Banner Elk Presbyterian Church

February 2016

From the Pastor....

If somehow you didn’t hear, January produced a rather large snow storm along the east coast, and Banner Elk scored between one and two feet. The ski industry finally has something to cheer about.

Laura, my wife, and I missed it all. We were on a two week trip, first to a family wedding in Charleston, then down the coast to Florida to visit some of the church’s seasonal worshippers. We discovered that, even in Florida, it can get cold. On three consecutive mornings, we woke to temps in the 30’s.

But we also found enormous hospitality. From putting us up in their homes to arranging events to gather people together, we experienced the kind of reception and good will that defines a gracious host. We were able to connect with nearly 50 people over a week’s time, and even picked up ideas from some of the winter church homes of our people.

Such a trip has expected and unexpected blessings. Last Sunday in worship I shared that it was so nice to have people greeting you with love when you arrive at a destination, and equally wonderful to return home to those who express joy to have you back. What I couldn’t foresee is what happened in my absence around the context of a storm.

I was chagrined when, toward the beginning of my journey, our oldest member died. Mary Elder was 105 years old, known and loved by all in the community. Arrangements for a service were challenging, to say the least.

Not only was I far away and on a tightly scheduled itinerary, but the forecast of deep snow in the cemetery next door (not our church’s property) already had the congestion needed. From the snow mentioned storm limited options.

Yet any anxiety over preparations proved to be misplaced. I watched from afar as everyone pitched in and went the extra mile to provide whatever was needed. From the snow-bound making phone calls to the last minute shoveling of deep snow in the cemetery next door (not our church’s property or responsibility), Banner Elk Presbyterians rose to the occasion — as they always do — and exhibited their own compassionate hospitality and good will in every way.

Parish Associate Ed Donnell stepped up admirably in my absence around the context of a storm. Parish Associate Ed Donnell, Parish Associate ed@aggiernetwork.com

Rob Clemmer, Office Administrator rob@bannerelk presbyterian.org

Director of Music: Diane Byrhee diane bepc outlook.com

Admin. Assistant: Dedy Traver dedy@bannerelk presbyterian.org

Housekeeping: Margaret Trivett

BEPC Preschool: Shane Parker, Director parker@ evan gton edu

Jim Taylor, Music Director

Office Telephone: 828-898-5406

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES
9:30 am Sunday School
11:00 am Worship - traditional
6:05 pm Worship - informal

For the Newsletter to be received by the first day of each month, Session has set the deadline for all submissions to be on or before the 15th of each month (via e-mail or diskette only). We extend a sincere welcome to everyone to join us for worship and any events you see listed in the newsletter.
**Faith Seekers’ Class**

About the Faith Seekers’ Class: Explore various issues, using music, video and conversation.

**Food:** Coffee and snacks provided (usually)

**Money:** Receives an offering for good causes and needs

**Time:** 9:30 AM

Feb. 7 Complete our study of James-Janet Speer teacher
Feb. 14 Begin a Lenten study: Lord, Teach Us to Pray is a six week study on the Lord’s Prayer. In Matthew 6 Jesus offers the Lord’s Prayer as he teaches his disciples about prayer and spirituality. Though the Lord’s Prayer is often said by heart, behind it are six petitions through which we can gain a better understanding of our relationship to God and the nature of the requests we bring before God.

Rev. Brant Piper will be teaching this series.

---

**Walking with Shadows**

This support group, under the direction of Rev. Brant Piper, is currently looking into ways of staying healthy when taking care of those with mental illness. We have enjoyed excellent attendance with persons who have much to offer those who deal with the day to day challenges. The group is also in the process of gathering resources. The group meets on the second Monday of every month. Our next meeting will be February 8th at 7PM in the Margaret Tate Parlor on the second floor.

---

**New Study for Lent**

Easter is early this year (March 27th), which means that it will be Lent before we know it! Please join us for a new Lenten study, beginning on Ash Wednesday evening and continuing on Wednesday evenings throughout Lent. Together we will study the book, “24 Hours that Changed the World”, by Adam Hamilton. Drawing on insights from history, archaeology, geography, and the Bible, Hamilton takes us to the Holy Land and provides a deeper understanding of the most amazing day in history. We visit the sites where those earth-shaking events took place, and we walk where Jesus walked along the road that led to the pain and triumph of the cross. This study will take place on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 pm, beginning on Feb. 10, and will be facilitated by Leslie Piper.

Study books cost $9.00, and will be available in the church office. Please join us for this new study!

---

**American Red Cross Blood Drive**

BEPC sponsors the American Red Cross Blood Drives several times a year. The next one will be held Thursday February 4th from 2:00-6:30pm in the King Fellowship Hall. Sponsoring a blood drive is an important community responsibility and helps many people in this community. Please mark your calendars and if you are able, please help the Red Cross reach their goal! If you want to make an appointment you can go to www.redcrossblood.org and put in sponsor code: Lees-McRae or call Nurse Carl at 898-8862.
Souper Bowl of Caring

Souper Bowl of Caring 2016 Changes the Game!

It's, of course, a play on words. Every year groups from around the country use this spectacular sporting event to remind us that there are many people among us who are hungry. Last year there were over $8 million in cash and food items received and almost 7,000 groups who committed to participate. Here's how it works.

On Sunday morning, February 7th, we will have some of our young people at the doors to our sanctuary prior to worship, collecting cans of soup or other food, as well as your financial contributions. Our Presbytery will match each dollar donated with 50 cents, and send our church a check for that amount. We will then donate all of the food and money to RAM (Reaching Avery Ministry) in Newland, for their emergency food bank. Let's face it, folks. Most of us cannot imagine not being able to feed our families. Unfortunately there are many who cannot. This doesn't have to cost any of us very much, but it can do so much good. Please help.

Communications

We Need To Hear From YOU!!

The Communications Committee is working on our newsletter and church directories, but we need information from you to make sure we’re on the right track.

Please consider these questions and reply to Rob Clemmer (robc@bannerelkpresbyterian.org) or give him a call at 828-898-5406.

1. Do you prefer to receive your newsletter as a print copy by mail or online?
2. Would you like to include your cell phone number in the church directory? If so, please send those to Rob by e-mail or note.
3. If we decide to update our church directory this summer, would you prefer that we use a professional directory service (like Olan Mills) or do you want us to continue taking photographs in-house with our own cameras?
4. Because of cost, we are considering printing new directories only once a year. Would this be agreeable to you?

Remember to respond to Rob Clemmer at the above address or phone. If you have questions, please contact Donna Dicks at dbdicks@skybest.com or 828-898-6667. Thank you for your help. We need your input!!

Ash Wednesday

The beginning of Lent, known as Ash Wednesday, falls on February 10th this year. We will hold the contemplative 30-minute worship at noon. The imposition of ashes on the forehead is a main element of this service, and the earlier time allows for those who so desire to wear the mark throughout the rest of the day as a sign of their Christian commitment. The sanctuary will remain open after the service until 3:00 p.m., with a pastor nearby, for anyone to drop by to receive the mark of the cross.

Newly Elected Elders

As we begin 2016 we have some new elders joining the session. Below are biographies on the newly elected elders.

Three-Year Term:

Sara Brewer was born in Banner Elk. Her parents were active members of BEPC and she grew up as a child of the church. She has previously served three terms on Session, on Pastor and Associate Pastor Nominating Committees, and on the Christian Education Committee. Sara is a member of both the church choir and the bell choir. She lives in Banner Elk with her son, Corben, and is General Manager of High Country ABC Store, where she has been employed for 34 years.

Jimmy Ennis grew up in Linden, NC, where he was a member of Sardis Presbyterian Church. Later, his family moved to Banner Elk and he graduated from Avery High School. After completing high school, Jimmy joined the Army and served in the 10th Mountain Division as a Military Police Officer in Kabul and Bagram, Afghanistan. He is a Wildlife Officer and Area Supervisor with the NC Wildlife Commission and graduate of Haywood Community College. Jimmy and his wife, Lyndsay, are parents of two children: Elizabeth, born one week after her parents joined the church in 2014, and Beau, born last March.

Emily Garrett was born and raised in Clemmons, NC. She graduated from UNC Chapel Hill with a B.S. in Nursing. She and her late husband, Wayne, were married for 44 years. For 33 years, Emily was organist at New Hope Moravian Church, where she served two terms as Elder. The Garretts moved to Banner Elk in 2010 and joined BCPC in 2012. She currently serves on the Art in Worship, Membership Outreach, and Member Care Committees. She is a member of the bell choir and helps with acolytes.

Denise Powell was born in Banner Elk. She was one of the directors of the original Mothers’ Morning Out. Over the years, she has been active with youth groups and children’s programs in which her own children have been involved. She and her husband, Garry, are the parents of: Leah, 23; Landon, 21; and Lucas, 16. Denise is a school counselor at Avery High School and enjoys being outside, gardening and reading.

Two-Year Term:

McNair Tornow grew up in Laurenberg, NC. He received both his B.A. and Law Degrees from Wake Forest University. After graduating from Law School, McNair served as a Captain in the U.S. Army, with a tour in Vietnam. Afterwards, he established a law practice in Winston-Salem and became a member of High Point Presbyterian Church, where he served as Deacon and Elder. At BEPC, McNair has served as an Elder and chaired the Pastor Nominating Committee. He and his wife, Debi, live in their “retirement” home on Beech Mountain.

Don Hilsmier is a native of Fort Wayne, Indiana. He was educated at Florida State University. Don joined the U.S. Army reserves during the War in Vietnam and began a career in financial services in Tallahassee. After relocating to Boca Raton, FL, he served as a Deacon and Elder at First Presbyterian Church in Boca Raton. Since joining BEPC in 2007, Don has served on Stewardship/Finance, Membership/Outreach, and Nominating Committees. He has served one term as Elder. He is the father of two children and loves spending time on the golf course and with his six grandchildren.

Carolyn Jones was born in Charleston, WV, but she grew up in Chattanooga, TN, where she was a member of a United Methodist Church. After she married her late husband, Bill, the couple moved to Cookeville, TN, then to Lake Jackson, Texas. Their next move was to Kingsport, TN, where they lived for 36 years and joined Colonial Heights Presbyterian Church. In 2005, they decided to make Linville Land Harbor their permanent home. Carolyn worked as an RN for 19 years. At BEPC, she has served one term as an Elder and has been active in many church activities.

One-Year Term:

Don Hilsmier is a native of Fort Wayne, Indiana. He was educated at Florida State University. Don joined the U.S. Army reserves during the War in Vietnam and began a career in financial services in Tallahassee. After relocating to Boca Raton, FL, he served as a Deacon and Elder at First Presbyterian Church in Boca Raton. Since joining BEPC in 2007, Don has served on Stewardship/Finance, Membership/Outreach, and Nominating Committees. He has served one term as Elder. He is the father of two children and loves spending time on the golf course and with his six grandchildren.

Carolyn Jones was born in Charleston, WV, but she grew up in Chattanooga, TN, where she was a member of a United Methodist Church. After she married her late husband, Bill, the couple moved to Cookeville, TN, then to Lake Jackson, Texas. Their next move was to Kingsport, TN, where they lived for 36 years and joined Colonial Heights Presbyterian Church. In 2005, they decided to make Linville Land Harbor their permanent home. Carolyn worked as an RN for 19 years. At BEPC, she has served one term as an Elder and has been active in many church activities.
February’s Artist - Emily Garrett

“I was born and raised near Winston-Salem, NC and graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill with a BS in Nursing. I worked in Hickory as a Labor & Delivery nurse until retirement in 1997 and started caring for my husband and grandchildren.

Having been a knitter for most of my life, I’ve always loved fiber art and became immersed in it after retirement. This love “exploded” into weaving, spinning, felting and eventually, a fiber artist was born. I’ve taken classes in NC and Maryland, taught by artists from all over the country. The most recent study was in California last year—an in-depth session learning the Japanese art form of “Saori” weaving. The piece on display was woven in California and incorporates different techniques and materials, including shells and eucalyptus seeds from the beach where I spent time weaving. Saori is a more expressive and creative form of weaving than traditional weaving, although it is still done on a loom.

Over the past 18 years, I have shown and sold my various garments and accessories at art shows and in specialty shops all over NC...every piece one of a kind!

As with many of the artists in our church, the serene beauty that surrounds us in these mountains serves as inspiration for our creativity. I could never have dreamed of the plans the Lord has had for me, but I trust the journey and follow His lead.

Scripture: Jeremiah 29:11
“For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Art in the Sanctuary

Did You Know?
What Is a Pall?

When a recent bereavement in our church family called for the use of a “pall,” several people asked, “Just what is a pall?” Here’s a bit of Funeral Traditions 101:

In ancient times, a coffin was covered by a cloth called a pall. It was usually black, the color of death and mourning. Later, in Reformed Tradition, palls were light-colored or white emphasizing “liturgical renewal.” Its use helps equalize the appearance of a coffin, whether costly or simple, and helps the congregation focus on worshipping God and hope in the resurrection, while symbolizing that in the eyes of God, all are equal.

Some years ago, the women of our church, under leadership of Marietta Breidenthal and Vivian Guignard, felt our congregation should have a pall. At that time, before we had the columbarium when cremation became prevalent, funerals in our church were usually more “traditional,” having the coffin present in the sanctuary near the pulpit during memorial services. Vivian and Marietta researched palls, appropriate colors, fabric, symbols, dimensions, etc. and created a lovely pall, which the women dedicated “To the glory of God and in memory of Anna VonCanon Guignard at the time of her death, January 19, 1984.” The pall was used recently on the casket of her daughter, Mary Guignard Elder, who died January 19, 2016.

-- Claire Fortune with help from Liturgy and Learning by Will Willimon and John Westerhoff

Friendship Tea

You Are Invited…….

Girls and women of all ages are invited to a Valentine Friendship Tea 10am on Thursday, Feb. 11th in the Margaret Tate parlor. (Last year a few guys even joined in to liven things up!) The tea is being coordinated by the Fellowship Committee.

For the third year, we look forward to a lovely event celebrating friendships, old and new. Please invite anyone who might enjoy this occasion. Dedy Traver, our tea-time specialist, will lend her expertise. Feel free to bring a “dainty tea refreshment” to share, if you wish.

Call Carolyn West, Ruth Matherne or Claire Fortune for more information. Alternate date will be Monday, February 22, in case of bad weather on the 11th.

Annual Congregational Meeting

The annual congregational meeting of the congregation will be held next Sunday, February 7th, immediately following worship. The purpose of the meeting is to act on changes to the pastor’s terms of call, and to present the church budget and annual report. Copies of the annual report will be made available both as hard copies and on the church web site.

Did You Know?

Our February comforter is dedicated to Rev. Coy and Becky Franklin. The Franklins met in high school, dated through college and got married in 1960 just as they both graduated from the University of Tennessee. Coy started out as an electrical engineer, but soon made a career change and prepared for the ministry. He served congregations in Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi over 40 years of ministry. Becky taught school in all those places in both elementary and high school and in a variety of areas from English to Art with a stint leading the Gifted and Talented program. At BEPC both have been active in the choir and on the Mission Committee while Coy has filled in preaching from time to time here at BEPC and other area churches. One of Becky’s beautiful pieces of art was displayed for “Art in the Sanctuary” last summer.
Church Happenings

JULIETS
The Juliets enjoyed getting together for food and fellowship on January 13th at the Tartan Restaurant in Linville. Instead of meeting in February, the ladies will celebrate Valentine’s Day at the Friendship Tea to be held at the church on Thursday, February 11th.

Thanks from Time for a Change Program
A big “THANK YOU” to all who answered the call to support the IT’S TIME FOR A CHANGE ministry in 2015. You responded well when our funds ran low. The Mission Committee appreciates everyone who was so kind and generous to help these babies in need. We will continue to work with RAM to help these vulnerable you ones and their parents. Blessings to each and every one.
- Carolyn Jones

Time to Recycle!
It’s that time of year again! Through the end of March, we will continue to collect old telephone directories to be recycled through Skyline Telephone’s annual program. Banner Elk School received 25 cents per directory which is used to purchase needed items for classroom teachers. There is a box in the reception area of the church office for these old telephone books. Thank you!

Around the Church.....

February Birthdays

1. David Nixon
2. Phyllis Clemmer
3. Bill Ferguson
4. Teresa Latta
5. Bill Kennedy
6. Chris Kirkpatrick
7. Ashley Smith
8. Cynthia Watson
9. Emily Garrett
10. Corinne Causey
11. Lisa Shook
12. Sam Stapleton
13. Donna Bender
14. John Miles,II
15. Carolyn West
16. Susan West
17. Bruce Pendergast
18. Amanda Vergara
19. Felid Russell
20. Jerry Shinn

BEPC New Members

A heartfelt welcome to new church members Cynthia Kittle and Pam Wilkerson, and a hearty welcome home to former members Jane Boyer and Bill and El Wilson!

Bill and El (short for Elnora) came back to us after several years at Crossnore, “and it feels like we’re home again,” El says. The Wilsons live at Crooked Creek in Banner Elk. Both are ordained elders, both are retired—Bill from the fields of insurance and banking, El from teaching. Bill is a native of New Hampshire—El’s hometown is Newland! They’ve been back in the High Country for some 15 years.

Jane Boyer left for Huntsville Alabama several years ago with husband Bob, to be nearer family. They never sold their home here; however, and following Bob’s death, Jane also decided to come “home” to Banner Elk. A retired CPA, Jane (and Bob) were avid skiers, and Jane now favors “almost anything outside—especially hiking.”

A small coincidence: Jane grew up in Texas, and Pam Wilkerson moved here from Texas!

Pam has been a friendly face in our pews for awhile, lured to our midst by friends from Beech Mountain. Pam and her husband, Richard Murtland, live on Beech, where she is an avid golfer. A retired property facilities manager, Pam has been a regular at the ladies’ JULIET luncheons.

Cynthia Kittle attended a funeral at Banner Elk Presbyterian—and that introduction led to her new membership! Cynthia and husband Thomas also have been in the area for some 15 years, and now live in Vilas. She is a former social worker and retired social work professor. Her background in the church includes service as an elder, deacon and Sunday School teacher. Special interests and hobbies range from kayaking, sailing, hiking, to reading, weaving and jewelry making.

Ann Swinkola
### January Session Review

- **Approved:**
  - Property Development Task Force members as follows: Nancy Clark, Travis Henley, Rob Clemmer, Jimmy Ennis, Coy Franklin, Paul O'Connell, Debi Tornow, Larry Zimmer
  - Receipt of a challenge/matching gift to the Permanent Funds Ministry from Jim and Ann Swinkola
  - Communion schedule for 2016 – first Sunday of each month, plus Maundy Thursday and Christmas Eve
  - Providing a professional Storyteller event (A Christmas Carol) in December as a gift to the community, possibly in conjunction with LMC
  - Vacation and quarterly weekend dates for Rev. Russell

- **Heard**
  - Reports from Stewardship and Finance that 2015 books show a small surplus
  - Report from Preschool that a search has been started for a new Director (present director finishes degree program and moves away this year)

- **Elected Dick Larson as commissioner to the January meeting of Presbytery**
- **Set February 7 following worship as the Congregational Annual Meeting and Annual Corporation Meeting**
- **Discussed plans for a Capital Campaign to pay for and develop recently acquired property, as well as potential makeup of a Capital Campaign Committee**

A Meeting of the Corporation Trustees was held following Session to elect officers for 2016: Dorothy Pullease – Chairperson, Tony Fortune – Vice-Chairperson, Susan Carter – Secretary, Ron McGowan - Treasurer

### WE'RE CONNECTED: DENOMINATIONAL NEWS

**To Affirm Love - Not Fear**

Nearly 400 people crowded into the pews of a small Presbyterian church in the mountains of western North Carolina on January 17 to affirm a call to love—not fear—people of other faiths. This gathering was inspired by the peaceful legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The event was part of a nationwide effort to bridge the growing racial and religious gap dividing America and was hosted by the Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church in Swannanoa, NC. The majority of those attending the program were Presbyterians, including key leaders from congregations throughout the Presbytery of Western North Carolina.

Heath Rada, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and Imam Mohamed Taha of the Asheville (N.C.) Islamic Center, spoke at a press conference followed by an hour-long public forum. Rada stated: “Recently both of our faith traditions have been unsettled and upset by the demonstrations of prejudice and discrimination we have witnessed around the world, and in our own United States.” He cited in particular negative and hostile actions against Muslims. “Presbyterians do not believe that such actions reflect the teachings of our leader and our Savior Jesus the Christ,” he continued. “The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) stands for justice, compassion, peace, and grace. These are the values which our Lord embraced and challenged us to follow.”

--- Eva Stimson, Correspondent, Office of the General Assembly