

SONSHINE NEWSLETTER

MAY 2013

A Publication of Rocky Grove Avenue Presbyterian Church

“Sharing, Preparing and Caring in Jesus’ Name”

321 Rocky Grove Avenue, Franklin, PA 16323

Church Phone: 814-432-4162

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Email Address: [rgapc @ verizon.net](mailto:rgapc@verizon.net)

Sunday School – 9:30 a.m.

Worship – 10:45 a.m.

Reverend Sue Nageotte, Pastor

Rhonda Rust, Secretary

June McClintock, Organist

Janet Bish, Assistant Organist

Scott Donaldson, Custodian

Church Office Hours:

Tuesday and Wednesday, 9:00 AM - 4:30 PM

Thursday 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

From the Pastor's Study

Dear RGAPC family and friends,

Over the past few months, several people have asked me what is meant by the terms Presbyterian, Reformed, and Evangelical. Often this has come up because RGAPC is having conversations about the possibility of being dismissed from the Presbyterian Church (USA) “to another Reformed body” for reasons of conscience. Some people have asked, “If RGAPC decides to move to another Reformed body, does that mean we won’t be Presbyterians anymore?” Others have asked what “Evangelical” means, since some of our neighboring presbyteries have dismissed churches to the EPC (Evangelical Presbyterian Church) and to ECO (Evangelical Covenant Order of Presbyterians).

So, what *does* it mean to be Presbyterian? Reformed? Evangelical?

Presbyterian primarily refers to the way a church is governed. The name comes from the Greek word *presbuteros*, meaning “elder.” In Presbyterian-style governance, each congregation elects elders to serve with the pastor(s) on the session. The session is responsible for overseeing the mission and ministry of the local congregation. Congregations may, if they choose, elect deacons and trustees for particular work, but the session still has overall responsibility.

Each congregation also belongs to a “presbytery,” a regional body designed to help churches work together in accordance with the rules and norms of the denomination. The “presbytery” is made up of ministers and elders chosen by each Session to represent them. Every two years, each presbytery also elects ministers and elders to represent the presbytery at a “General Assembly” where denomination-wide policies are established or modified by vote. In simplest terms, Presbyterian churches function under a representative form of government with a network of connections to other churches.

Reformed refers to our theology – that is, our essential beliefs about who God is, our relationship to God, and our understanding of the Bible. Historically, Reformed theology is marked by five key elements defined in the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century.

- *Sola Scriptura* – “Scripture Alone” – teaches that the Bible is the authoritative written Word of God and is the only rule (standard) of faith and practice in the Christian life;
- *Sola Gratia* -- “Grace Alone” -- teaches that salvation is a gift from God given to us purely through God’s loving-kindness and not through any human efforts or merit;
- *Sola Christus* – “Christ Alone” – teaches that salvation is found only in Jesus Christ (“No one comes to the Father except through Me”);
- *Sola Fide* – “Faith Alone” -- teaches that we are saved only by faith in who Jesus Christ is and what he has done, and, that even faith itself is a gift from God; and
- *Soli Deo Gloria* – “to the Glory of God Alone” – teaches that Christians are to conduct their lives (and their churches) for the glory of God alone and not for human gain.

Now let’s consider the final question: *What does “evangelical” mean?*

This is difficult to answer briefly, for this term has been used in quite different ways by different groups of Christians. For some, it is a negative word suggesting narrow-minded religious fundamentalism. For many others, it is a positive word suggesting a faithful commitment to the Christian life with an emphasis on mission and outreach.

The word **evangelical** comes from the Greek *euangelion* meaning “good news” or “good message.” *Euangelion* appears 76 times in the New Testament. In the early years of the Protestant Reformation, Martin Luther used the term *evangelische kirche* to distinguish Protestant Christians from Roman Catholics of that time. For several centuries “evangelical” was understood as referring to a renewal of faith by returning to study of the Scriptures. In keeping with the message of the Bible, evangelical faith centers on the eternal purposes of God as most clearly revealed in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Evangelical faith acknowledges that humans are in every way dependent upon God, that we are prone to sin, and that it is impossible to overcome sin by human effort, positive thinking, psychology, social policies, etc. Evangelical faith embraces the good news that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners (1 Timothy 1:15). It also has a deep desire that all people would come to know and enjoy the grace of God and the new life made available through Jesus Christ.

In summary, we find that “Presbyterian” refers to a church structure with elected, representative governance and connection with other congregations in a regional area. “Reformed” refers to a particular set of theological convictions, and “evangelical” refers to a renewed and energetic faith flowing out of a biblically-grounded belief in who Jesus is, what he has done for us and what he calls us to do.

I hope and trust that these definitions will be useful as we continue to seek to know and to follow God’s will for us as a community of faith, living and working together in Jesus’ name.

Love in Christ, Pastor Sue

An Update from the Re-Affirmation Team

The Presbytery has recently established a team to enter into discussions with our congregation about possible dismissal from the PC(USA) to another Reformed body. They will begin by speaking with the session, but unfortunately until they do so there is nothing further to be reported at this time.

If you have specific questions, we invite you to write them down and either put them into the offering plate or put them into the suggestion box located near the church office. Questions will gathered and answered in future issues of the newsletter or “question and answer” letters to church members.

Jesus is Everything

By Anne Graham Lotz

**His office is manifold,
And His Promise is sure.
His life is matchless,
And His goodness is limitless.
His mercy is enough,
And His grace is sufficient.
His reign is righteous, His Yoke is easy,
And His burden is light.**

**He is indestructible,
He is indescribable.
He is incomprehensible,
He is inescapable.
He is invincible,
He is irresistible.
He is irrefutable.**

**I can't get Him out of my mind...
And I can't get Him out of my heart.
I can't outlive Him...
And I can't live without Him.**

**The Pharisees couldn't stand Him
But they found they couldn't stop Him.
Satan tried to tempt Him
But found he couldn't trip Him.
Pilot examined Him on trial
But found he couldn't fault Him.
The Romans crucified Him
But found they couldn't take His life.
Death couldn't handle Him,
And the grave couldn't hold Him.**

My Jesus is ...Everything

FROM THE SESSION

Approved Motions from the Session Meeting – April 8th :

- **The minutes of the regular Session Meeting of 11 Mar 13 but with one minor change.**
- **The Financial Secretary's report for the period ending 31 Mar 13 and the following Treasurer's reports: the checking account summary, the budget year-to-date figures and the Financial Report for March 2013.**
- **Received the minutes of the Christian Education Ministry Team meeting on 18 Mar 13, Congregational Life & Worship Ministry Team meeting on 1 Apr 13, Missions and Outreach Ministry Team meeting on 25 Mar 13, Trustee's meeting on 1 Apr 13, Shepherds' Committee meeting on 6 Mar 13, and the Administrative Activity Report 11 Mar 13 through 8 Apr 13.**
- **Spending up to \$250.00 for a new web site.**

- Paying \$50.00 per Sunday for temporary organists/pianists.
- Paying for all the camp fees for eleven children who have registered to attend summer camps at the Seneca Hills Bible Camp and Retreat Center.

RGAPC Financial Information

	March 2013	Year to Date
Congregational Giving	\$ 8,981.25	\$ 24,116.26
Expenses	(\$ 8,038.54)	(\$ 24,831.06)
Difference	\$ 942.71	(\$ 714.80)

Detailed Financial Reports for April will be available in the
narthex beginning the second Sunday of May.

MISSIONS CORNER

Hi Everyone,

**The Missions Team has picked recipients of our Benevolence gifts for 2013!
They are:**

Child Evangelism Fellowship

Seneca Hills Bible Camp and Retreat Center

**World Gospel Mission (Jim & Alice Vanderhoof) ABC Pregnancy
Center**

One Mission Society (Joetta Lehman)

Venango Youth for Christ

Latin American Missions (Robert & Nina Bruneau) Fishermen's Network

Camping Association of Presbyteries of N/W PA Undesignated

We hope you will help us support these wonderful teachers of Christ.

We are always looking for new members to add to our Missions Team. All are welcome to come the 4th Monday of the month (except in May it will be the 3rd Monday) at 6:30. We would love to see you.

Don't forget our upcoming event: Spring Fling – June 1, 2013 – 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. This will be an outdoor event in the parking lot. Many vendors will have their products on display. Come enjoy some unique and useful wares. Refreshments will be available.

God is good!

GOD IS IN CONTROL

A man from **Norfolk , VA** called a local radio station to share this on Sept 11th, 2003, two years after the tragedies Of 9/11/2001. His name is Robert Matthews. These are his words:

A few weeks before Sept. 11th, my wife and I found out we were going to have our first child.. She planned a trip out to **California** to visit her sister. On our way to the airport, we prayed that God would grant my wife a safe trip and be with her. Shortly after I said 'amen,' we both heard a

loud pop and the car shook violently. We had blown out a tire. I replaced the tire as quickly as I could, but we still missed her flight. Very upset, we drove home.

I received a call from my father who was retired NYFD. He asked what my wife's flight number was, but I explained that we missed the flight. My father informed me that her flight was the one that crashed into the southern tower. I was too shocked to speak. My father also had more news for me; he was going to help. 'This is not something I can just sit by for; I have to do something.'

I was concerned for his safety, of course, but more because he had never given his life to Christ. After a brief debate, I knew his mind was made up. Before he got off of the phone, he said, 'take good care of my grandchild.' Those were the last words I ever heard my father say; he died while helping in the rescue effort.

My joy that my prayer of safety for my wife had been answered quickly became anger. I was angry at God, at my father, and at myself. I had gone for nearly two years blaming God for taking my father away. My son would never know his grandfather; my father had never accepted Christ; and I never got to say good-bye.

Then something happened. About two months ago, I was sitting at home with my wife and my son, when there was a knock on the door. I looked at my wife, but I could tell she wasn't expecting anyone. I opened the door to a couple with a small child.

The man looked at me and asked if my father's name was Jake Matthews. I told him it was. He quickly grabbed my hand and said, 'I never got the chance to meet your father, but it is an honor to meet his son.'

He explained to me that his wife had worked in the **World Trade Center** and had been caught inside after the attack. She was pregnant and had been caught under debris. He then explained that my father had been the one to find his wife and free her. My eyes welled up with tears as I thought of my father giving his life for people like this. He then said, 'there is something else you need to know.'

His wife then told me that as my father worked to free her, she talked to him and led him to Christ. I began sobbing at the news.

Now I know that when I get to Heaven, my father will be standing beside Jesus to welcome me, and that this family would be able to thank him themselves.

When their baby boy was born, they named him Jacob Matthew, in honor of the man who gave his life so that a mother and baby could live.

This story should help us to realize this: God is always in control.

We may not see the reason behind things, and we may never know this side of heaven, but God is ALWAYS in control.

Please take time to share this amazing story. You may never know the impact it may have on someone. God doesn't call the qualified, He qualifies the called.

Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. His love endures forever.

Psalm 136:1

(submitted by Betty Siefer via email)

NOTES OF THANKS

Many thanks to all for the cards, thoughts & prayers I have received in the past few weeks. I really appreciate your thinking of me.

Eleanore Moffitt

I want to thank my shepherd, Linda Zeller, for the nice Easter card.

Carol Rough

I want to thank everyone who contributed to the bake sale for Multiple Sclerosis. The proceeds of \$500.00 will go to research. *Carol Rough*

Congratulations to Jeremy Dickey on his upcoming graduation from Mercyhurst University on Sunday, May 19th, at 2:00 p.m. in the Bay Front Convention Center, Erie, PA. Jeremy will graduate having a Bachelor of Arts degree with a concentration in International Relations and a Minor in French.

Ronald and Louise Moorhead Scholarship - Important Information

This scholarship was established to support active members of the Rocky Grove Avenue Presbyterian church who are planning to further their education after high school and requires applicants to be active members for at least two years as well as regular attendees. To meet the guidelines for a "regular attendee" for scholarship consideration one must attend worship services and/or other church related activities at the Rocky Grove Avenue Presbyterian Church an average of once per month during the two years prior to going to college (or technical/vocational school). Please contact Phyllis Wetzel or Wayne Edmondson if you have questions pertaining to this. Scholarship applications will be available in May. Watch Sunday bulletins for further instruction.

Cecile Wagner will be celebrating her 105th birthday on May 8th. Her daughter reports that Cecile is in relatively good health, but is losing her sight; thus, she doesn't enjoy doing much. She does enjoy receiving cards though, so let's shower her with birthday greetings on this momentous occasion. Her address is Room 407, Sugarcreek Station, 351 Causeway Drive, Franklin, PA 16323.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Youthful Spirits, men and women of the church, will gather for food and fellowship at noon on May 1st at Primo Barone's, 1564 Airport Road (Venango Regional Airport). All are welcome to join in the fun. Make your reservation with Mabel Mong – 432-5453. Next month's gathering will be on June 5th. More info will be forthcoming.

MOTHER-DAUGHTER BANQUET

WHEN: May 11, 2013 at 6:00 p.m.

WHERE: Moorhead Hall

COST: Donation

Everyone is asked to wear or bring a decorated hat for judging. Let's make this a fun-filled event to remember. The men will be serving – that's a sight to behold in itself! There will be entertainment afterwards in the sanctuary by "The Messengers."

"Highland Rocks!" is Coming on June 1st!

Highland Rocks! is a fun-filled family festival at Westminster Highlands Camp from noon to 8 PM on Saturday, June 1st. Live Christian music, games for all ages, swimming, hayrides, food, fellowship and more! There is no entrance fee, but there might be a small charge for some of the activities. We will carpool from the lower parking lot at the church, leaving at 11:15 AM. For more information speak with Pastor Sue or Wayne Edmondson.

Youth Car Wash Fundraiser – Saturday, May 11th – 9 to 5

LET US PUT A SHINE ON YOUR VEHICLE!

(Church parking lot)

(RAIN DATE – May 18th)