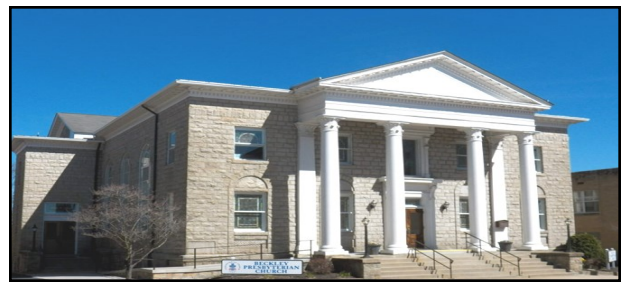


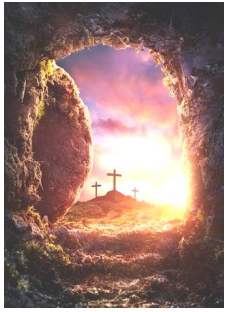
The Pipe Line

Beckley Presbyterian Church
203 S Kanawha Street
Beckley, WV 25801
304-252-6289

Email: office@beckleypres.org
Website: beckleypres.org
www.facebook.com/BPC.PCUSA.WV



April 1, 2024



As I've been reading the four gospel stories of the resurrection, I've been struck by the emotions each story reports. There is terror and amazement in Mark. Matthew speaks of fear and great joy. The women at the tomb are terrified of the angels, Luke tells us. John writes of Mary Magdalene weeping and then being confused before finally recognizing Jesus.

Out of all those emotions, we emphasize joy on Easter Sunday and don't often think about how terrifying it all seemed. In some ways that's possible because we've had the time to process things. They didn't have time for understanding that first Easter. But we know those other emotions. We've all been afraid and have cried and been confused. But we also know joy, and the followers of Jesus knew joy in fear at first, and then came to know pure joy as the reality grew within them that Jesus was alive.

Life is difficult and amazing and terrifying and worrying and confusing, but the season of Easter gives us 50 days to celebrate joy.

Easter is not over at the end of lunch on Easter Sunday or when the holiday ends on Easter Monday. The season of Easter is a great feast of celebration from Easter Sunday to Pentecost. Easter lasts 50 days as a great celebration of joy. You may notice in the bulletins these next weeks that each Sunday is not listed as a particular Sunday after Easter, but rather as the Sunday of Easter. (The Second Sunday of Easter; the Third Sunday of Easter, etc.)

Within that framework, after 40 days we celebrate the Ascension of the Lord, as Jesus rose to heaven. The number itself is sacred: 40 days it rained; the flood was 40 days; Moses was on the mountain with the Lord for 40 days; Moses and Elijah fasted 40 days; Jesus was in the wilderness for 40 days. These were all times of trial and testing, but they were followed by renewal and hope.

But Jesus finished his time of trial and testing when he left behind the empty tomb. In the 40 days before he ascended to God, he continued to do what he'd done in his life, teaching about the kingdom of God. "After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God." (Acts 1:3)

The kingdom of God continues to break in around us, and the kingdom of God is marked by joy; by things being set right; by justice and righteousness; by healing and wholeness.

We're not talking about superficial happiness, which depends on the things that happen to us. Happiness is often wiped out by sorrow. People debate the difference is between happiness and joy, and I think gratitude is a big part of joy. We are not happy to be sick, but we can be grateful and joyful for bodies that are usually well. We are not happy when a loved one dies, but we can be grateful and joyful for their lives. Joy remains steadfast. Joy is the inner feeling that endures despite grief or uncertainty. It is a confidence and a

hope rooted in faith.

Joy is what we have in a life with God, and is given by God. Joy is the beginning of eternal life.

As Christians, our key is the Lord, past, present and future: his life, ministry, death on the cross, resurrection, ascension, and his continuing presence with us, praying for us and sitting at the right hand of God for us, until that promised time he comes to gather us home. If Christ is in me, that is forever and always. Even if we cannot rejoice in our circumstance, if we have pain or sorrow or grief, if we are definitely not happy, we can rejoice in the Lord, since he never leaves us nor forsakes us. God's grace is with us in the midst of life.

If you feel down and a little deflated after a great celebration like Easter, don't let go of joy. Celebrate Easter this whole season.

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." – Romans 15:13

God bless you!

Monte



An updated plan for proposed changes to South Kanawha has eliminated the roundabout at McCreery Street and the median in front of the church driveway. The new plan also calls for the preservation of the handicapped parking space in front of the Education Building.

Dr. Ramon Stuart, president of West Virginia Tech, said those changes were made in response to concerns raised by the church in a letter the Session sent to the Division of Highways. Dr. Stuart visited Session this past week to discuss the project, which is meant to ease traffic through campus.

One big change that will affect the church is that traffic will be reduced to one-lane flowing out of town, from the corner of Main Street and South Kanawha Street (where City Bank is). Traffic would flow in that direction only, heading toward the university and past the church. That means the portion of South Kanawha in front of the church would be reduced to one lane heading in the direction of the university. What has been the lane farthest from the church would become a designated bike and pedestrian path, divided from the road by planter beds. This would mean you could no longer turn right out of our driveway as you leave. On the plus side, traffic would no longer come from the other direction around the curve by the Education Building and toward the spot where folks cross the road to and from the parking lot.

The sidewalk inscription that says "Presbyterian Church 1924" would be preserved.

Right-of-way acquisition on the \$17 million project is expected to start this summer, with construction in 2025.

MEMORIAL GIFT FUND

We are grateful for the following Memorial Gifts:

--In Memory of Donna Harris by: Ms. Valerie Hartling

--In Memory of Helen Carter by: Ms. Valerie Hartling

--In Memory of Bernard Hurtt by: Ms. Lynn T. Harmski



Beckley Presbyterian Church
203 South Kanawha Street
Beckley, WV 25801

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit
U.S. Postage
PAID
Beckley, WV
Permit No. 114



Calling All Campers!

Bluestone Camp and Retreat, the Presbyterian summer camp near Hinton, is accepting applications for campers.

Summer camps run June 16-23; June 23-30; and June 30-July 7.

Pioneer Camp is a half-week version of Discovery Camp and is for rising 3rd graders.

Discovery Camp 1 is for rising 4th and 5th graders, and Discovery Camp 2 is for rising 6th and 7th graders. Campers live mainly in the cabins and eat meals in the lodge. Campers in Discovery Camp 2 may spend two nights in tents, weather permitting.

Venture 1 Camp is for rising 7th and 8th graders and campers stay in Hogans, which are open frame structures with canvas tarps covering the windows and doors. Venture 2 is for rising 9th and 10th graders. Venture campers help prepare at least one meal a day over an open fire. The week for Venture 2 campers will also include paddling seven miles of the Bluestone Reservoir in canoes from Indian Creek to Bertha.

The church has scholarships available. If you are interested, please send an email to office@beckleypres.org.

For more information about camp, visit <http://bluestonecamp.org/>



02 Peggy White	09 Billy Richmond, Jr.
02 Elizabeth Mestrovic	10 Barbara Yurick
03 Hester Thacker	13 Kristin Mullins
03 Bill Rucker	16 Rachel McNeel
05 Charles McNeel	19 Darlene McNeel
07 David Trader	23 Richie Turschmann
07 Brian Rucker	28 Rita Johnson
09 Nancy Hageman	29 Frank Meadows
	30 Susan Pietrantozzi



Centennial Celebration

Save the Date for the upcoming Homecoming celebration and Luncheon Sunday, August 11th. We plan an 11 a.m. worship service with remembrances, special music, and a meal to follow in the fellowship hall. We are celebrating the Centennial of the sanctuary building!



Fellowship Meal

A Fellowship Luncheon will be held on Sunday, April 14, immediately after worship. All are welcome. The luncheon is sponsored by the Sunday School program. A housewarming for Ed and Angie Houck will follow the luncheon.



GRADUATES WANTED If you know someone graduating this year and would like to honor them in an upcoming Pipe Line, please email the church office at office@beckleypres.org with information.

LECTIONARY READINGS

April 7

Acts 4:32-35; Ps. 133;
or Isa. 65:17-25
And Ps. 3:
1 John 1:1-2:2;
John 20:19-31

April 21

Acts 4:5-12; Ps. 23; or
Zech. 10:1-12 and
1 John 3:16-24;
John 10:11-18

April 28

Acts 8:26-40; Ps. 22:25-31
and Ex. 19:1-6 and
Ps. 118:19-25;
1 John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8

April 14

Acts 3:12-19; Ps. 4; or
Isa. 6:1-9a and
1 John 3:1-7; Luke
24:36b-48

NURTURING FAITH IDEAS

April 7: Read John 20:19-31 Thomas has gotten a bad rap through the centuries, often being referred to as "Doubting Thomas" because he wouldn't believe it when the other disciples told him Jesus was alive and had visited them. When he did see Jesus, Thomas believed. We all have our doubts at times, but that doesn't stop Jesus from coming to us. Jesus meets us where we are and invites us to believe. What doubts make it hard for you believe that Jesus is alive and with you, meeting you where you are? Celebrate the good news that God in Christ meets and accepts us where we are.

April 14: Read 1 John 3:1-7 The children's song "If Anybody Asks You Who I Am" contains the words, "If anybody asks you who I am, tell 'em I am a child of God." The concluding verse changes it a little bit to "If anybody asks you who are you, tell 'em you're a child of God." The au-



thor of the first letter of John reminds us that we are all children of God, not because we are always good and loving, but because God loves us. As God's child, how might you share God's love with others?

April 21: Read Psalm 23 Shepherds take care of their sheep by seeing that the sheep have the food and water they need. When the sheep are threatened or are in danger, the shepherd uses a staff and rod to protect and rescue them. The psalmist sings of God as the shepherd of the psalmist.

Think of yourself as one of God's sheep; how has God cared for you?

April 28: Read 1 John 4:7-21 God is love and commands us to love one another. We live in love rather than fear because God abides in us. Are there fears or anxieties that hinder you from loving freely and boldly? In what specific ways are you called to show the love of God to someone else this week?