

APC Connections

Volume 7, Issue 7

April 2015

Upcoming Events

- Apr. 1— 6:30PM B & G meets
- Apr. 2—7 PM Maundy Thursday Service
- Apr. 5—Easter. No SS; One Great Hour of Sharing
- Apr. 6-11—Brett on call for Kerra
- Apr. 12—Congregational meeting
- April 14—11 AM PW Circle meets
- Apr. 25—Spring Cleanup 9 AM
- Apr. 26—5¢-A-Meal Offering/4th Sunday Fellowship; April/May Session meeting



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Pastor's Page

Friends,

By now, you may have heard in the national news that the Presbyterian Church (USA) has “redefined” marriage. In an historic change to our *Book of Order*, our constitution now has been ratified to include the following:

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the wellbeing of the entire human family. Marriage involves a unique commitment between two people, traditionally a man and a woman, to love and support each other for the rest of their lives. The sacrificial love that unites the couple sustains them as faithful and responsible members of the church and the wider community.

In civil law, marriage is a contract that recognizes the rights and obligations of the married couple in society. In the Reformed tradition, marriage is also a covenant in which God has an active part, and which the community of faith publicly witnesses and acknowledges.

What the news articles are quick to point out is that this permits Presbyterian congregations, in states where civil law allows it, to hold a marriage ceremony between two men or two women. Radical stuff, isn't it? Now what you won't find in these articles, but you will find in our constitution, says a whole lot more about the truly radical nature of marriage, no matter what gender the partners happen to be. A Christian understanding of marriage is already radical – before we ever bring the issue of gender into it!

So as Presbyterians really define it, here's the radical nature

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Pastor
Rev. Kerra English

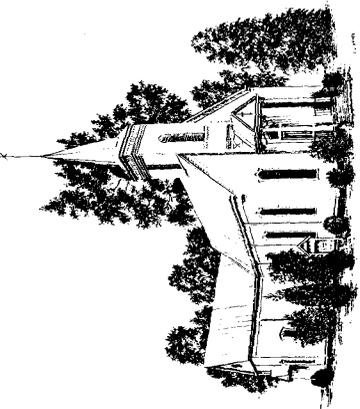
Secretary
Susan Vitale

Director of Music
Karla Bloom

Organist
Elizabeth Hargrove



... just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may **live a new life.** ROMANS 6:4



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of marriage as I see it:

...**Marriage is a gift.** That doesn't mean that it's a gift that the couples' parents are going to charge to their credit cards! It is understood to be a gift from God, and that means that accepting the gift of marriage will change who I am in the world. My faith tradition reminds me that my choice to make a binding commitment to another person will teach me some fairly important things that I need to know to live more peaceably with the rest of humankind. As a married person, I am responsible for loving my spouse on the days he is most unlovable, and he promised to do the same for me on the days that I am just being dreadful. Being able to do that changes how one begins to see "others" in the world. It is a gift to let the rubs of marriage wear you smooth so that others may benefit from that softening and rounding out of who we are. That's what it means when it says that marriage is a gift for the wellbeing of the ENTIRE human family.

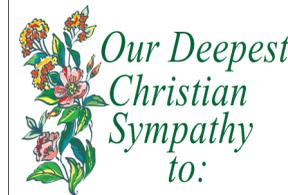
...**Marriage is a sacrifice.** It is so sacrificial that in the early church, those front-line Christians were counseled to stay single if at all possible so as to not have more than one sacrifice to deal with at a time. Being married means not always getting your own way – for the sake of the relationship. And if the marriage also entails raising children, the bar of sacrifice just got raised a little bit higher! Learning responsibility in marriage helps us take on larger responsibilities in our community, and then we also need the community to help us shoulder those family responsibilities with faithfulness.

...**Marriage is a covenant** – which means it is a promise of the highest order. Even our legal agreements remind us that there is a contract in place that can only be broken with an additional legal action. However, Christian marriage asks for more than just a contractual agreement. A covenant is the kind of promise God was known for making with humanity, so while not "unbreakable," it is vitally important to recognize that breaking a covenant is serious business. A covenant is attested to by God and by the community of faithful witnesses. That's the reason for having a "church wedding" rather than meet up with a few friends gathered on a beach somewhere. It's about accountability. The married couple promises before GOD and THESE WITNESSES that they will keep the promises they are making to each other. Breaking those promises wounds people to the core, and the church, in its traditional wisdom,

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Usher and Greeter Schedule

	GREETERS	USHERS	COMMUNION ELDERS	COMMUNION PREP & CLEANUP	LITURGIST	FLOWERS
4/05/15	J. Tate	L. Herring, E. Mathes, C. Sthreshley, M.	M. Carneal, J. Glazebrook, V. Neeley, E. Shea	K. Pugh, J. Tate		
4/12/15	L. Allison	L. Allison, S. Henderson				
4/19/15	K. Basilio	K. Basilio, T. Blair	REMEMBER, If you cannot serve, please find a replacement and leave a message on the office phone, 798-5543.			
4/26/15	N. & R. Bryan	Ron Bryan, V. Neeley				
5/03/15	S. & M. Carneal	S. & M. Carneal	R. Bryan, R. DuPriest, D. Moncol, C. Sthreshley	J. Aderhold, J. Glazebrook		



• Annette Shuff and the Vitale Family in the death of their uncle, Al Vitale of New Jersey on March 19, 2015.

Remember to check out our website at:

ashlandpresbyterian.org

where you can find Kerra's sermons, current (and old) newsletters, and upcoming events.

You can also find us on Facebook!

David M. Coddington

August 13, 1930
March 5, 2015



Happy Birthday to: April

- 4 Riley Doyle
- 6 Ardie Brown
- 13 Flo Sthreshley
- 17 Caitlin Blair
- Erin Blair
- Rob DuPriest
- 20 Kevin Doyle
- Linda Herring



- 22 Nate Hubbard
- 23 Ginger Young
- 24 Julie Tate

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does what it can to try to prevent such devastation in couples' lives by reminding those considering marriage of the weightiness of the promises they will make.

My guess is that those gay and lesbian couples who have been yearning to be married by the churches that faithfully raised them are well aware that marriage is a life-affirming gift, a sacrifice, and a promise they are willing to enter into with great care. To carelessly marry is a problem in our culture to be sure, but to long for such commitment, I believe, is a desire we would be foolish to ignore in the longer tradition of Christian marriage. Marriage is a gift – God's gift - for the benefit of the entire human family. Radical? Yes indeed!

God's strength to those who are married – and God's peace for us all!
Pastor Kerra

A New Way to Communicate!

We are now using a new communication system to get in touch with all our members in a timely manner. Whether it is general information about an upcoming event, a member in the hospital or closings due to weather, this system will notify all our members in a matter of a few minutes.

By now, you should have received a phone message or two; however, if you would prefer to have the message come to you by text or email, just let us know and we can make the change.

If you think you have missed a message, you can always call 1-877-698-3261 and hit 1. The service will recognize your number and play the latest message if there is one. This service is being provided by OneCallNow. – Session

Union Seminary Key Friends

Union Presbyterian Seminary is reviving a valuable tradition of having ambassadors from Presbyterian Churches as *Key Friends*. *Key Friends* bring practical concerns about current and future needs for leadership in particular churches and they share important information about seminary efforts to address those needs with people in the pews. Karen Hasbrouck has been appointed by Session to be a *Key Friend* from Ashland Presbyterian, but there's room for another! If you are interested, please contact Clerk of Session, Julie Tate for more information.



Communion Service
April 2, 2015 at 7 PM

Easter Sunday
April 5, 2015

11 AM Worship
No Sunday School

Come early and bring fresh flowers
for the Living Cross!



One Great Hour of Sharing Offering

Your generous gifts assist those affected by natural disasters, provide food to the hungry, and help build strong communities.



Congregational MEETING

son, Pat Dunn, and Kathleen Pugh to the 2015 Nominating Committee.

Sunday, April 12

A Called Congregational meeting will be held for the purpose of electing members at large



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Presbyterian Women

PW Circle will meet Tuesday, **April 14 at 11:00 a.m.** in Lancaster Hall for study (Lesson 7) and lunch. Bring a sandwich. Beverages and dessert are provided. Also, remember to bring an item for Mary's pantry!



Saturday, April 25 at 9:00 a.m.

We will be installing air conditioners, touch up painting and working on our normal spring maintenance grounds upkeep. So, put on your gloves, bring your rakes, and remember, many hands make light work!

SAVE THE DATE!

*Ash Grove Women's Retreat
will be held at Richmond Hill on
November 13-14, 2015.*

