



News from the Hill...

St. John-Hill U.C.C. 620 Hill Church Road, Boyertown, PA 19512 March 2016

• FROM THE • Pastor's Desk

Greetings all!

What an exciting time to be alive and in a family of faith! We have done some really hard work recently toward revitalizing our family of faith to strengthen and encourage our current members and work toward gaining some new members. The work we have to do is going to be hard but in the end, we will benefit greatly in our spiritual lives as well as our community.

Change is hard. And it is hard because we face looking at things differently and are forced to move outside of our comfort zones. The other part of fear that brings anxiety is that we begin facing our fears and making decisions that affect not only us but future generations. That is the hard work of moving through a process like Natural Church Development. If we keep in mind the passage from Paul's 2nd letter to the church in Corinth which says, "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ. If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer," we can be comforted in knowing that Christ joins us in our pain and struggle as well as our conquests.

This passage brings great hope and comfort in a time when things seem to be completely uncomfortable and we are all beginning to get anxious about what's ahead. I can say this, I also take comfort in knowing that if we all pray together about the process, and really pray that we are strengthened and given wisdom through the process, then we can be assured that all things that happen will be for the greater good of God's plan for St. John-Hill UCC. I will be praying for the process as well as our Church Health Team and the entire leadership that we make the next right decision for us and for the future of our family of faith. I challenge each of us to begin praying today for this process...

Peace and blessings,

Pastor Christian



Church Contact Information

Pastor Christian Creyer –Pastor

Rev. Jim Rogers – Pastor Emeritus

Mr. Elmer Miller – Musical Director/
Organist

Mrs. Nikki Weller – Church Secretary

Mrs. Wendy Shane - Church Treasurer

Church Telephone: 610-367-8114

Church Website: www.stjohnhillucc.org

Consistory News

The Consistory met on Tuesday, February 16th, 2016 and discussed, reported and voted on the following items:

Secretary's Report: Minutes from the January Consistory meeting and the Congregational meeting on February 7th were reviewed and approved.

Treasurer's Report: General Operating Fund Income and Expense Summary for January 2016.

Operating Fund	January 2016	2016 YTD	January 2015	2015 YTD
Income	\$9,527.49	\$9,527.49	\$8,343.16	\$8,343.16
Expenses	\$10,230.36	\$10,230.36	\$11,757.83	\$11,757.83
Income vs. (Expenses)	(\$702.87)	(\$702.87)	(\$3,414.67)	(\$3,414.67)

- Benevolence received for January was \$407.00 and will be sent to PSEC. Year to date total is \$407.00.
- A current summary of all Hill Church financial accounts is available on the bulletin boards in the Narthex and Sunday school hallway.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Christian conducted a total of 15 visits on the phone and at various locations from mid-January through the first week of February. The next Communion will be held on Maundy Thursday, March 24th. The East Berks Association Spring Meeting will be held at Hill Church on April 23rd, and the Spring Conference meeting will be held June 10th - 12th at West Chester University. We will be having joint Lenten Services again this year with St. Joe's, and in addition we will also be holding joint services with Salem UCC. A schedule of services will be available in the weekly bulletin and our weekly email distribution. Pastor Christian would like to have a spring time bible study focusing on the Old Testament starting in April. We will keep you posted as more details are available.

Reports from the various committees were reviewed. Their activities can be seen elsewhere in this newsletter.

Same Sex Marriage: We have set a date for March 13th, after our regular worship service, to have an open discussion on our views on same sex marriage. Pastor Christian has been in contact with Chase Kneeland, who is experienced in assisting groups with such sensitive discussions. Mr. Kneeland will be joining us on the 13th to offer support and guidance as we navigate through this discussion. We encourage everyone to participate who wishes to discuss this sensitive topic with a spirit of Christian love. As a reminder, at this discussion we will not be voting or making any changes to our current policy. If the outcome of this discussion would deem it necessary or desirable, we would then schedule a Congregational Meeting to make any amendments to our current policy.

Iron Sharpens Iron: PointMan Ministries will be holding the Iron Sharpens Iron Men's one day conference on April 16th. The mission of PointMan Ministries is to reach, challenge, and equip men to be mature followers of Jesus Christ, and committed Christian leaders, guardians, protectors and providers of and for their families, churches, and communities, by acting with Biblical integrity out of reverence and love for and obedience to God. We have information packets available, and encourage all of the men in our church family to consider attending this day of fellowship and worship.

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Sidewalk Repairs: We are in the process of revisiting the quotes we received last year to repair the sidewalk in front of the church. Our goal is to have a plan in place by spring time to get this project under way. Thank you again for all of your prayers and support throughout this project!

Employment Opportunity: Eric Miller has given us notice that February 21st will be his last day as Sexton of Hill Church. If you or anyone you know might be interested in applying for this part time position or would like to find out more information about this opportunity, please see any Consistory Member or Nikki in the Church office for more information.

Volunteers Needed: We are looking for volunteers to help clean the church until a sexton is hired. If you are interested in helping out, please contact Nikki (610-367-8114 or 610-781-6248 or nikki@stjohnhillucc.org) or sign up in the Narthex. Don't have a key to get in to clean and help...no problem, we will make arrangements to have the doors open for you. Don't know exactly what needs to be done...we got that taken care of too. Just ask and we can give you an overview. If you are considering applying for the sexton position, this would be a great opportunity to learn more about the tasks and responsibilities involved.

Spring Cleaning: We have set a date of April 9th starting at 8:00 am for our annual church spring cleaning. Please consider helping out as many hands make light work.

The Philadelphia Project: We received a letter from Abby Shane to ask for our prayers and support as she joins with DiscipleMakers Christian Fellowship (DCF) for a mission trip to Philadelphia over her spring break. DCF is a student group at Bloomsburg University that aims to help people come to know Christ, grow deeper in their relationship with God, and be equipped to follow Jesus' commission to "make disciples of all nations." The consistory has unanimously agreed to cover the cost of this mission trip (up to \$250). Please pray for them as they travel into a seemingly unfamiliar world to share the love of Christ.

Consistory Pre-Service set up for March will be provided by Terry Shane and Bonnie Helmick. The next monthly Consistory Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 8th at 7:00 pm.

In Christ, Your Consistory: Dottie Fronheiser, Rick Furches, Mark Hile, Ray Kochey, Kristen Nagy, Arlan Schaeffer, Terry Shane, Clarence Weller, Matt Weller, and Pastor Christian.

Association & Conference News



Conference

- Spring Conference Meeting (Annual Meeting): This year, the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference has decided to hold its annual meeting from June 10-12 at West Chester University. The specifics of this event are not quite finalized but there will be workshops, dynamic preachers and teachers, with a revival type worship experience on Sunday morning. If you have an interest in attending or would like more information, please see Pastor Christian.

Conference

- Association Spring Meeting: We will be hosting our annual Association spring meeting on April 23, 2016. At this meeting, we are entitled to two delegates, in addition to Pastor Christian, as well as one youth delegate. We will need to bring forth at least two delegates to the meeting. If you are interested in being one of our delegates, please see Pastor Christian to be registered for the meeting. Anyone is welcome to attend the meeting but we are only permitted to assign two delegates.

News from the Women's Guild

We met on Tuesday Feb 2nd, thankfully, with no snow. Kristen Nagy had the Program after our meeting and she made an Emergency snow kit for each of us.

We set a date for a visitation trip to Wernersville Hospital. It will be Tuesday night April 5th. If anyone would like to go along, please contact Eileen Fisher at 610-779-6202. We will be meeting at 5:45 p.m. at Weis parking lot in Oley to car pool. Women's Guild has Coffee Hour on Sunday April 10th.

Sunday School News



Easter is on the way...Palm Sunday (March 20th) the children will have their program during the morning worship. The annual Egg Hunt will be on March 26th. Keep an eye out in the bulletin for more information.

Not long after Easter, we will get together for another exciting Vacation Bible School! This year's theme is "Following Jesus: The Light of the World" Join us in July for "Cave Quest" to discover God's awesome light in our world. Look in the bulletin and upcoming newsletters for more information!

Our next leadership meeting will be on March at 7:00 pm.

Choir News

On Maundy Thursday Eve. March 24 at 7:00 PM the Choir and members from Salem UCC Choir will present "The Living Last Words", a cantata written by Ruth Elaine Schram. This cantata contains dramatic monologues of some witnesses at Calvary - the contemptuous soldier; the crucified thief's sympathetic sibling; the scornful priest; the anguished shepherd; the grieving mother of Christ; and the heartbroken disciple. Christ's words are conveyed passionately through the musical score.

We hope you can attend the inspiring Worship Experience! Invite your friends and neighbors.



Wednesday, March 2 - Sr. Choir 6:15 PM, Cantata 7:45 PM (both at Salem UCC)

Wednesday, March 9 - Sr. Choir 6:30 PM, Cantata 7:45 PM

Wednesday, March 16 - Sr. Choir 6:30 PM, Cantata 8:00 PM

Saturday, March 19 - Cantata 10:30 AM

Wednesday, March 23 - Sr. Choir 7:00 PM, Cantata 7:30 PM

Wednesday, March 30 - Sr. Choir 7:00 PM



Elmer Miller

Organist/Music Director

610-367-5613 or e-mail elmerhm@dejazzd.com

NATURAL CHURCH DEVELOPMENT

A workshop attended by about 20 people was held on Saturday, February 20th to develop an action plan for our worship service to become more inspiring. We will be developing a team to specifically pray for the next tasks and steps in this process. If you are interested in joining this team, please contact Mayetta Shane. A full report of the workshop's conclusions will follow in April's newsletter.

CEMETERY NEWS



Please remove all flower arrangements from the cemetery by Sunday, March 13th. If not removed by that date, cemetery personnel will remove flowers. Please be advised that the Cemetery Board is facing environmental concerns. As such, we urge you to kindly remove artificial flower arrangements and dispose of them privately to help defray the financial burden placed upon the cemetery. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.



Park Committee News

Workday & Men's Breakfast: Saturday, March 12, 2016

We'll start with the men's breakfast about 7:00 am. If you can stick around afterward, we'll join forces with the rest of the group at church around 8:15 am. We're planning to do some general clean-up again, and we'll also have some inside work to do as well. Everyone is invited.

Hope to see you there!

Congregation Corner

This month, we will re-focus our attention and our minds upon the calling of God upon our lives to pray for our leadership and the Church Health Team as we start journeying into the future with the Natural Church Development process...Congregation Corner Member of the Month will return after Easter.



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How many of you were able to guess last month's Congregation Corner member?
It was Jan Fisher.
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Bible Trivia

From Bible Puzzles, Quizzes & Brain Twisters, the BIG FUN collection.
All answers are listed on page 8.

Short Answer

- 1) Paul prayed for what after being threatened by Jewish leaders in Acts?
- 2) How did the Lord first describe Saul of Tarsus to Ananias?
- 3) Paul commanded Simon the Sorcerer to pray for forgiveness from what?
- 4) Paul prayed and healed whom on the island of Malta?
- 5) The apostles named two men - Barsabbas and Matthias - and then prayed about what?
- 6) Paul prayed over Tabitha for what?
- 7) The apostles chose seven men to care for widows, and then prayed over them with what result?
- 8) What were Paul and Silas doing when their chains fell off in prison?

Announcements from the Hill

Sexton Job Position

Hill Church is looking to hire a part time sexton (approximately 20 hours per week). Copies of the job description and applications are available in the Narthex or from the church office. If you would like to submit an application please do so by submitting it to the church office. If you have any questions regarding the position, please call the church office.



Volunteers Needed

We are looking for volunteers to help clean the church until a sexton is hired. If you are interested in helping out, please contact Nikki (610-367-8114 or 610-781-6248 or nikki@stjohnhillucc.org) or sign up in the Narthex. Thank you for considering helping serve Hill Church.



Easter Egg Hunt

Mark Saturday, March 26 10:00 a.m. on your calendar for the egg hunt. If you are moved to provide snack donations for the Egg Hunt – that would be awesome! Remember to spread the word of our egg hunt. There is a sign-up sheet in the Sunday school hallway for donations. We will also need volunteers to set up refreshments and hide eggs on March 26th. You can come early (9:30) to help.



“Once Upon A Prom”

Hosted by Boyertown Junior Woman’s Club on the weekends of March 5- 6 and March 12-13 from 12 to 4 at Miracles in Motion located on 1145 E. Philadelphia Ave. Girls in need of a special occasion dress are welcome to come browse our collection of over 400 dresses, in all sizes, and accessories as well. Take one home for a small donation which will benefit our local community. Please contact Jane Prutzman for more information or if you would like to donate a dress. Home phone number is 610-689-9020 or cell phone 610-763-2128.



	Bible Movie Club	
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The bible movie club will be meeting on the following dates in the new year. Please come out and join us. We gather at 6 pm and the movie will start about 6:30. Refreshments are available.

- March 18 - Peter and the Last Supper
- April 22 - Esther
- May 20 - Hosea
- June 17 - Sampson

The passages to be read before will be listed in the bulletin. Hope to see you there!

MISSION TRIP 2016

We are excited to announce our Mission Trip will be happening again this year. This year we have FOUR area churches all coming together to do the planning.



The work days for the Mission Trip will be Wednesday, July 20th through Saturday, July 23rd. The daily time frame will be 7:30 am to 7:15 pm. These days will include all meals, morning and afternoon work times, and evening faith reflections.

You are eligible to attend the Mission Trip if you are at least 10 years old as of September 30, 2015. If you are between 10 years old and 14 years old as of September 30, 2015, you must have a parent attend the Mission Trip as well.

This year's registration fee will be \$15 per person or \$50 per family max.

More information will be coming soon! But mark your calendars now as you don't want to miss this Mission Trip!



Weekly Multi-Service Collection

Boyertown Multi-Service Outreach: We continue to collect canned, jarred, and other items for the Boyertown Multi-Service. As we look at the month of March, we have two really fun holidays coming up that we can do something different for the folks who rely upon the Multi-Service to meet their needs. Therefore, the congregation is being challenged to come up with some ways to provide green items for St. Patty's Day (canned green veggies, lime Jello, pistachio pudding, spinach, lima beans, lime Koolaid, spearmint leaves candy, pickles, pickle relish, split pea soup, even GREEN MONEY) and spring items that help us to remember that Christ came to cleanse us from our sins by providing any kind of cleaning products that help with Spring cleaning (Lysol, surface cleaners, bathroom cleaners, floor cleaners, etc). If you need a more concrete list to follow:

- 3/6 - Juice (especially in bigger bottles)
- 3/13 - Crackers
- 3/20 - Spaghetti Sauce
- 3/27 - Cleaning products.



Creation Festival



We would like to get a group together again this year to experience another awesome year at Creation. The event runs from June 29th through July 2nd.

We will again be leaving on Tuesday June 28th to set up and return home Sunday July 3rd. The price is \$100.00 for Hill Church youth and \$150.00 for adults (18 yrs. and over) and non-Hill Church youth. Contact Dale or Nancy if you are able to join us this year.

ALTAR FLOWERS & BULLETIN SPONSORSHIP

The 2016 sign up charts for “Flower & Bulletin Sponsorship” are posted on the Narthex bulletin board. The cost is \$25 for flowers and \$15 for bulletins.



Bulletins

As always, we greatly appreciate and need your stewardship. When signing up, please include with your name, how you would like the “In Memory Of” or “In Honor Of” to appear in the bulletin. Thank you!

EASTER FLOWERS



We will be ordering Easter Flowers (lilies, hyacinths, daffodils, tulips, mums, & azaleas) from Levengood’s Flowers in Douglassville this year. If you are interested in ordering any, please contact Nikki in the church office or fill out a order form in the Sunday bulletin. Orders are due March 20th.



GROCERY CARDS

Don’t forget grocery cards for Giant, Redner’s and Weis Markets are available for purchase. They may be used towards groceries, gas and pharmacy purchases and make terrific gifts! We receive 5% for every card you purchase which will be used to support our Church Missions program. See Connie Hile to purchase your cards today!

BIBLE TRIVIA ANSWERS

- 1) Boldness (Acts 4:23-31)
- 2) He is praying (Acts 9:11)
- 3) The thought in his heart (Acts 8:22)
- 4) Publius’ father (Acts 28:8)
- 5) Which one of the two should replace Judas (Acts 1:24)
- 6) That she would be raised from the dead (Acts 9:40)
- 7) The Word of God spread (Acts 6:7)
- 8) Praying and singing hymns (Acts 16:25)



Lenten

SCHEDULE

March 2

7 pm - Midweek Lent Service with Salem UCC
(held at Salem UCC, 307 Covered Bridge Rd., Oley)
Passage: “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?”

March 9

6 pm - Soup Fellowship
7 pm - Midweek Lent Service with Salem UCC
(held at St. John-Hill UCC)
Passage: “I Thirst”

March 16

6 pm - Soup Fellowship
7 pm - Midweek Lent Service with St. Joseph’s
(held at St. John-Hill UCC)
Passage: “It is finished”

March 20

9:30 am Palm Sunday Worship

March 24

6 pm - Soup Fellowship
7 pm - Maundy Thursday Service with Salem UCC
(held at St. John-Hill UCC)
Cantata will be performed
Holy Communion will be served

March 25

Good Friday Prayer Vigil at St. Joe’s

March 26

10 am - Children’s Egg Hunt

March 27

7 am Easter Worship
with Holy Communion
9 am Easter Worship
with Holy Communion