

APC Connections

Volume 9, Issue 7

April 2017

Upcoming Events

- April 9— Palm Sunday Breakfast, 9:30 AM; Sacrament of Infant Baptism
- April 11—11 AM PW Circle meets
- April 13—7 PM Maundy Thursday Communion Service
- April 16—One Great Hour of Sharing Offering
- April 30—Farewell Fellowship for our Intern Amanda Hill



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Pastor's Page

Baptism is the sign and seal of incorporation into Christ. Jesus through his own baptism identified himself with sinners in order to fulfill all righteousness... The disciples were empowered by the outpouring of the Spirit to undertake a life of service and to be an inclusive worshiping community, sharing life in which love, justice, and mercy abounded. *(Directory for Worship, Presbyterian Church USA)*



Friends,
 Why in the world do we do this thing called Baptism? We understand that it is a sign, a ritual that marks inclusion into a church family. We baptize individuals "into" Christ. Those who are baptized are welcomed into the fold as brothers or sisters in the faith, as spiritual brothers and sisters of Jesus himself. Especially when we baptize infants, we promise to care for those children, teach them about the faith, and love them to the best of our ability. It is a seal of deep inclusion. It says, we care about you. We love you. We promise to cherish you. It is not just an act, it is a promise on behalf of the church community to fully welcome this child a part of the beloved community.

But what we also might think about when we think about baptism is that it is a cleansing. Baptism washes away our sin, makes us acceptable, marks us as somehow fit for heaven. At least that used to be the fear, right? People used to be afraid that if a baby died before it was baptized then his or her soul might be lost. I think we've gotten away from that kind of thinking, at least I hope we have. And yet, it still is a reminder that Jesus washes away our sin, not just at the point of baptism, but contin-

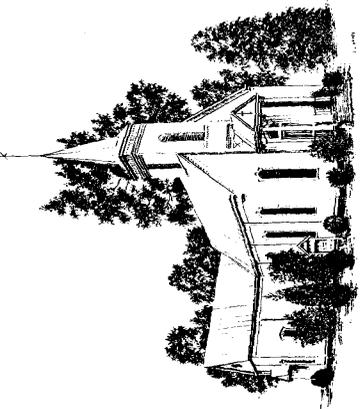
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ues to identify with human sin, and remind us that in him our sins will be forgiven. When we baptize babies, we are reminded ourselves that we continue to be washed clean, and made whole in the sight of God.

And finally, the part we often forget is that baptism is the entry point into a life of service. We who are baptized are called to serve in this world with love, justice, and mercy. Baptism claims the baptized for the Christian life. The Spirit joins with us to continue to bring about God's work in the world through the hands and feet, the hearts and minds of those who have joined with the church, not for membership or blessing, but for a life of service.

On April 9, Rosalie and Rockwood, will be baptized as part of our worship service. They will be made part of the beloved community. They will be washed in the water that cleanses us deeply and to our souls. They will be inducted into a life of Christian service. It's a lot to put on a baby's tender head. And yet we do. We do because in God's eyes they are already part of the Kingdom, already a part of the family of faith, already called to be disciples of the one who calls us to love, Jesus Christ.

It is a blessing indeed, not just to them, but to all of us to welcome the newly baptized.

God's peace, Pastor Kerra



Adult Sunday School

Our **Lenten Speaker Series** continues through Sunday, **April 2**. We start with **refreshments at 9:15 a.m.**, **class begins at 9:30 a.m.** This series has focused on the beliefs of the Spirit as stated in the Apostles Creed. The final theme and speaker is:

* **April 2** — The Life Everlasting, Lynn McClintock, Chaplain at Westminster Canterbury

There will be **NO** Sunday School **April 9 and 16**. Schedule following Easter will be as follows:

- * **April 23** — *Windwork*. Maturing and Interceding
- * **April 30** — Creation Theology: Where did it all begin? What are we called to do as stewards of this earth? What is the relationship between creature and creator? Come explore the depths of creation theology found within the New Testament with our seminary intern, Amanda!
- * **May 7** — New study, "The Essential Presbyterian" begins.

Usher and Greeter Schedule

	GREETERS	USHERS	COMMUNION ELDERS	COMMUNION PREP & CLEANUP	LITURGIST	FLOWERS
4/02/17	T. Blair	S. Henderson, J. Tate	L. Allison, R. DuPriest, B. Mathes, G. Young	K. Pugh, J. Tate	A. Hill	
4/09/17	R. Bryan	L. & R. Herring	<i>REMEMBER, If you cannot serve, please find a replacement and leave a message on the office phone, 798-5543.</i>		A. Hill	
4/16/17	L. Campbell	L. Allison, K. Basilio, E. Mathes, C. Schutte			A. Hill	Easter
4/23/17	S. & M. Carneal	R. English, C. Phillips, B. Shea, J. Tate			K. English	Tate
4/30/17	D. Coddington	S. & D. Moncol			A. Hill	Vitale
5/07/17	R. Cole	R. Bryan, S. Vitale	R. Bryan	C. Schutte		Neeley

Happy Birthday to: April

- 1 Liz Campbell
- 13 Flo Sthreshley
- 17 Caitlin Blair
Erin Blair
Rob DuPriest
- 20 Linda Herring
- 23 Ginger Young
- 24 Jennifer Raymond
Julie Tate



Reminders from Outreach



Remember to bring food for the rail on Communion Sunday, **April 2**. We will be preparing Easter Food baskets for about 12 community families on Monday, April 10 for distribution during Holy Week.

Our church will be providing fruit and dessert for the Circles Ashland training on **April 27**. Look for the sign up sheet in the narthex!



A Note of Farewell and Appreciation from Our Intern Amanda Hill

I cannot believe that my time with you all is coming to an end so soon. My last day is April 30th, and I pray that it takes it's time getting here! I have LOVED every minute with you all, you have been a gift to my ministry and to my life. God has certainly been working in your hearts to make the Church a welcoming place for strangers. Just 7 months ago, I barely knew you. I didn't know anything about your personalities or talents or passions. But in this short amount of time, you have shown Christian hospitality to me and have opened your souls to me, and I thank you.

As many of you know, I am beginning a year of hospital chaplain residency at VCU in August. You as a church have helped to prepare me for this next year in my ministry. I have visited many of you in your homes, at the hospital and out and around in Ashland. You have taught me how to be a better listener and caregiver. You have given me wisdom on how to better pay attention to congregational needs and desires. In the hospital, I will be engaging strangers each and every day. During my year long residency, I will be assigned to two units on the hospital (for example, Surgical Trauma and Psychiatric). There will be some patients that I get to know well, but there will also be people who I will only see once. Relationships are really different in a hospital setting. Ministry to staff, however, is ongoing. My time at Ashland Presbyterian Church has given me more insight and tools into how to dig deep quickly. You have trusted me with very personal information, and for that I am grateful. Something that chaplains attempt to practice in the hospital is called a "ministry of presence" which is basically just being there for someone. Sometimes, people don't necessarily want to talk or even have you in the room, but knowing there is someone who cares for them spiritually in the hospital is very important. Or, other times people have A LOT to say, and really just need someone to talk to. A ministry of presence has been a big part of my role here at Ashland, and I feel that my abilities have grown in that area.

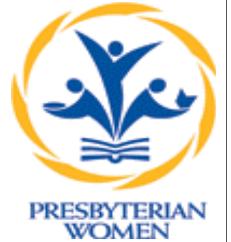
Once again, thank you for all that you have done for me over these past 7 months. Ashland Presbyterian is a gift to the world, and a stronghold of God's Kingdom. I am blessed to have been with you, and I pray that I too was a blessing to your community. Please know that I will be in prayer for you. I love you, Amanda.



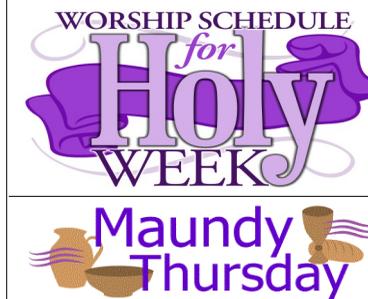
Join us on **Sunday, April 30** following morning worship as we bid Amanda farewell and blessings in her continuing ministry! The Farewell Fellowship will be hosted by Buildings and Grounds and is in lieu of our 4th Sunday Fellowship which has been cancelled.

Presbyterian Women

PW Circle will meet Tuesday, **April 11 at 11:00 a.m.** in Lancaster Hall for study and lunch. Please read Lesson 8, *According to the Other Abrahamic Faiths*. Bring a sandwich. Dessert and beverages are provided! —Doreen Coddington



April 9 at 9:30 a.m.
in Lancaster Hall
The Christian Education Committee invites all to a fellowship and breakfast Palm Sunday morning. Afterwards, join us for worship as we celebrate the Sacrament of Infant Baptism.



Communion Service
April 13 at 7 PM
Anyone unable to come to the Maundy Thursday service who would like to have communion at home during Holy Week, please contact Pastor Kerra to make arrangements for a visit.

Easter Sunday April 16, 2016

11 AM Worship
No Sunday School

Remember to come early and bring fresh flowers for the Living Cross!



During morning worship, we will receive the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering which goes to the Self-development of People, Presbyterian Hunger Program, and the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

Upcoming Events at UPSem

April 19-20, 2017 – The Howie Center Events: Shawna Bowman and Nanette Sawyer will lead worship, large group activities, and workshops related to *Embodying God's Story and Our Stories: Storytelling | Art | Worship*. There are a number of different events, beginning with community chapel on Wednesday, April 19, and ending with a labyrinth walk at mid-day on Thursday. Please register at the link above for the events you will be attending. Although everything is free, we would like to get an idea of how many will attend.

May 8-10, 2017 — The Sprunt Lectures. Watch for details in the May issue.