



# Good News from Canonsburg First UMC, Spring 2016

## doodles from pastor deb's desk

***If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words.***

— John 14:23-24

***The Bible is very easy to understand. But we Christians are a bunch of scheming swindlers. We pretend to be unable to understand it because we know very well that the minute we understand, we are obliged to act accordingly.***

—Soren Kierkegaard

Dear friends, my topic for this newsletter is a very difficult one but a very necessary one. Some of you, perhaps most of you, who read this will become angry with me for bringing it up. But it is heavy on my heart and the scripture above and the theological quote above reflect this. It is the matter of accountability. I have been reviewing the records of our church since my arrival. Of all those who were baptized here, only one child is faithfully included in our worship. There were 7 children who were baptized. Of all the youth who pledged oaths of membership, of which there were 7, only one faithfully attends. Not very good

statistics. But it does tell me something. That the statement made by Kirkegaard is true. When we begin to understand the Bible, we are held accountable to it. By whom? Not the pastor, but held accountable to it by God. As pastor, without the support of the congregation, what can be done? If the pastor introduces a new program, if the people do not support it, it doesn't fly. That is true for the leadership as well. Many things can be offered by leadership, but if no one supports it, it fails.

What can we do? As a congregation, I think we need to repent. Repent does mean we acknowledge that there was a wrong-doing. The wrong-doing is an irresponsibility to the vows we all took as members and we pledge each time someone is baptized. It means to know the new person who comes through the doors. To know their name, what they do, and from where they come. We need to follow up on these relationships. Make sure they get a bulletin, write their information in the attendance folders in the pews. Invite them to have a coffee at McDonalds to get to know them better. This will help a great deal.

The other things we can do is support one another through prayer, calls, letters and cards. We can encourage one another on our collective faith journeys. We can quit pretending we do not understand the Bible and own up to what we do understand and live into it. And it is simple. It comes down to one four letter word, and that word is LOVE!!! When we show our love, we truly want to know what is going on in each others' lives.

Some new things are being talked about in leadership team meetings. We need to be more involved in missions. I know, we do give a lot towards mission work, but we need to be physically involved. There is a team of 2 who pack food for Blessings in a Backpack. The work is not challenging in the least, but how many of you could do that about 4 times a year? Could we have another team? Our spaghetti dinner is a great mission post. We have 15 missionaries who work with the spaghetti dinner. Those workers minister to all who come who are in need of something. Even members of the congregation who attend the dinner for supper are missionaries, as they share with those who come. Mission trips are offered by the Annual Conference. Could we send a team with them to have a

life altering experience? Could we develop a local team to help the poor in our neighborhood?

There are many things we, as a congregation, can be involved in. Education and youth ministries, worship (and I am so grateful to Rod and the New Day Band and John as together they offer so much depth to our services), mission and nurture. Where will you serve so that the joy of Jesus will be complete? Let's join together, if your child was baptized here, bring them, so we can nurture that child in God's ways. If you were confirmed as a member, come, regardless of age, so we all can be one in the body of Christ. And let us read our Bibles with understanding and not sheepishly turn away, pretending not to understand God's instruction for our lives, and that is LOVE!! See you in church!

In Jesus' Love and service,

Pastor Deb

## MISSION: POSSIBLE!

Our mission work here at First UMC has certainly exploded. 2015 was awesome! And we are looking forward to another year of helping one another and bringing the hands and feet of Christ to our communities. We will continue our monthly free spaghetti dinners and Meals on Wheels collections, Ainsley's birthday boxes to our children in the shelter, donations to our Waynesburg Veteran's pantry (so families of deployed veterans can be certain of their next meal while their breadwinners are off fighting for our freedoms), Knots of Love blanket ministry for those in need of God's love to wrap them up and provide them with comfort, Grab & Go bags for the Fisher House families so they will have some nourishment as they wait for their loved ones to receive treatment. We presented the Canonsburg Youth Network with \$500 to help the youth ministry, and we offer summer camp scholarships to our youth members. We are currently working on a Mother's Day Diaper Drive with UPMC and the Western PA Diaper Bank. We collect gently used medical equipment for Global Links, eyeglasses and cases all year long for the Blind Association, and cell phones for Domestic Violence Services. We have developed a strong prayer ministry as well, and continue to pray for those in need, as well as our shut-ins and ten of our church families weekly. We are blessed that God has chosen to keep our family strong, and we are excited for what the future will bring.



## DEDICATIONS:

Two beautiful nativity sets were purchased this past December with funds designated by the Sacco family for that purpose. The nativity sets were dedicated in memory of our member and friend, Mario Sacco. We also dedicated our sanctuary sound system to the memory of W.D. "Dusty Rhoads, who previously ran the sound for the worship services. Plaques have been made and will be installed soon. Thank you to both families for allowing us to honor these special men in these ways.

### **CELEBRATING YOU**

*Celebration Sunday occurs the last Sunday of every month, when we fellowship together right after the worship service to enjoy some light breakfast fare and celebrate the birthdays and anniversaries for that current month. If your records have not been updated with the church recently, please visit the website at [www.cb gumc.org](http://www.cb gumc.org) to download a copy of the Member Information form, and send it to the office at 161 West Pike St., Canonsburg, PA 15317. We would love to*

### **DID YOU KNOW ... ?**

⇒ Each week, our shut-ins and some visitors receive a weekly bulletin? If you wish to be added to our weekly list and receive information, please call the church office.

⇒ Each week, the congregation prays for 10 families from the membership rolls. We go alphabetically, and we hope that you are encouraged and uplifted knowing your church family is lifting your name to the Almighty.

⇒ Pastor Deb is available for visitation and communion. Please call to schedule.

⇒ We have a card ministry graciously managed by member Caron Boyer, and we can send out cards of encouragement on behalf of our members? Just provide an e-mail with the name and address of where you would like Caron to send a card! We are also working on building our birthday and anniversary card ministry from the church office, so please be sure your information is updated in the church's database so we can honor you at the proper time!

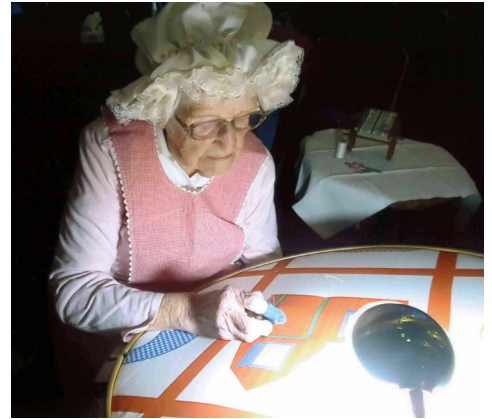
⇒ We have a grief group who is meeting periodically to fellowship and support one another. This group is for anyone who has lost someone. They gather together to share a meal and just spend some time together. Call the church for the next meeting time.

⇒ The church is seeking people who are interested in the following ministry opportunities: Ushers, Greeters and Counters. These are not hard, but do require commitment. Please contact the church office or let Pastor Deb know if you are interested.



## HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY, MILDRED!

Here is our dear Mildred Worstell at her quilting wheel, one of the many things that keeps her busy and enjoying her life!! Mildred celebrated 100 years young on February 4, and we are so blessed she is part of our little church family! A grand affair was thrown in her honor at the American Legion, with over 250 well wishers throughout the day! Thank you, Mrs. Worstell, for being a loving and caring friend, and an inspiration to all who know you!! We are so blessed!



Mildred in December 2015,  
in character at our Victorian Christmas  
Open House

<sup>13</sup> Then little children were being brought to him in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples spoke sternly to those who brought them; <sup>14</sup> but Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs." <sup>15</sup> And he laid his hands on them and went on his way. (Matthew 19:13-15)

**M**y granddaughter, Gwen, was at her local Kroger grocery store with her daisy troop selling Girl Scout Cookies. She sat at the table with her little friends and asked passersby to purchase these delicious, but expensive morsels to help their troop. One woman passed by and she was a friend of her parents, but Gwen didn't know her well, but asked her to buy a box of cookies. When she told Gwen she had no money, (she didn't have cash to make the purchase) Gwen replied, "That's OK. You can just have some to eat." Well, when I heard that, I just beamed with pride that my sweet little granddaughter was so thoughtful that she would give up the prophet so someone could have something to eat. But I had to take a step back and think more deeply about the incident. It took more than being a thoughtful child to make this remark. It took some training by parents, friends and church, and it also took people providing her with a good example of being Christian.

**S**ummer is nearly here and our children will be out and about, having fun at the pool, the fairs, sporting events, perhaps at daycare, and hopefully in church. Even though school is over for the season, their learning and education doesn't stop. How do we model Christ-like behavior? They watch us and learn all sorts of behavior. Do we exhibit forgiveness when family members and friends hurt or disappoint us? Do we extend kindnesses to those we think may deserve less? Do we show self-control when we want to strike out at someone who doesn't do what we think they should do? Do we share freely? Do we pray with them and for them? If we answer yes to these questions, then we can say that we are teaching our children to be Christ-like by our thoughts, words and deeds. If we are hesitant to answer in the affirmative, then perhaps we need to re-examine our lives, seek forgiveness from Jesus and ask him to help us model a life, pleasing to him, so our children can learn what a good life is!

**O**ur children learn what they see. They also seek our approval and want to please us. Let us all make an effort to model good Christ-like behavior, so our children will make us proud, as Gwen made me proud while she sold cookies at Kroger. We have beautiful children. We have children eager to learn. We have children who want to be part of the greater church by being included in every aspect of church life. Let us open our hearts and minds and allow them to be included. Let us not be like the disciples in our scripture and turn them away. There is room for everyone! In Jesus' love and service, Pastor Deb

**For behold,  
the winter is  
past; the rain  
is over and  
gone. The  
flowers  
appear on the  
earth, the  
time of singing  
has come, and  
the voice of  
the turtledove  
is heard in our  
land.  
Song of  
Solomon 2:11-  
12 (ESV)**

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Website: [www.cbgumc.org](http://www.cbgumc.org)

Worship Service: 8:45 AM Sunday  
Adult Sunday School 7:57 AM

Have news? We love to highlight our members, so contact the office if you would like an article to appear in our next edition!  
Accomplishments, recipes, articles of interest...anything!



Our Mission is to provide a relaxed, casual atmosphere that welcomes all to gather, as friends, to worship, so that by the power and grace of Jesus Christ we may gain strength, wisdom and knowledge to be a visible outreach of God's love to our community.

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**  
(also see full calendar on [www.cbgumc.org](http://www.cbgumc.org))

- Trustee Meetings—every 2nd Wednesday at 7:00 PM (6/8, 7/13)
- Leadership Team Meetings—every 2nd Thursday at 7:00 PM (6/9, 7/14)
- Morning Bible Studies—Mondays, 10:30 AM
- Monthly Meals on Wheels collections—2nd Sundays (6/12, 7/10). We also share Communion on those days.
- Free Community Spaghetti Dinners—every 3rd Friday of the month (5/20, 6/17, 7/15)
- Celebration Sundays—last Sundays of the month (celebrate current month's birthdays and anniversaries)
- Outreach: Domestic Relations Anger Management Classes—Thursdays at 5:30 PM, Church Library
- Outreach: Narcotics Anonymous, Sundays 7:00 PM
- 5/20—Next Spaghetti Dinner, free to our community—4-6 PM. Takeouts available until 5:30 PM.
- 5/22—Peace with Justice Sunday (United Methodist Special Sunday)
- 5/29—Next Celebration Sunday! Join us after worship with light breakfast fare to celebrate our May births and anniversaries!
- 6/9-12—Annual Conference, Grove City College. Registrations currently being accepted.
- 7/20—8 PM—Movie Night on the Lawn!! "Peanuts Movie". More details TBA!
- 9/19—5:30 PM—Movie Night—"Risen". We will enjoy a light supper together.