taken on United Methodist Student Day, World Communion Sunday, and Native American Sunday. Please share this information with students who qualify for this support.
- **E**ASTER EGG HUNT - On Saturday, April 11, beginning at 11 am, 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 at 2459 Chatham Court in the Saybrook Subdivision. All children, teens, and children at heart are welcome. **Carla Roser-Jones** and several assistants will organize the event that will be lots of fun consistent with Easter's purpose.
- **A**SH WEDNESDAY SERVICE - Albright-Bethune and Emmanuel Lutheran Church held a joint Ash Wednesday service on February 26. Thanks to everyone who helped organize and assist with this service. Almost 40 individuals participated in our joint service.
- **S**ERVICE WITH MENNONITE CHURCH – On February 16, our church again worshipped with and shared a meal with the University Mennonite Church during our 20th annual joint service. This year the service was held at the Mennonite Church and Pastor Amara delivered the sermon. This annual service is held during Black History Month to promote cross-cultural understanding of two religious traditions. Thanks to everyone who brought dishes to share.
- **H**OMECOMING 2020 – On June 13-14, Albright-Bethune will have a weekend program for our former members and worshippers. We plan to have a picnic on Saturday afternoon (June 13) that will be followed by worship on Sunday (June 14) and then a farewell lunch. See **Blannie Bowen** if you would like to help plan and conduct this event or need more information. Also, share this information and invite individuals that you know.
- **L**ITURGISTS & TEACHERS NEEDED - Please consider playing a more active role in our congregation. Volunteers are sought to be Sunday School teachers and our liturgist during worship. Contact **Carla Roser-Jones** if you are interested in these opportunities. You can reach Carla at (814) 880-9302 if you do not catch her at our worship service.
- **S**PRING GRADUATES - If you are graduating from high school or college in May or June, we want to honor you and celebrate your accomplishment. Please contact **Blannie Bowen** at 237-5131 or by email at blanniebowen@gmail.com with your information. Remember your congregation if you are moving away. Be sure to worship with us when you return for a visit. If you are staying in the area, continue to worship regularly with us.

- **UMC RESTRUCTURING** - What form The United Methodist Church will take will remain unclear until the 2020 General Conference meets May 5-15 in Minneapolis. Various proposals will be discussed by the 862 delegates. A summary has been prepared that compares the proposals and all of these proposals will be open for amendment at General Conference and may be subject to Judicial Council review. You can review the summary at <https://cdnsc.umc.org/-/media/umc-media/2020/01/09/19/07/General-Conference-UMC-Plans-Chart-V6> (From UM News Service).
- **FINANCE CORNER** - Each month the amount our church collects via offerings is posted in this section of the newsletter. Our February collections totaled \$4,091.50. See Cathy Bowen if you have questions about our church's finances.
- **ONLINE GIVING** - Consider setting up a monthly or weekly online contribution. It is easy and helps you meet your yearly giving goal without taking action each week or month. When the collection plate is passed, simply insert the card found in the back of the pews that says, "I give online." The amount you designate will be deducted from your checking account according to your preference. For example, if you decide to give \$400 each month, you can deduct \$400 once a month or \$100 each week. When the amount is consistent throughout the year, you can easily check the accuracy of your yearly statement acknowledging your giving! Adopt "the set and forget it" technique for your annual giving. Once a year, set your budget for giving to the church, and you are done. Now you have more time to spend on other matters instead of writing checks each week or month. The button to set up your online giving is on the church website, upper right corner (<https://www.albrightbethuneumc.org/>). If you need help setting up online, see Cathy Bowen at (814) 574-8346 or by email at cbowen2015@gmail.com.
- **YOUR 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

March 3	Albright-Bethune Administrative Council Meets, 7 p.m.
March 7	World Day of Prayer
March 8-14	Penn State Spring Break
March 8	Daylight Savings Time Begins
March 11	Racial Justice Allies, State College Presbyterian Church, 7 p.m.
March 22	UMCOR Sunday (Formerly One Great Hour of Sharing Sunday)
April 5	Men Who Cook & Men's Day
April 7	Albright-Bethune Administrative Council Meets, 7 p.m.
April 10	Good Friday
April 11	Church Easter Egg Hunt at the Bowen Home, 11 a.m.
April 12	Easter Sunday
May 1	Penn State Classes End
May 5	Albright-Bethune Administrative Council Meets, 7 p.m.
May 8-10	Penn State Commencement Exercises
June 2	Albright-Bethune Administrative Council Meets, 7 p.m.
June 7	Peace With Justice Sunday
June 13-14	Homecoming 2020