

The Union Press

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"To know Him and make Him known"

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The deadline for the
March Newsletter is
February 14th.

Letter from the Pastor

2 Timothy 3:16,17 - *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

Usually by the time February rolls around I have thoroughly forsaken any New Year's resolutions I've made. Perhaps you are like me in that regard. Fortunately, February affords an excellent opportunity to commit to our daily disciplines again with the beginning of Lent. This forty day period (excluding Sundays) is a time of fasting and repentance as we prepare for the celebration of Easter.

A long standing tradition of Lent involves giving something up. Be it sweets, meat, television, or something else, the sacrifice of something during the forty days of Lent is intended to make us mindful of our longing, and at times when hunger pains or a desire to turn on the tube sets in, to instead turn to prayer, in recognition that it is God alone who can fulfill and sustain us. We do not count Sundays as part of the forty days of Lent because each Sunday of the year is a reminder of Easter, a day of celebration, and fasting on such times would be unbecoming.

Something else we might choose to sacrifice is time, say ten, fifteen, or thirty minutes each day to read our Bibles. I cannot stress how critically important it is for Christians to be spending time regularly and frequently immersed in the Word of God. And nothing explains the reasons why this is important better than the Bible itself. In the Scripture at the top of this article Paul says that Scripture is important because it is God-breathed and useful for teaching, correcting, and training in righteousness. What this means is that the Scripture, along with the Holy Spirit that opens our eyes and ears to understanding the Bible, teaches us how we are to do everything else associated with being a Christian.

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Letter from the Pastor Continued (page 1)

We are to have a friendship with God, but if we don't take time to learn about who God is through reading God's autobiography, are we being good friends?

We are to pray, but if we are not reading our Bibles and learning the way to pray from the many prayers offered in Scripture, how do we know we are asking the right things?

We are to be the Church, but if we are not consulting God's book, how can we expect to faithfully be God's people?

The sad truth is that many in our congregations in America today do not know their Bibles, and yet by calling themselves Christians they take upon themselves the duty of representing Jesus Christ to the world. That is like a schoolboy giving a book report to the class based on the information he gleaned from the front and back cover. The people of God can do better, and God expects us to do better.

If you are already reading your Bible faithfully, good for you. If not, let me try to encourage you. If you were to commit to reading four or five chapters of the Bible each day, or if reading is difficult, then listening to four or five chapters of an audio recording of the Bible each day, you would be able to make it through the whole Bible in the time remaining in 2016. And then in 2017, you could do it all over again, or you could work on understanding a particular book in the Bible more deeply by reading it slowly or several times throughout the year. One way or another your relationship with God, your understanding and involvement in the Church, and your witness to Christ would all be dramatically improved. And that is a resolution worth making and keeping.

Scott



Thank You

Union Church Family,

Thank you for the prayers, cards, phone calls, and visits. A special thank you to Pastor Scott for his prayers and concern. All was appreciated.

The family of Charlotte Adams



December 2015 Giving

Giving:	December
Church envelope/Check	13,711.41
Deacons	205.00
Glover Sunday School	339.00
Sunday School	347.00
Ground Zero	0.00
Kidz JAM	40.00
Church Use	400.00
Flowers	144.00
Special Offering	20.00
Pageant Love Offering	672.00
Building Fund	645.00
Special Event Offering	102.00
Per Capita	105.00
Manse Rental	1,000.00
TOTAL Giving	\$17,730.41



February 2016 The Heart of Ground Zero



Well most times the month of February is known for Valentines today and “love” is a topic which is frequently discussed. Cupid, red and pink, chocolate and other candies, and hearts are all common pieces used to decorate and celebrate the season. For the sake of the holiday however, I felt it was only appropriate to discuss the heart; but not the lovey-dovey, Valentine’s Day heart. Instead, I want you to know the heart of the thriving youth ministry within your very own church walls.

Ground Zero Youth Ministry has a long history that this church knows better than I but regardless of its history, this ministry has a very fruitful present. Ground Zero Youth Ministry is the home to many displaced, hurting teenagers within the Solanco Area. The majority of our students are not otherwise plugged into a church and most of them come from broken homes, living with a single parent, grandparents, or others who stand as legal guardians.

Consistency is not something that most of our students are familiar with. However, through GZ, our students have come to know, understand and desire consistency in their lives. You see, we have a group of amazing adult volunteers who show up week in and week out to pour into the lives of these students, regardless of what their personal lives hold. Our volunteers desire to simply invest into the students we see so much potential in.

If you ask our students about their family, they may give you a brief overview of their home life, siblings, parents, grandparents, etc. But then they will be very quick to follow with their GZ Family. You see, for our teens, GZ is not just a hangout where they can be wild and run around and scream. GZ is family. GZ is feeling safe and secure; GZ is knowing that the people inside the doors have your back, no matter what; GZ is being able to be crazy teenagers and not forced into responsibility that is not theirs; GZ is family.

As the youth ministry facilitator, I have made it a point to ensure Ground Zero seeks to meet the needs of our students. With that being said, it is essential for us to spend time each week, walking the spiritual journey with our students. However, we also warmly welcome students of all different backgrounds. We are not afraid of hosting students with past or present addictions, fears and other issues. We are also not afraid to have passionate followers of Christ gather with us. We have a beautiful mix of a wide variety of students but these students, regardless of what they are going through, are students who want to be at GZ every week. Our students are not forced to go to church by their parents, on the contrary; many of our students must plead with their parents to take them to GZ and other GZ events throughout the week.

All in all, you must know that the heart of Ground Zero Youth ministry is to be intentionally and actively involved within the lives of our students on various levels. As I said, we feel it is very important to continually expose our students to the love of God and His Word. However, we will not force Christianity down their throats. It is not uncommon to have students who don’t believe in God to come hang out with us on Wednesday nights and beyond. The heart of Ground Zero is also one which provides a safe place for any student. This means that we welcome anyone to join with us, however, we will also not tolerate any sort of bullying for discrimination within our walls. The heart of Ground Zero is “doing life” with our students day in and day out because we truly love and care about them.

Continued on page 4

Well, I have merely given you a glance into the ministry of Ground Zero and I would be delighted to speak more to this ministry if you have any questions. But, as I previously stated, I felt it to be beyond necessary to share the heart of Ground Zero Youth Ministry through sharing how and why we operate. I also feel it is important to make note that Ground Zero is not only a Wednesday night ministry. Ground Zero has other programs and events that happen all throughout the week. Ground Zero is not confined to the walls of Union; Ground Zero Youth Ministry has made itself present throughout the community as a whole.

I invite you to take the month of February and join with us in prayer for this ministry because we cannot function well without the love, support and prayer of others.

February Prayer Calendar:

- February 1st—pray for a new start for our students
- February 2nd—pray for our High School Girls' Group
- February 3rd—pray for GZ and that the students would know and feel the love of God tonight
- February 4th—pray for students as they pray about the opportunity to take part in a summer mission through Broad Street
- February 5th-7th—pray for our high school students attending Black Rock Retreat this weekend, pray the weekend will be fruitful and that God would work in big ways
- February 8th—pray for our students who are taking time to volunteer within the community
- February 9th—pray for our High School Guys' Group
- February 10th—pray for our adult leaders tonight at GZ, pray that they are bold in their ministry
- February 11th—pray for the parents of our teens
- February 12th—pray for the school district and our teens to be a light within
- February 13th—pray for safety as we go snow tubing with 30+ kids today
- February 14th—pray that our students would know what Godly love and relationships look like
- February 15th—pray for the future of GZ
- February 16th—pray for Shawn, Sadie and Taryn as they lead the HS Girls' Group
- February 17th—pray for GZ in the midst of change and transition
- February 18th—pray that our kids would have a desire for God's Word
- February 19th—pray for the safety of our teens
- February 20th—pray that our teens would know the unending love of Jesus
- February 21st—pray that our teens would stand out amongst their friends
- February 22nd—pray for our high school students
- February 23rd—pray for James as he leads our High School Guys' Group
- February 24th—pray for GZ as it becomes more of a mobile ministry
- February 25th—pray for our middle school ministry
- February 26th—pray for our students caught in addiction
- February 27th—pray for our students actively pursuing the Lord
- February 28th—pray that our students would be bold in their faith
- February 29th—pray that our students would expect great things from God and attempt great things for God.



Lectionary Passages

February 7th

Transfiguration of the Lord
 Exodus 34:29-35; Psalm 99;
 2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2;
 Luke 9:28-36 (37-43)

February 14th

First Sunday in Lent
 Deuteronomy 26:1-1;
 Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16;
 Romans 10:8b-13; Luke 4:1-13

February 21st

Second Sunday in Lent
 Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18;
 Psalm 27; Philippians 3:17-4:1;
 Luke 13:31-35

February 28th

Third Sunday in Lent
 Isaiah 55:1-9; Psalm 63:1-8;
 1 Corinthians 10:1-13;
 Luke 13:1-9



- 1 *Joan Probst*
- 2 *Michael Ferguson*
- 3 *Blanche Church*
Lori Kelley
Allen Weicksel
- 5 *Bradley Fuller*
Russ Gilmore
Faye Chase Whyte
- 7 *Nathan Supplee*
- 9 *Olivia Williams*
- 10 *Dorothy Walton*
- 11 *Allison Reed*
Mary Nickle
Wayne Letterman
- 12 *Verna Herr*
- 14 *Jerry Whiteside*
- 19 *Betty Lou Griffith*
- 23 *Dorothy Herr*
Robert Whiteside II
- 25 *Frankie O'Connell, III*
- 26 *Thomas Hastings*
Austin Murray
- 28 *Nancy Ambler*
- 29 *Peter Graziano Jr.*

Quilting

We will start quilting again each Tuesday in February at 9:00 a.m. Bring scissors and a packed lunch and spend the day or just a few hours. If there is bad weather we will cancel. For more information contact Arlene Hastings at (717) 529-2495.



February Flowers & February Greeters

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 7 Holly Urbine | 7 John & Katie Armstrong |
| 14 (Still Available) | 14 Verna Mae Walton |
| 21 Harold & Joan Probst | 21 Bill & Trudy Bard |
| 28 Jack Hastings | 28 Betty Vasco & Jeanne Stone |



February Food Bank

- Rice For the SWEEP program:
 - Pancake Mix Pouches
 - Tuna Helper (Any Kind)

In addition, we appreciate any donations of hats, scarves, and gloves for the winter!



february

2016

The most famous verse in the Bible [John 3:16] begins “For God so loved the world that he gave” It’s a generosity verse. I say you can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving. If you want to become a loving person, you have to learn to give. You spell love G-I-V-E.

—Rick Warren

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 7:00 Trustee Mtg.	2 Groundhog Day 9:00 Quilting 6:30 Girl Scouts	3 9:00 Art Class 5:30 Ground Zero	4 4:15 Kidz JAM 7:00 Handbells	5	6
7 Transfiguration Sunday 9:00 Sunday School 9:45 Fellowship 10:00 Worship 11:30 Choir Practice	8 1:00 Circle #1 7:00 Circle #3	9 9:00 Quilting NO Girl Scouts 7:00 Session Mtg.	10 Ash Wednesday 9:00 Art Class 9:00 Deacons Mtg 5:30 Ground Zero 7:00 Ash Wed. Service	11 1:00 Circle #2 4:15 Kidz JAM 7:00 Handbells	12	13
14 Valentine’s Day/1 st Sun. of Lent NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 9:00 Sunday School 9:45 Fellowship 10:00 Worship 11:30 Choir Practice	15 Presidents Day	16 9:00 Quilting 6:30 Girl Scouts	17 9:00 Art Class 7:00 Worship Mtg.	18 4:15 Kidz JAM 7:00 Handbells	19	20
21 2 nd Sunday of Lent 9:00 Sunday School 9:45 Fellowship 10:00 Worship 11:30 Choir Practice	22	23 9:00 Quilting 9:30 Presbytery – 1 st Strasburg 6:30 Girl Scouts 7:00 Christian Ed	24 9:00 Art Class 5:30 Ground Zero	25 4:15 Kidz JAM 7:00 Handbells	26	27
28 3 rd Sunday of Lent 9:00 Sunday School 9:45 Fellowship 10:00 Worship 11:30 Choir Practice	29					

Session Meeting - January 12, 2016

In an effort to encourage reading session news, the highlights will be replaced with a short informal message each month. I will try to change the format and make it more interesting to read. Below is the first attempt to share portions of the meeting:

Our group met this Tuesday as the snow fell and then disappeared by the time we had adjourned. We began with Scott telling us about a book he had read called *In The Name of Jesus* by Henry Nouwen. The book noted that it's easy to be grateful for good things and a challenge to be obedient for the difficult things that occur in life. A good discussion followed that included often the difficulties in life makes us stronger. Scott had been to a meeting and the phrase, "Look for things that sparkle" was suggested as a way of thinking more positively. Pastor Scott began the meeting with prayer.

Session will be starting a Vision Planning Committee. Many suggestions stemmed from this idea, including a visionary type of person to lead a plan of this magnitude. Elder Phillips will look into two names for leaders that were suggested.

Pastor Scott thought that a book review would be worthwhile. Elder Wade has read a book she recommends and it is called *Eldership and the Mission of God*. This could be the start of a cottage book/prayer study.

There will be a Union Prayer Congregation Time on January 28, following our JAM Children's group at 7:00 p.m. There will be reminders before this ministry.

The Worship Committee has been looking into training some of our youth to be Acolytes. Betty Vasco has agreed to train a group in the proper way to light the candles at our Sunday services.

Sue Shuler,

Clerk of Session, (Who is interested in hearing ideas or suggestions for this news each month.)

Request for Payment of Per Capita Funds



The Session is requesting that all active members of Union make their Shared Proportional (per capita) gift for 2016. This figure, which is assessed to us by the Presbytery based on our annual membership, goes to support the work of the Church on the regional and national level. Our total obligation for 2016 equates to **\$32.27 per member**. An envelope for per capita giving is included in each member's yearly box of envelopes. Please include that your gift is for Per Capita payments in the memo line of your check. Thank you for sharing in the ministry of our congregation.

The Session

**Union Presbyterian Church
5637 Street Road,
Kirkwood, PA 17536**

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February 2016

The Union Press

Sisters in Christ 2016



Free Event Includes:
Uplifting Messages
Praise and Worship Music
Silly Song and Skits

Event Details:
Saturday, March 5 2016
Lancaster Bible College
901 Eden Rd
Lancaster, PA 17601

Two Event Times
9:00 AM - Noon
OR
6:00-9:00 PM



With very special guests
Ian and Larissa Murphy
ianandlarissa.com

www.pasistersinchrist.com