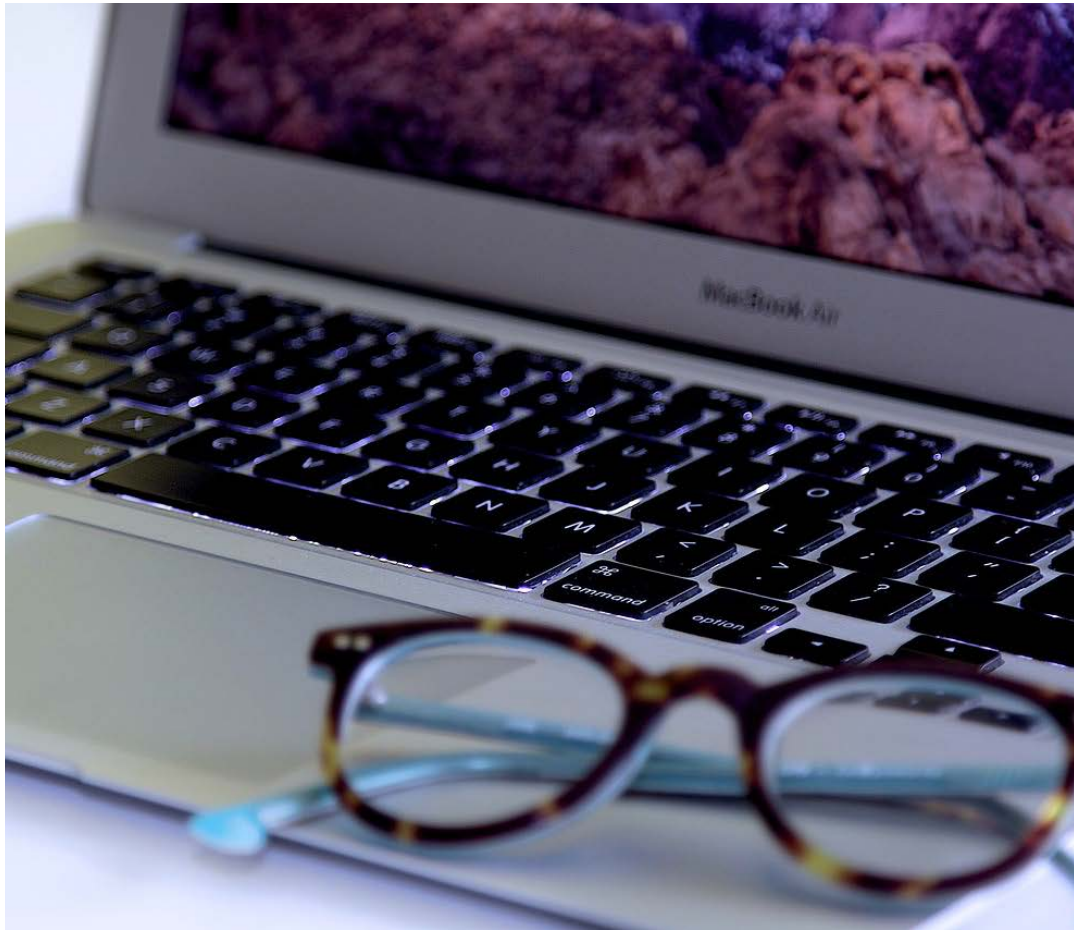




EAST BRANCH
NEWS & VIEWS

June/July 2017



From the Associate Pastor's Study

No Shadow of Turning!

REV. DR. BEVERLY W. JAMES

East Branch Congregations, Members and Friends,

The past year has seen many changes in the East Branch.

New leadership has come to at Grace Memorial Presbyterian Church, and to Kerr Presbyterian Church in Verona. The Braddock and Hazelwood Presbyterian Churches have closed. The Greenfield Presbyterian Church building was sold, and the small congregation is seeking its next steps.

These churches are going through a transition in leadership during this year: Community of Reconciliation, Third Presbyterian, and Mt. Hope Community Presbyterian Church.

NEWS & VIEWS

Rev. Dr. Beverly W. James

Associate Minister, the Pittsburgh
Presbytery
bjames@pghpresbytery.org
412.323.1404

ALL THAT GOD HAS IS OURS -----DREAMING STEWARDSHIP ANEW
Stewardship Kaleidoscope Conference *Real Tools for Real Ministry*

September 25-27, 2017 St. Pete Beach, FL Trade Winds Island Grand Resort

To register and for more information: www.stewardshipkaleidoscope.org

Change often seems to be the only constant! But change is also a sign of continuing growth. Change is a sign of life. Change can be a gift. *"Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, **with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.**"* James 1:17 (NRSV)

The PCUSA is also currently going through a season of change. There are three appointed groups looking into how we can rethink and reshape the future of our denomination. These are: the Way Forward Commission, the All Agency Review Committee, and the 2020 Vision Team. These three teams will conduct listening sessions throughout 2017 and make their initial report to the 223rd General Assembly (2018) meeting in St. Louis.

It is all too easy to allow our fears and anxieties to cast shadows over our faith, hope, and love. Let us pray that we can embrace the changes that bring renewal and new directions while we hold fast to Jesus Christ who is the same, yesterday, today and tomorrow. And let us sing:

*Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father,
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.
Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided—
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!*



HAIL AND FAREWELL!

We welcome the Rev. Gavin Walton to Grace Memorial Church. Gavin was ordained on January 22, 2017. The Rev. Dr. Ron Peters faithfully served as the Theologian in Residence for the past few years at Grace. Kerr Presbyterian Church is now the leadership of the Rev. Kelly Jean Norris who was ordained at the Valley View Presbyterian Church on May 21, 2017.

The Rev. Dr. C. Howard Ray ended his long and faithful service to the Braddock Presbyterian Church. The Braddock Church is now closed. Howard is 86 years young and residing at Westminster Place, 1215 Hulton Road, Apt 11. Oakmont, PA 15139. Congratulations to the Rev. Vance "Trip" Torbert who retired from the Third Presbyterian Church in June, 2017, and the Rev. Jay Lewis who will be retiring from the Mt. Hope Presbyterian Church in August, 2017.

The Hazelwood Church closed and its remaining members are now active at the Duquesne Presbyterian Church.

East Branch Picnic Supper

You are invited to a Picnic Supper and Concert at Second United Presbyterian Church in Wilkinsburg on:

Thursday, July 13th 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM

Simple Gifts Concert in the Park 7:00 PM to 8:15 PM

The picnic and the concert are free but please let us know of your intention to attend by e-mailing cmiller@pghpresbytery.org. All church members and friends of all ages are welcome!! Bring something to sit on!

Two women plus twelve instruments equals one good time when Simple Gifts takes the stage. This award-winning band performs on an impressive array of instruments, including two violins, mandolin, hammered dulcimer, recorders, banjo, and guitar plus some more unusual instruments like the bowed psaltery, baritone fiddle, shruti box, banjolin, guitjo, and dombek.



NEWS & VIEWS

East Branch of Pittsburgh Presbytery



Fighting Food Insecurity! Together!!!!

Second UP in Wilkinsburg has been helping feed its neighbors through their We Care Food Pantry for many years. Second UP purchases over 2,500 pounds of food each month to distribute each month. With the addition of a vegetable garden and fruit orchard, the congregation was able to add fresh fruit and produce.

The Northmont and Ben Avon congregations have worked in the garden. Mt. Pleasant United Presbyterian faithfully collects food each month and recycles paper and plastic bags. Waverly Presbyterian Church provides paper products for 75 families each month.

Hillcrest Church is the newest partner church to join in Second UP's effort to fight food insecurity. Pictured is their raised garden bed where they are growing tomatoes. Not ALL the churches working together are in the East Branch. What are some other ways we can work together effectively within and across our branches in the Pittsburgh Presbytery? Would you like to help out at Second UP? Start a garden?

NEWS & VIEWS

East Branch of Pittsburgh Presbytery