

THE NEXUS

JANUARY 2023

Presbyterian Church
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Nicki's News

Dear Congregants,

I've been reading through Isaiah and a thought came to mind. Isaiah, along with many other prophets, understood something we so often miss. They knew that, many times, things need to be torn down in order to be rebuilt in a new way to stay in line with God's ways. This appeared to me to be a biblical theme that has emerged. In Isaiah's case, the Israelites he was speaking to had to be exiled before their community could be rebuilt. God knew their way of life had gone so far from God's intended way that it would have to be torn down and rebuilt. It also appears in the New Testament. In Jesus' life example, the temple, His body, had to be torn down for it to be rebuilt into something new. In the new year when we think of resolutions, I was thinking about this idea from a spiritual perspective. I wondered what things in our personal and collective church lives need to be torn down so they can be rebuilt to be in line with God's ways. Are there things we are holding onto because we think we need them, when God is calling us to let them go so new things can be built that will help us grow spiritually? As we step into this new year, may we review, both personally and collectively, some of the things we might need to let be torn down in order to be rebuilt to glorify God.

In His Peace,
Pastor Nicki

Nexus Deadline

The Nexus deadline for the February issue is Monday, January 30th.

Nexus Sponsor

You may choose to sponsor an issue of the Nexus. There is a new sign-up sheet for this year. The cost is \$35.00.

Men's Lunch

The Men's Lunch group will meet on Wednesday, January 11th at noon in the Lounge. Please join us for soup and sandwiches and great conversation.

Celebrations:

Celebrating **Birthdays in January** are:

Sue Ellis, Scott Harrison, Doris Schoonover, Ed Flory, Bobbie Long, Mikayla Charpentier, Jeff Gibbons, Keli Butera, Ed West and Lois Swisher

Celebrating an **Anniversary in January** are:

John and Kathleen Kauderer

Shared Ministry Opportunities

This year, New Year's Day falls on a Sunday. The New Year's Day service will be a lesson on carols and will be held at Christ Presbyterian Church in Bangor at 10:00 a.m. We will be singing Christmas Carols and learning about where they originated and how that can inform their spiritual influence. We hope that you will take this opportunity to worship with fellow brother's and sister's in Christ in new and exciting ways.

Living Into Our Mission

Here are ways we have brought God's light to our community in recent months:

1. We have helped someone move into a new apartment with furniture and home furnishings they needed.
2. We have provided meals for Family Promise members in need.
3. We have supplied food to individuals and have also taken lots of food to the North Timberwolf Pantry.
4. We have provided temporary room and board for people traveling through our area.
5. We supplied, blessed and delivered backpacks to kids in need in our area and donated more up north.
6. We provided practice space for a summer choir.
7. We baptized a baby, 3 children and their father!
8. We completed and are starting a new TOALC session.
9. We have had several Walk & Talks.
10. We have helped in giving rides, meals and visits to our congregants.
11. We have donated money to Ukraine.
12. We donated funds to Common Threads, Angels & Dragonflies, Angel's Closet, Meals On Wheels, 2nd Coming Thrift Shop and Timberwolf Pantry.
13. We contributed to One Great Hour of Sharing.
14. We contributed to the Peace & Global Witness Offering.
15. We contributed to the Alice Visionary Project.
16. We provided space to the Lehigh Presbytery for some of their activities.
17. We support Cares. Once a week we have young adults, with special needs, come in and volunteer to do small chores around the Church.
18. We provided for several families for Brighter Christmas.
19. We sent 36 boxes overseas to children for Operation Christmas Child.
20. Some members volunteered to Ring the Bell for the Salvation Army at Christmastime.
21. S.S. kids made cards and we delivered the cards and cookies from the cookie exchange to 10 different shut-ins for Christmas.



Youth Group

Our combined church youth group will be meeting again this month on January 22 at 2pm. This time we are meeting at our church. Like last time, both the confirmation and youth groups will meet at same time. We will begin with team building activities as a combined group then separate out in our perspective groups. During the breakout time, the youth group will be getting to learn about David Childs' adventures that many of you asked if he could share. Hope to see you there.

Youth Group Host- Since the youth group is meeting at ESPC this month we are also seeking someone(s) who might want to make a treat for them to share. We do have some gluten allergies, but if you don't feel comfortable making something gluten free, don't worry, we will provide something for those with any food allergies that can coincide with what is made. If you can help with this, please reach out to Pastor Nicki or call the office. We thank you for supporting our youth in this way.

Presbytery News

By now, you may have heard but our very own Pastor Nicki was installed at the November Presbytery Assembly as this year's Lehigh Presbytery moderator. The theme she chose for the Presbytery this year is "Better Together." She is inviting churches to understand what it means when we describe the Presbyterian church as a connectional church. At the basic level we are connected because we all believe Christ is the head of the church, but connectional church is so much more. When we embrace our connectedness, we can become even more effective in finding ways to be relevant to our communities once again. She also wants to remind everyone that Presbytery Assembly gatherings are open for any to attend. They often have great speakers that are there to guide us in these ever-changing times.

Congregational Meeting



Congregational Meeting

If you are hearing rumors about upcoming changes to our structure and bylaws being proposed, don't worry. Those in the commission and in leadership have not been purposely holding anything back, they just wanted to ensure that we have everything corrected before we present it to the wider congregation. The 5–7-year planning commission will have the manual and bylaw changes given to session for approval. Once that is completed, we will share the documents with the wider congregation. Additionally, on Sunday January 22nd following worship, we will host a town hall to answer any questions about the proposed documents that will be voted on at the annual January congregational meeting on **January 29, 2023**. The documents will be distributed both by email and hard copies will be available in the lobby (Narthex) by Sunday January 15.

Inspirarity Dialogue's

You have a chance to meet your neighbors of differing faiths through conversations with them. This dialogue time is one hour and each month a different topic is chosen for the next month's discussion. Each person is to bring their faith traditions or own personal beliefs take on the chosen topic. Currently we are still doing this remotely on Zoom, but the hope is to do it in person in the future.

The next meeting is Sunday, January 8th at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting ID: 811 4459 9578

Passcode: 621686

Humor Corner

When I arrived at church one Sunday morning, I bumped into our pastor. "How are things at work?" he asked. "Father," I said, "I'm so busy that every morning I make a list of five things that I have to do that day. If I make it to number three, it's a good day." The pastor nodded knowingly. "I'm the same way with the Ten Commandments."

Reflection on Advent Swap

I wanted to write separately about my experience of the Advent Pastor Swap as we focused on our spiritual journeys, both personally and collectively. I personally found this beneficial. I was able to see how other churches worshiped both similarly and differently. I also discovered some things that were spiritually moving to me that I might share in our service in the future. One thing you may not have realized is that part of the reason these churches' sessions decided this was a good idea is because they know their pastors are working very hard and could use a break. In solo pastor positions of often aging congregations, the time to meet the community needs leaves them with very little time to plan any additional events or bible studies without overworking themselves. Doing the pastor swap allowed each pastor to have to write one sermon during the advent season instead, of the typical three to four, plus Christmas eve. This meant that the extra time freed us up to do more planning together for shared ministry possibilities, as well as explore future Bible studies etc. I want to say thank you for taking this journey with all of us. I look forward to more new ways God can use our collective churches to do God's work in our community.

Congratulations!

Streamwatch volunteers take monthly readings of water temperature, pH, and conductivity in their local creeks. Brodhead Water Association has been collecting volunteer-sourced data for 30 years! At this year's annual Celebration, board member Edie Stevens, presented **Wendy Lichty** with the John Riley Award for her nearly 20 years of service to this program. Great job Wendy!



January Meetings & Events

- January 1st Service at 10:00 at Christ Presbyterian of the Slate Belt
- January 2nd Church Closed
- January 3rd 5-7 Year Planning Commission meeting at 3:00 p.m.
- January 6th K-Group, 1:00 in church lounge
- January 8th Session meeting
- January 10th Women's Circle, 1:00 in church Lounge
- January 11th Men's Lunch, noon in the lounge
- January 16th Church Closed – Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- January 22nd Youth gathering here at ESPC from 2:00-4:00
"Town Hall" meeting after worship
- January 29th Congregational meeting after Worship
- January 30th Nexus Deadline



Presbytery Giving Catalog

The children's Sunday school class, under direction of Kylee Vogel, had decided to choose something from the Presbyterian Giving Catalog to invite the church to help them support. The kids wanted to help everyone. First is the Community Garden. Community gardens supply nutritious produce where it's most needed, while providing employment and educational opportunities that nurture communities. They are given the education and supplies to start a sustainable garden that serves the entire community at a cost of \$200.00. The second one they chose was to educate a child. The hope would be at least five children, but more would be great too. The cost to educate one child is \$25. They raised more than they originally planned and are now helping to educate additional children. Thank you all for your contributions!

Church Elders

Sharon Laverdure Rick Sanker Ellie Buff
Sandra Rydell Judy Schreck Jim Hall
Phil Lawrence Debbie Prince Lisa Swanson

Church Staff

Nicole Vogel Pastor
Jen Carmella Secretary
Linda Schaller Music Director
Sami Carmella Nursery Attendant
Keith Karkut Tech/ Sexton

Nexus Staff

Pastor: Nicole Vogel
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Contributing Editors:
Sandy Rydell, Tim Swanson,
Kylee Vogel

January 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Service at Christ Presbyterian of the Slate Belt, 10:00	2 Church Closed	3 5-7 Year Planning Commission, 3:00 pm	4	5	6 K-Group, 1:00	7
8 Worship, 10:00 Communion Session Mtg. Inspararity Dialogues, 7:00 pm	9	10 Women's Circle, 1:00	11 Men's lunch, noon	12	13	14
15 Worship, 10:00	16 Martin Luther King Jr. Day Church Closed	17	18	19	20	21
22 Worship, 10:00 Youth Gathering 2-4	23	24	25	26	27	28
29 Worship, 10:00 Congregational meeting following worship	30 Nexus deadline	31				