

Pastor's Column

As you are reading this, we will be passing from the liturgical season of Epiphany into the season of Lent. Epiphany gives focus to the grandeur of God: God's holiness, and majesty, and beauty. It would be idyllic and wonderful to remain "lost in wonder, love, and praise" all year!

But Lent comes. It comes suddenly. The first words of Lent are harsh and hard: "In the sweat of your face you shall... return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return." (Genesis 3:19)

There is a subtle balance between our enjoyment of God's glory in Epiphany, and the awareness of our own inglorious limitations in Lent. Epiphany is symbolized by light; and light reveals what has been hidden. Lent we see what we would have liked to have kept hidden about ourselves. Accordingly, Lent is symbolized in the darkness of the ashes of Ash Wednesday.

The movement from God's light, in order to view our mortal shame, would be a dead end course if it were not for Easter. Easter is the victory of light over darkness and of life over death. Easter is where we are heading. Jesus' victory is the source of all our hope.

I wish you a successful Lent. Remember God's glory, shining! Remember that you are dust! And remember that God has willed to do something about our human predicament. Holiness gets the victory! Light comes with the dawn, every day! We cannot save ourselves, but Christ is our Savior!

The liturgical year mirrors the Christian life. We begin in amazement at God's majesty and goodness (Epiphany). We are subject to dry and difficult times too; and these times teach us something about ourselves. But the life of faith is a life of joy, because God's majesty and goodness will ultimately win. Again, it is the awareness of that victory that carries us on.

Know you are loved,

Matthew

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Christian Education



We gather as a church community to worship, learn and serve. Those activities are important and vital, yet it is important we nurture our faith 'in between.' Here are some links to activities for different age groups, although ANY age will benefit from any of these activities!

So much is being said about the diversity in our country. Some of it positive, some not so much. Children are naturally curious and open to differences, but often learn less helpful messages as they grow. Here is an activity to help your child learn to appreciate and even celebrate the rich diversity which is such a strength of our country:

<http://www.vibrantfaithathome.org/item/people-who-are-different>

Lent begins the first day of March! Many of us seek to deepen our spiritual life, often by giving something up or perhaps taking on a new spiritual discipline. Having help and support to keep those disciplines is important. This activity will bring encouragement on the journey for all members of the family: <http://www.vibrantfaithathome.org/item/gang-up-on-lent>

Lent is a 40 day journey. The number 40 is significant in the Bible. Explore the gospel of Matthew and the story of Jesus in the wilderness as you begin your own Lenten journey. This is a good study for adults or couples or even a small group! <http://www.vibrantfaithathome.org/item/a-lenten-wilderness>

Sunday School News: Lent is bringing some new opportunities for adults on Sunday mornings!

The Floyd Hays Ellis Class is beginning a study of the book A Letter to My Anxious Christian Friends – From Fear to Faith in Unsettled Times by David Gushee. The social upheaval we are experiencing leaves many anxious as it seems difficult to discern a faithful Christian response. This book seeks to reassure and offer hope. Books are available in class for \$10 each.

Our Lenten theme this year is based on Rowan Williams' book Tokens of Trust. Worship themes and preaching will be built from this and we are also offering a class. With the Apostle's Creed as a frame, Williams gave each chapter as a separate talk at Canterbury Cathedral in 2005. A solid study for those curious about Christian faith, but an excellent foundation for all who profess Christ. Nathan Love will be leading a small group study on this book from March 5 to April 9. Books are available for \$10 each.





Our annual Easter Egg Hunt will be Saturday April 15 this year. Final details are in process, but we need your help! **Donations of small, individually wrapped candies and toys (erasers, temporary tattoos etc) are needed** to prepare our eggs for the hunt. Since our date is later, with the real chance of warm weather, we ask for items such as Skittles and Starburst and other non-chocolate candy. That will help prevent possible melting and an invasion of sweet-seeking ants. Toy/Candy donations are needed at any time prior to April 1; please bring to the office. Questions? See Leslee Kirkconnell.

Lent and Easter are **ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING SEASON**. We will collect and dedicate our offering on Easter Sunday, April 16. OGHS is one of four special offerings of the PC(USA) and is the most ecumenical, as a number of denominations participate and have for more than 50 years. Our generous gifts support three key ministries of the Presbyterian Church – The Presbyterian Hunger Program, Self-Development of People and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. Watch for more information about these ministries as well as creative ways to donate.



Child/Youth Protection Policy has been revised and adopted by the Session in January. The Christian Education Ministry is in the process of more fully implementing this, which includes training workshop and background checks for all who work with those under 18. Two workshops occurred in February and one will take place March 5, 11:30-2:00pm

following worship. The more we educate ALL our members about the issue of safety in our church, the safer we will all be to worship, learn and serve our loving God. Additional workshops will be planned for those who were unable to attend this first round.

Did you know? 80% of people who join a church are **INVITED by someone they know!** Be sure to extend the loving hand of fellowship and invitation to those you know who don't have a church home. We have great things going on and we need everyone to spread the word!



When combined with other pennies, the impact is tremendous! Our next **3 Cents a Meal Worship Collection** will be **Sunday April 30**. Our children and youth will come around with cans to collect your coins, bills and checks. Each month's contribution is \$2.70 per individual. Our last collection (Jan. 29) brought in \$351.71. One third goes to our Food Pantry and the remainder is forwarded to the Presbyterian Hunger Program to address root causes of hunger at home and abroad. Your generosity with a little has a huge impact!

Vacation Bible School will be June 11-14 at Christ Episcopal Church. Our Passport to Peru will introduce us to the land and the people of Peru, AND we will also learn more about Living Waters for the World and the plans to install a system there next summer! Registration will begin after Easter, so watch for details for children, as well as needs for leadership from our youth and adults!

Church and Community



LENTEN DINNERS AND WORSHIP Each Wednesday during Lent, make plans to attend dinner and worship service. Dinner is served at 5:15pm and a worship service begins at 6:05pm on Wednesdays, March 8 through April 5.

To ensure enough food is prepared for dinner, we need an accurate head count! Please use one of three methods to let us know that you plan to attend:

Mark your pew pads each Sunday, or call the church office by Monday each week, or contact David Thomison (you may email davidthomison@gmail.com or phone 270-782-5294) by Monday each week. Dinners are \$8 per person, or \$20 per family.

EASTER LILIES will be available for purchase to honor or remember loved ones on Easter Sunday. Forms will be available in the Sunday bulletins later in March (or in the church office) to reserve a lily or to make a donation in honor of those special people.



Dates to remember which are coming up soon—

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME will begin on Sunday, March 11th.

An **EASTER EGG HUNT** is planned for Saturday, April 15th.

MAUNDY THURSDAY DINNER AND WORSHIP will be on April 13th.

GOOD FRIDAY is April 14th and we will have worship at 12:00pm.

EASTER WORSHIP on Sunday, April 16 will include a Sunrise Service at 7:00am as well as a 10:30am service.

Our deepest sympathy is extended to the following members and friends of this church who have recently lost loved ones:

*Jim and Linda Skaggs in the death of son-in-law Mike Jones
Lynn Croxton and the Croxton family in the death of Lynn's
father, D. A. Faxon*





A Mission Statement Points the Way

Pity the poor organizational mission statement! They are hard to write. Anyone who sets out to write one will quickly become friends with the delete key! And yet, being able to describe what your organization is all about is a good thing. After all, as someone has said, “it’s your direction, not your intention, that determines your destination.” Mission statements have to be short, specific, and able to answer the question: “are we doing what we’re supposed to be doing?”

Matthew has previously mentioned the value of everyone having a short “elevator speech” about our church, some short paragraph that you could use to describe what draws you to The Presbyterian Church. It’s called an “elevator speech” because it’s supposed to be short enough to repeat on an elevator ride. Well, the mission statement is supposed to be even shorter, and pithier, than that!

The Disney Corporation’s mission statement is “To make people happy.” That’s not bad. They may not mention their profit motive, but hey, why quibble? Starbucks’ Coffee has the mission “to inspire and nurture the human spirit—one person, one cup, and one neighborhood at a time.” Does it matter that their cups are disposable? I’m not sure. And does coffee really inspire the human spirit, or is that just the caffeine talking?

This is not idle rambling. Your Church needs to know where it is going. Our congregation is active and alive, but it sometimes seems that we are (like the Apostle Paul) trying to be “all things to all people so that by all possible means [we] might save some.” (I Corinthians 9:22)

Here’s what has been proposed, and what the Session is now considering: “We are a Bible based church, sharing the vitality of Christ, beginning with welcome, centered on worship, and devoted to caring service. We are a family that loves and forgives each other; a household where people know they belong; a place of peace in a disquieting world. Our mission is to be a church where you are at home.”

We welcome your thoughts. Call Matthew of Leslee at church (843-4707) or talk to the Elder of the Week in the parlor after worship.



Session Report

The Session met for its regular meeting on February 21, 2017 in the Church conference room. These items highlighted the meeting.

After Matthew Covington opened the meeting with prayer, he gave the devotion. Following, on proper motion, the minutes of the last regular meeting were approved; the minutes of the special called meeting of the Session of January 22; the minutes of the congregational meeting of January 29; and the minutes of the special called meeting of the Session of February 12 were approved, as well. The congregational meeting had been called so that it could receive the balanced budget from the Finance Committee and confirm the changes to the call of the Pastor. The special called meetings were for the purpose of accepting new members into our congregation. The regular business agenda was then taken up.

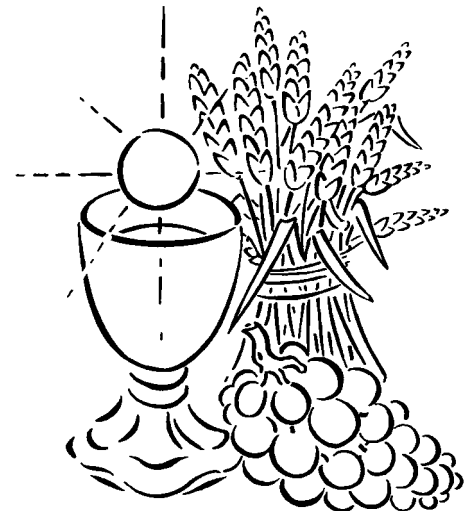
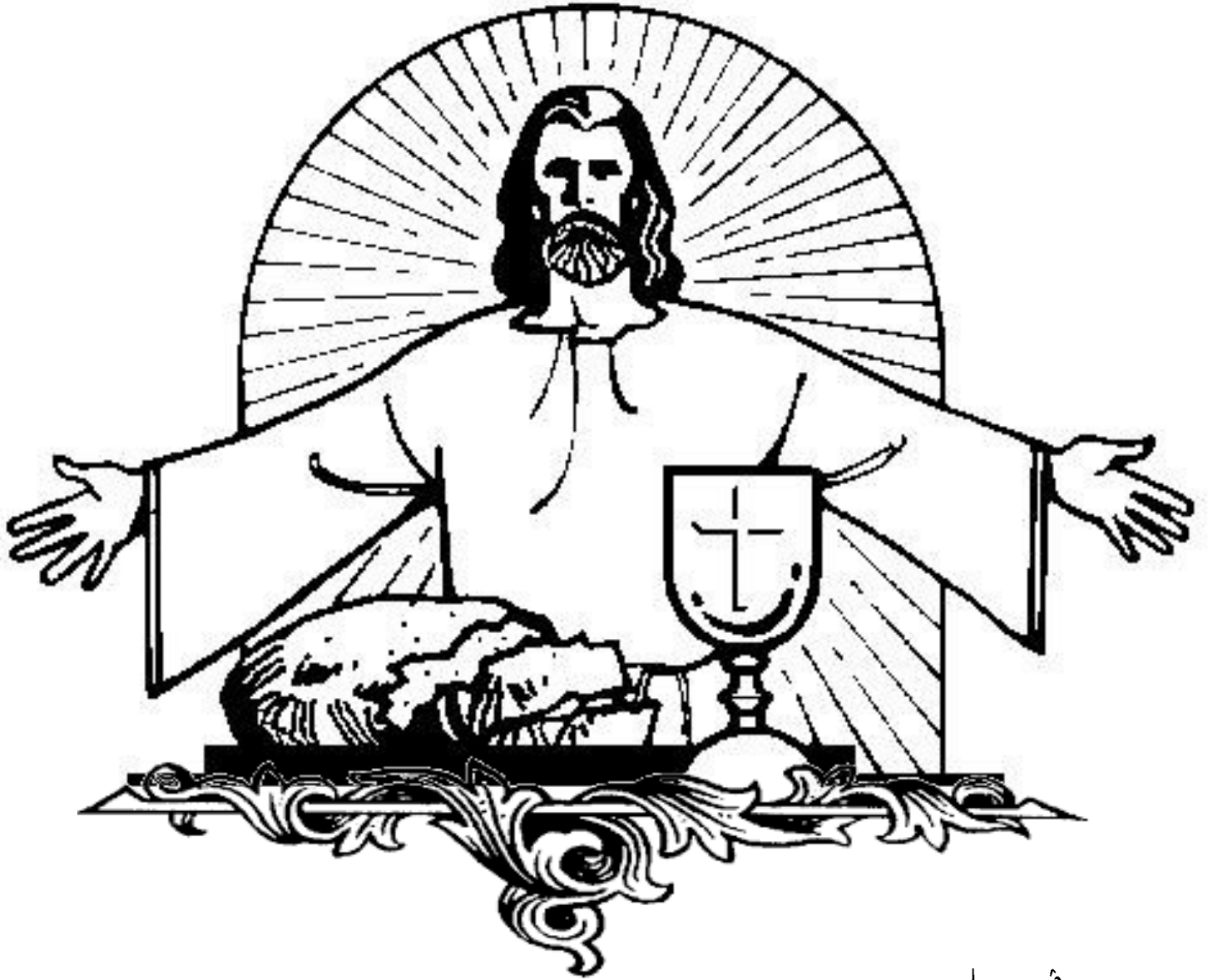
There were several Staff and Ministry reports. Matthew reported on the continued improvement in our congregational communications and on the progress with a statement on our Churches vision and mission. Leslie Kirkconnell commented on the upcoming March 19 Potato Party, as a Montreat fundraiser; the Confirmation planned for April; and the Church's Child Protection Policy. Christian Education reported on the development of a job description for a youth and family ministry part time assistant. Fellowship reported on the Wednesday night Lenten dinners and on the Pig Pickin, presently set for August 13. Property reported on the general upkeep of our Church facility. Currently, all is well. With regard to the Worship Committee, the "Elder in the Parlor" roster was set with Nancy English taking February 26; Denny Wedge taking March 5; Brad Howard, March 12; David Coverdale, March 19; and Bobby Rabold, March 26. Finance advised that the state of the budget was currently satisfactory. The "Buck in a Basket" offering for the remainder of this quarter will go toward Uspiritus and Buckhorn. A Deacon's report was submitted that set out the general responsibilities and Deacon of the Week duties. A report of the February 14 meeting of the Presbytery was submitted.

Finally, the congregation is urged to bring any cares or concerns to any Deacon, Elder or member of the Pastoral Care Committee, as well as to Matthew, whose door is open. Business having been completed, the Session meeting was adjourned with prayer.

James D. Harris, Jr.
Clerk of Session

Our church elders: Gary Ahrendt, Pam Bratcher, Franklin Berry, Charlie Capito, Sam Evans, Jim Harris, Fred Higgins, Brad Howard, Julia Roberts, Nancy English, Bobby Rabold, Diane Simmons, Margaret Stein, Larry Warden, Denny Wedge. **Our church deacons:** Karol Ahmed, Barbara Brindle, Peggy Carthrae, Shannon Dyche, Kim Ferguson, Kelly Goad, Sheryl Goad, Larry Gildersleeve, Cathey Green, Wayne Hendrix, Frederica Kernohan, Nathan Love, Marilyn Mattingly, Donna Meredith, Charlotte Prow, Kevin Reber, Ken Royse, Ann Rudolph, Janet Schwarzkopf, Diane Simmons, Debbie Trickey, and Judy Whitson.

Kids' Coloring Page



Youth Ministry



MONTREAT FUNDRAISER LUNCHEON! Sunday March 19, 11:30am Fellowship Hall. Join us following worship for great food and fellowship. The Youth will be preparing a Potato Bar with baked white and sweet potatoes and a variety of toppings for you to create your own meal. We ask donations (suggest what you might spend on a meal out). Dessert items will be sold individually. All donations will go to help our youth attend the Montreat Youth Conference, July 15-22.

POTATO PARTY

We also need **donations of food items** for our Party! We have a Perfect Potluck sign up -

<http://www.perfectpotluck.com/meals.php?t=WYPD4547>

All items can be brought the week before to the kitchen, or by 9:30am Sunday, March 19. THANK YOU for your generous support of our youth!

CALENDAR ITEMS FOR YOUTH:

Sunday Evening Fellowship meets each Sunday unless noted (our calendar may be found on our website). Confirmation meets at 5 (through March 12) with dinner and fellowship beginning at 6.

Spencer's Fellowship will break for Lent (March 1-April 5) Please come for Dinner and Worship on Wednesdays during that time (RSVPs required).

March 19 Potato Party – ALL YOUTH/COLLEGE (AND CHAPERONES) ATTENDING MONTREAT MUST PARTICIPATE. 9:30am until we are cleaned up (1:30ish).

MONTREAT PAYMENTS DUE APRIL 1. The remainder of the conference fees will be due. The amount is \$250, payable to the church. If scholarship assistance is needed, please contact Leslee Kirkconnell as soon as possible. All inquiries will be kept confidential. Funds are limited. **The deadline to request help is March 20.**

April 15 Egg Hunt final details in the works, but YOUTH will be needed to help us hide eggs and run fun activities for the kids.

Confirmation is April 16, Easter Sunday. Barbara Solberg-Hale has been exploring the Christian faith and what it means to be Presbyterian since September and we look forward to celebrating her uniting with this church.

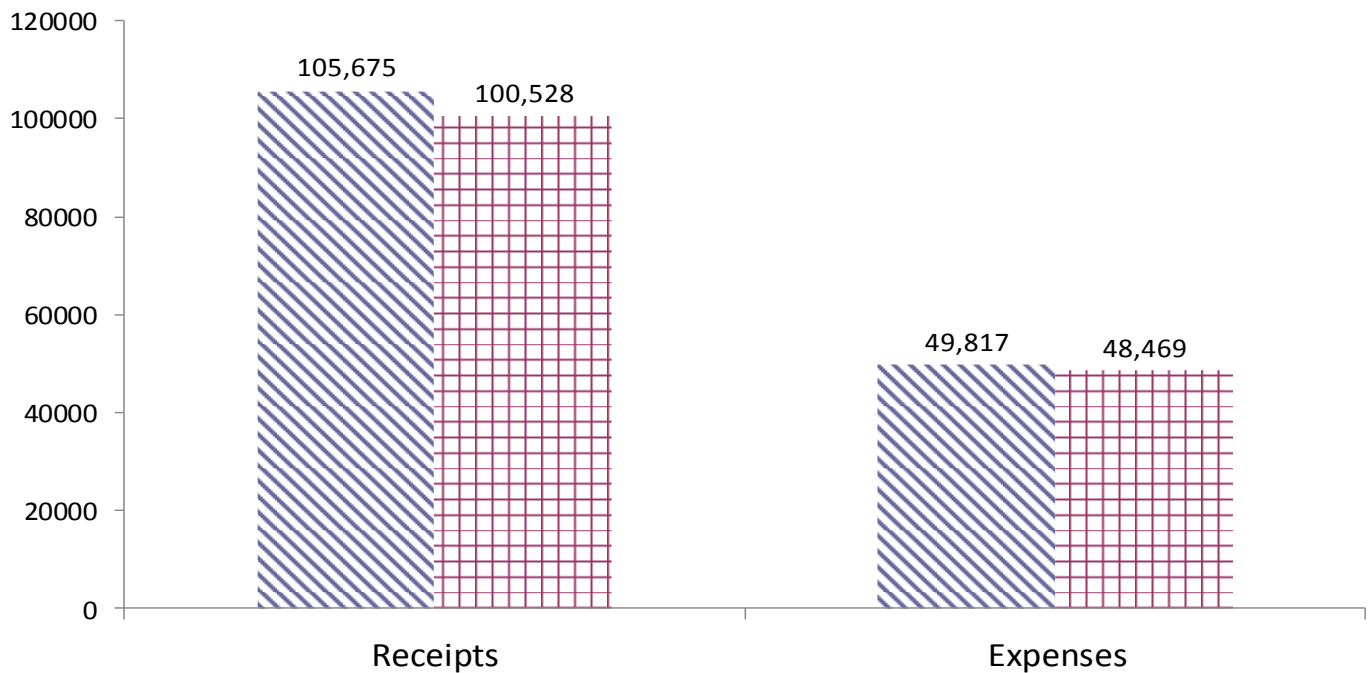
April 30 is YOUTH SUNDAY. We will also have **GRADUATE RECOGNITION** and invite our graduating seniors to have a special part in the service. If your youth is graduating from High School this year, please let Leslee Kirkconnell know. We will also need a bio and plans for the future so we can celebrate this milestone with the whole congregation. Those will be due by April 20. All our youth will be engaged in planning and leading the service. We will likely have a rehearsal on Saturday April 29, so stay tuned!

Financial Report

Financial Summary

Year to Date January
2017

■ Budget
■ Actual



March Birthdays

March 1

Betty Jo Beard

David Gentry

Anna Sue Heller

March 2

Jeane Smith

March 3

Mary Kirkwood

March 4

Jonathan Hendrix

Michael Nade

March 7

Patty Greninger

Rita Rudloff

March 8

Peggy Carthrae

Buzz English

March 10

John Franklin

March 12

Jeffrey Johnson

Luke Johnson

Todd Kessler

Bryce Phillips

March 13

Ahmad Gilliam

Alex Maudlin

Katie Wyrick

March 14

Kate Grise

March 15

Karol Ahmed

Chuck Webb

March 16

Colton Nade

Eleanor Short

March 18

Beth Tyrie Rogers

March 19

Sarah Johnston

Kelly Wyrick

Daniel Zeller

March 20

Will Barrick

Christine Long

Connor Siddens

March 21

Bob Hunt

March 22

Leigh Ballard

March 23

Earlene Chelf

Nina Njoku

March 24

Lynn Reeves

March 25

Emily Cooper

Bud Schlinker

Jamie Simpson

March 27

Henry Heller

March 28

Clark Carthrae

Dorothy Reeves

March 29

Sarah Ellis

Mike Kanan

March 30

Katrina Barnhill

Phillip Burkeen

March 31

Toni Stahl



March Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 6:00pm Ash Wednesday Dinner 7:00pm Worship	2 6:00pm RITI 7:00pm Theology Pub	3 10:30am Morning Prayer Winter Youth Retreat	4
5 8:30am Fellowship 9:00am Children's Music 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship 11:30am Child Prot. Training 5:00pm Confirmation 6:00pm Youth Group	6 11:00am Circle 3 6:00pm Cooking Class	7 11:00am Special Care 2:00pm Staff Meeting 7:00pm Deacons	8 9:15am Wed Morn Circle 9:30am Circle 6 5:15pm Lenten Dinner 6:05pm Lenten Worship 6:45pm Chancel Choir	9 6:00pm RITI 7:00pm Theology Pub	10 10:30am Morning Prayer	11
12 Daylight Savings Time  8:30am Fellowship 9:00am Children's Music 9:30am Sunday School 9:45am Sunday Circle 10:30am Worship 5:00pm Confirmation 6:00pm Youth Group	13 11:30am Circle 9	14 9:00am POPS 11:00am Special Care 2:00pm Staff Meeting 7:00pm Evening Circle 7:00pm Camera Club	15 9:00am POPS 5:15pm Lenten Dinner 6:05pm Lenten Worship 6:45pm Chancel Choir	16 7:00pm Theology Pub	17 10:30am Morning Prayer 	18 9:00am Presbytery training
19 8:30am Fellowship 9:00am Children's Music 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship 11:30am Potato Party	20	21 11:00am Special Care 2:00pm Staff Meeting 7:00pm Session	22 5:15pm Lenten Dinner 6:05pm Lenten Worship 6:45pm Chancel Choir	23 7:00pm Theology Pub	24 10:30am Morning Prayer	25
26 8:30am Fellowship 9:00am Children's Music 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship 6:00pm Youth Group	27	28 11:00am Special Care 2:00pm Staff Meeting 7:00pm Missions	29 5:15pm Lenten Dinner 6:05pm Lenten Worship 6:45pm Chancel Choir	30 7:00pm Theology Pub	31 10:30am Morning Prayer	

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**March
2017**



"Our reason for being is to manifest the good news of Jesus Christ in word and deed so that disciples are made by means of inspiring and engaging worship, relevant and reliable education, compassionate and caring fellowship, meaningful and magnanimous outreach, to the glory of God."

The full-color newsletter is online at www.bgpres.org.
March 15 is the deadline for the April 2017 newsletter.
Please send your information to the church office at
info@bgpres.org

The Presbyterian Church

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www.bgpres.org

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