

BUFFALO PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



JUNE NEWSLETTER 2017

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FROM THE HEART OF YOUR PASTOR

Rev. Jean Smith

June 2017

In a recent sermon I talked about how people are either lost or found. Those who are lost lose out on certain things, but they do not lose their value in the eyes of God. They are still valuable to God. Like a shepherd he longs to lead them, protect them, help them achieve their potential, find happiness and live for eternity in heaven. Lost people are important to God and they are to be important to us as well. In an effort to understand those outside the church, your session has been studying a book by George Barna on Understanding the Unchurched and How to Reach Them. In chapter five Barna gives us a great deal of information about the differences between the unchurched and the churched when it comes to values, attitudes and lifestyles. If we are to build bridges to the unchurched then we have to understand who they are and what is important to them.

Unchurched people describe themselves in pretty much the same way as churched people, with some notable differences. They describe themselves as slightly more self-sufficient, aggressive, and controlling than churched people describe themselves. They like to avoid conflict to a greater degree than churched people. They feel more misunderstood by others than churched people do, and they tend to put their careers first to a greater extent than do churched people. Given these differences we can easily see why the church environment, where reliance upon God and being controlled by the Holy Spirit, may not be appealing to those outside the church. They like their independence more than the unimagined benefits of surrendering one's life to Christ. They aren't as relationship oriented as church people, and they describe themselves as driven, determined, competitive, problem solvers far more than church people describe themselves. They are significantly more domineering than church people. The idea taught in the church of

submitting to one another and thinking of others more highly than yourself would not be very attractive to them.

Unchurched people identify themselves as 50% less likely to volunteer their time to help nonprofit organizations. They are also far less likely to discuss moral or ethical issues with friends, to be registered to vote and to support nonprofit organizations financially. The message of the church to serve others, and to be generous with your time, talent and treasure would not be unimportant to them. They are however twice as likely to have given to organizations that focus on defending the environment.

When it comes to the priorities of the unchurched, they place a greater importance on living a comfortable lifestyle, having a high-paying job, traveling for pleasure and owning a large home. The greatest gap between the unchurched and the churched is in their lack of desire to have a close relationship with God and to be personally active in a church. The unchurched really do not feel a need for faith development. They are clearly more focused on living the “good life” than on living a good life. Those individuals outside the church are far more concerned with quality of life and the ability to define themselves through their accomplishments.

All their striving and chasing after the good life is not helping them to find satisfaction and contentment. They identify themselves as less satisfied with their lives and less hopeful about the future. The Christian faith has much to say about finding contentment and happiness in this life and in the life to come, but getting the unchurched to hear that message remains a challenge. Though they reject our way of life, we cannot take it personally. They are being consistent with who they are and how they have coped with life to this point. And yet we cannot give up on them. They are of value to God and to us.

The Ludwigs' Update - Family Fun and Resiliency



Three weeks ago we packed up our home to be away for three months. Transitions like this can be difficult for our sensitive children, so there were tears and extra hugs at all the things they love that will be left behind.

We had car trouble on the normally 10 hour road trip to the capital, but the children handled waiting on the side the road in small villages in melting heat (110) surrounded by local children for an extra 4 hours very well. We traveled to Rwanda for a Pecusa mission coworkers conference focusing on reconciliation. We stayed in a beautiful location and there was a children's program from Ferncliff camp, who created a wonderful environment for our children. They even gave our children attention when they didn't 'have' to, as our children always wanted to be around them! It was a little break for a homeschooling Mom who is around her children 24-7. El Padre and I had time to have good conversations with colleagues (the best part), attend meetings sharing the amazing work of God's grace and reconciliation in Rwanda and update us on church procedures. A Delight stated that she wanted to stay there forever and there were tears when we said goodbye to the children's new friends.

We stayed in Rwanda to travel around as a family with coworker of our for a couple more days and again we were spoiled with beautiful accommodations at a Free Methodist clinic compound. Rwanda is green with abundant wildlife, much less dust and strict laws on keeping the country clean. They don't even allow thatched roofs! It seemed so very developed, referred to as the "Switzerland

of Africa.” We always had running water and electricity, cool evenings and comfortable days - makes it pretty easy to idealize a place we are visiting. We hiked, had a day to relax and meet another missionary family, and even went on a Rwandan safari. Still at the end the children rated the Sahel ahead of Rwanda on their list of favorite countries!



From there we flew back to the Sahel to extreme heat. The capital had had their first rain, so it was 110 and muggy with power cuts! We were pretty glad that we were heading out of the country about 13 hours later! Because of Zig Zag’s visa, we had to spend a few days lay over somewhere on our way to the US. We chose Casablanca, Morocco. I found a hotel on Expedia outside of town that caters to children.

They had a man on stilts and a clown here for the weekend. They have a pool and even a playground!! Again, the children were bouncing around with uncontainable excitement. Maybe once one had adjusted to living in the Sahel – it is easy to please! We visited a few sites in Casablanca the morning we arrived and walked on the old walls in El Jadida and enjoyed the beach. We found Morocco very cold with the wind in the country – almost too cold to enjoy the pool! But again, it was more developed than we thought and the part we were in looked very similar to a southern Europe country side.

So the resiliency? First saying so many goodbyes was difficult. Second, as you probably know traveling is difficult with odd times for everything. We had four middle of the night flights, some as short as 2 or 3 hours, meaning a full night of sleep was completely lost. With three children there was no way we could carry them all, but they all stepped up to the challenge and woke up to walk when needed! We had 5pm bedtimes and many nights the three children were sharing two twin beds (even El Padre and I shared a twin!). We had lots of time in the car not knowing where the road would go, as our maps were poor or didn't match up. We ate lots of sandwiches and had strange meal times. But the children did very well adjusting and not complaining. I would say they have earned the title mish-kids. We are grateful for this energy intensive but fun family time.

--Rachel Ludwig

Facebook

Did you know that we are on Facebook? Like and follow us on Facebook to see upcoming events, sermon titles, and inspirational messages. The newsletter and sermon is also available.



Pastoral Care

Rev. Janet Hufford will provide emergency pastoral care while Pastor Jean is on vacation from June 16-24th. Her cell number is (412)877-9310

Summer Work Days On Third Tuesdays

Now that the program year is over, Presbyterian Women (PW) at Buffalo PC will still gather on third Tuesdays to work on charity projects from 10 AM till 2 PM. The dates are June 20, July 18, and August 15.

Processing of used stamps and greeting cards, Boxtops for Education, Campbell labels, and tabs from pop-top cans will continue. Place donation of these items in the boxes in the narthex. Quilts and blankets will be cut, sewn, and knotted. School bags can also be sewn.

Everyone is encouraged to join the work effort. See Virginia Shirey [724.353.1278] for more information.



All Church Picnic

Our annual church picnic will be held here at the church following worship on Sunday, June 25. Stay tuned for sign up sheets and more information as we get closer to the day.



Pentecost



Pentecost falls on June 4th this year. Contemporary Christians celebrate Pentecost as the birthday of the church. Early Christians saw the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples fifty days after the resurrection of our Redeemer as symbolic of the spiritual first-fruits that were procured through His sacrificial death on the cross. In this day and age on Pentecost, the church celebrates Christ's promise to be with us, celebrates the gift of faith to all people, and celebrates the gifts the Holy Spirit brings to our lives. Pentecost is, in essence, the Church's festival of the Holy Spirit. A descending dove is a symbol used to represent the Holy Spirit coming into our lives. Tongues of fire are also used to represent the Holy Spirit. We decorate the church in red for this festival by hanging appropriate banners with these symbols on them. We also fill the church with red geraniums.

Come join us in the celebration of Pentecost on June 4th. Communion will be served during the morning worship service. It is appropriate to wear something red on this day.

New Wilmington Mission Conference – July 22-29

The 2017 Conference will be held at Westminster College in New Wilmington, PA. This year's speakers include Dr. Rodger Nishioka, Director of Adult Educational Ministries at Village Presbyterian Church, and Rev. Dr. Jim Singleton, Associate Professor of Pastoral Leadership and Evangelism at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, as well as many others. Visit the conference website for more details. <http://nwmcmision.org/home>



Everyone Can Help With CWS Kits

Everyone can help build kits for Church World Service (CWS) this summer by bringing one designated item to church each Sunday during June, July, and August. These kits

(for school and hygiene) will then be assembled by Presbyterian Women at Buffalo for shipment to New Windsor, MD, at the end of September. The recipients of the kits will be people here in the US or overseas who are experiencing a disaster—manmade or nature. Clip the list below, and post it for easy reference. Boxes for donations are in the narthex. All items should be new.

June 4 – hand towel (no fingertip, bath, dish towel, or microfiber)

June 11 – wash cloth

June 18 – wide tooth comb

June 25 – finger nail or toe nail clipper

July 2 – bath-size bar of soap

July 9 – toothbrush (one in package)

July 16 – blunt, rounded-tip scissors

July 23 – ruler with inches and centimeter markings

July 30 – hand-held pencil sharpener

August 6 – large pink eraser (no pencil cap erasers)

August 13 – box of 24 crayons (only 24 crayons)

August 20 – 70-page bound notebook or notebook with 200-210 pages

August 27 – new unsharpened pencils with erasers attached

Annual Rummage Sale



Buffalo Presbyterian Church rummage sale was a huge success, bringing in almost \$2200.00! Some of the money will go towards replacing funds for the youth checking account and the rest will go to the improvements fund. A huge THANK YOU to all!

BPC Scholarship

The Buffalo Presbyterian Church Scholarship Committee received one scholarship application this spring, 2017. The committee met April 18th and Session met May 8th and

approved awarding a \$300 scholarship to Chelsea Bova Bauer, the granddaughter of Wayne Bauer. This fall Chelsea will attend her second of five years at Saint Francis University in Loretto, PA. She is pursuing a Master's Degree in Occupational Therapy as she would like to become a pediatric occupational therapist. Chelsea will be awarded the scholarship on June 11, 2017 during the worship service. Congratulations and best wishes for your future.



Scholarship

Light House Lot Sale

The Lighthouse Lot community trunk sale and vendor sale will be June 3rd from 9-2 at 1302 E. Cruikshank Rd, Butler PA 16002. There will be a basket auction, vendor tables, food and drink tickets along with hourly giveaways. All proceeds benefit the Lighthouse Foundation.

