



THE PANORAMA

The Newsletter of
The Lewistown
Presbyterian Church

MARCH 2021

Greetings! I hope this note finds you well as we welcome the month of March. We can't move into March without acknowledging what a year it has been for us all personally and as a church family. We have all endured the unexpected during the pandemic and at the moment we are surviving. Thanks be to God for God's strength and protection.

It has also been a year since I was installed as the pastor of Lewistown Presbyterian Church and let me just say, although it wasn't a year I expected or planned, it has been a joy to serve alongside you all. Many of the ways in which I thought we would get to know one another were impossible to do as we stopped gathering in groups, remained in our homes and social distanced from each other.

Let me assure you that the opportunities to get to know one another better will be offered when the time is right. Jim, McKenzie, and I look forward to welcoming you to the manse for a visit or meal. I look forward to visiting your loved one in the hospital or nursing home. The day will come when we can do so!

Until then, I thought it might be helpful to highlight some ways in which the Deacons and I want you to feel connected and supported at this time. As many of you know, the Deacons are given the responsibility in our denominational Book of Order to serve in the following manner, "The ministry of deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of compassion, witness, and service, sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures, or anyone in distress." Essentially, one of the important tasks of our Board of Deacons is to provide congregational care and attend to the needs of people in our community beyond our church walls.

When I arrived to serve as the pastor at LPC, the Deacons were working with Fellowship Committee Elders to establish what they have coined, "Shepherd Teams." The purpose of the Shepherd Teams is to assign church members to each Deacon. Each Deacon then establishes a "connection" to the members of their Shepherd Team and provides support, care and ongoing communication with the members they are assigned.

I think it was providential that this plan came about prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. It has been helpful to create a ministry plan so that our church can stay connected to one another in a unique way. From a pastoral perspective, it has been a blessing to know that church members have another way to be checked on other than through me.

This doesn't mean that I'm leaving the pastoral care to the Deacons. I'm doing my best to meet as many folks as I can, at this point through phone calls and cards, until we can meet in person. The responsibility of caring for the congregation isn't the sole responsibility of the pastor, though. It is a shared responsibility of the pastor, church officers, and members, too.

As with any new ministry program, we are learning best practices in utilizing the Shepherd Teams. I encourage you to offer some grace as the Deacons (and I) utilize the teams to get to know each of you and to help you get to know other folks in your Shepherd Team. My hope is that once you know who your Deacon assigned to you is and a relationship begins that you will have an opportunity to meet and get to know the other church members in your Shepherd Team.

The creation of the Shepherd Teams, I believe, is an example of the way in which all our church officers are constantly thinking about ways to care for our church family. I appreciate the collaboration between the Fellowship Committee Elders and the Deacons in beginning this program for the benefit of us all.

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PASTOR SARAH SEDGWICK (continued from front page)

I encourage you to feel like you can contact your Deacon when you have need of prayer or have news to share. Your Deacon has and will continue to check in with you through phone calls, email, social media and cards. And hopefully soon, the board of Deacons will be able to plan some in-person gatherings. These gatherings will be helpful for my family to meet each of you, too.

And never hesitate to contact me if I can be of help or provide a listening ear. A known fact is that pastors are not all-knowing. . . meaning, I don't always know immediately what you or someone else may need. I want to hear what is going on in your life and am happy to pray for you or help you if I can.

I know I don't have a local cell, so when I call it may be unrecognizable to you. Please feel free to put my cell number in your contacts or write the number near your phone. I can be reached at (814-771-1891) or you can email me (pastorsedgwick@gmail.com). If I can't take your call, leave a message and I will return a call as soon as I can. You are also welcome to send me a text.

I hope this information about the Shepherd Teams and an encouragement to call me is helpful to you and your family. The joy of being a church family is that ALL of us can help each other. I consider it a blessing to be able to help you pastorally in whatever you may be experiencing in life. My work as a pastor is never too busy that I can't take a moment to pray with you or talk to you.

I will be working with the Deacons and the Fellowship Committee to identify ideas for you to get to know your assigned Deacon and Shepherd Team. Enjoy the opportunity to get to know some others in the church. The Shepherd Teams will be a great way for the church to share information with you, for your teams to find ways to fellowship and have fun and to serve with one another in activities that benefit the community around us.

Let us love one another as Christ loves us! Pastor Sarah

SPRING CONFIRMATION CLASS



Beginning on Palm Sunday, March 28, Pastor Sarah will be offering a 7—week confirmation class to youth in grades 6th—12th. This class will teach youth about church membership, the sacraments, church polity (structure), mission, spiritual disciplines, basic tenets of reformed theology, and more, as they explore with Pastor Sarah what it means to be a Christian. The class will end with participants writing their own Statement of Faith and being given an opportunity to join Lewistown Presbyterian Church.

If you are interested in participating in the class, please contact Pastor Sarah or the church office right away. This will be a wonderful opportunity for youth to explore their faith in a fun, encouraging, and interesting class environment. Classes will be held Sundays from 4 PM to 6 PM.

BAPTISM

Donald Alan Charles Riden Baptized February 14, 2021

Donny is the son of Dustin & Leah Riden and brother to Abi. Donny's grandparents are Brad & Elaine Siddons. Congratulations!



CHRISTIAN ED

Ginny Westover, Christian Ed Director

Today is Friday; the first Friday after Ash Wednesday. We are officially two days into the season of Lent. The world outside my window is a mix of gray and white; a wonderland or wilderness, depending on your feelings toward winter right now. Regardless, the usual traffic, either horse-powered by cylinders or hooves is nowhere to be seen. Or heard. The early morning is silent. No birds calling or dogs barking. Now if I can just get my thoughts quieted and focused so that I can begin this Lenten devotional. Coffee helps. After looking over the booklet from "Lent in a Bag" on my computer, I've decided to read and think about Jesus' wilderness experience during this first week of Lent. I pick up my daily planner and write, "bring home the bag" (it's still sitting at church and I'm thinking that the hands on activity would surely help with focus). Then I pick up my Bible. I wonder, as I turn the pages looking for Luke 4, what on earth did Jesus *do* in the wilderness for forty days?

I remember the time I got to experience the Judean wilderness while on a trip to Israel. Our tour group was traveling up to Jerusalem from the Dead Sea with a scheduled stop in the desert along the way. Our assignment, after unloading from the bus, was to find a spot away from anyone else in the group, then sit and "take in the wilderness" until the bus horn called us back. Picking my way up a rock-strewn slope, I was glad I had my jacket (once I got settled on a flattish rock I wished I also had a stadium cushion. Nothing comfy about a rock) The wind was constant and chilly. Its eerie moan was the only sound to be heard across the great expanse of dirt and rocks and scrub brush. I closed my eyes and let the emptiness of the desert wash over me. That took about five minutes. Snapping a series of pictures took another five. Pulling my binoculars out from under my jacket, I scanned the wadis and terraced landscape that stretched beyond what was magnified times ten. Vast emptiness. I tried to pray. I attempted to remember psalms that spoke of David's time in the wilderness. I felt restless. Mercifully, the bus horn sounded and I made my way back to our tour group, relieved but also frustrated. Had I missed something? Our guide had given us fifteen minutes. It had felt more like an hour. I

remember asking myself then, "How did Jesus make it for forty days in this wasteland?"

And suddenly, I wonder, "Is this the same attitude that I (and maybe others) approach Lent?" "How am I going to make it through forty days of... (fill in the blank; prayer, fasting of some sort, devotional readings, etc.)? This season is a call to solitude and self-examination; to moving through dark places of the heart; to change. It. Is. Hard. Hard rocks in a desolate, chilly, uncomfortable space. And, yet...

I find Luke 4. Reading through the assigned verses, I'm stopped by two phrases: "Then Jesus, *full of the Holy Spirit*"... "was *led* by the Spirit into the wilderness" (footnote: "driven" "compelled" by the Spirit). This forty-day wilderness test was God-directed. Did Jesus know what he was getting into? Did he struggle when faced with no food, no human company and the unrelenting barrage of Satan's flaming arrows? I don't know. Whether Jesus struggled here or not, his actions mirrored those of future Gethsemane, "not my will, but yours be done." Maybe this is part of the answer to my questions of how Jesus made it in the wilderness and what he did there...Jesus **trusted** God, his Father. He **surrendered** his will (his fears, his doubts, his questions, too?) to his Father, God. "Filled with the Holy Spirit," the very essence of love and life, and grounded in the truth of his Father's words, "You are my dearly loved Son and you bring me great joy," Jesus allowed himself to be borne along by the Spirit into the desert wilderness where he was tempted, sustained and able to return to Galilee after forty days, "filled with the Holy Spirit's power."

Maybe Lent is more about giving in to the invitation to draw close to God, than giving up a favorite food or hindering habit. Maybe more about our surrender than our determination. More about day by day yielding ourselves to God's transforming work in us than forty days of steeling ourselves to change habits we think might keep God from working.

Hmm...I jot these thoughts in my journal and look out the window. A squall of snow has added itself to the gray, white morning. Suddenly the stillness is broken by a distant cardinal's "Cheer, cheer, cheer!" I smile and remember, "You are my

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THE EASTER STORY

Rev. Robert L. Zorn, Pastor Emeritus

A recent conversation with a friend, who is also a Presbyterian, has given me an Easter message, which I would like to share with you, our Panorama readers. She is a dog fancier and often participates in shows with her dogs. Knowing this about her, I asked her if she had attended the Westminster dog competition in New York City. She had done so as an observer. She remarked about the "Best of Show" winner, which was a little Beagle. She noticed how proudly the little dog had walked in the arena, oblivious to everything except to be brought a flashback memory of such a hound that was a part of our farm family during the days of my childhood. Her name was Lady, and she faithfully fulfilled her duties, which consisted of barking at strangers and chasing the rabbits from our garden and orchard.

My friend also mentioned sadly the apparent poisoning of one of the magnificent show dogs, presumably by a jealous exhibitor who feared the competition that such an animal may present. Then she gave the sentence which is the heart and message of this article. She said of the deceased dog, "He was so good that he was killed." In the plight of that poor innocent beast we can find no more perfect illustration of the Easter story which we observe every year. Unfortunately, the central thread of this story has been repeated endlessly throughout the history of mankind. An anthology of such stories may be found in a book entitled, *Martyrs Mirror* (I understand that this is one of the two books allowed in conservative Amish homes. The other being the Bible). This book is the record of the

people who have been killed because of their faith. At least two members of our congregation have traced members of their ancestry to such tragic situations.

So, also was the fate of Gandhi who believed and practiced passive resistance, only to be martyred by a misguided person. Another example, Abraham Lincoln, whose basic goodness and humanity brought about his own assassination 150 years ago. In more recent times, we remember Martin Luther King, Jr., who met the same sad end.

I would mention another who gave his life for a noble Christian cause. Elijah Lovejoy was a Presbyterian newspaper publisher whose abolitionist writings were beginning to sway minds to oppose slavery. The destruction of his presses and possessions failed to silence him. The next step of his protagonists was to kill him.

There is a similar thread that runs through all of these examples, and many others, known and unknown. This is the central and essential theme of Easter.

Romans 5:6,8 ***"For when we were yet without strength, in due time, Christ died for the ungodly...But God commends His love toward using that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."***

Our Easter hymn puts it in perfect perspective. ***"There was no other good enough to pay the price of sin He only could unlock the gate of Heaven and let us in."*** *There is a Green Hill Far Away*—Cecil Frances Alexander.

EASTER DINNERS PROVIDED



The Fellowship Committee and the Deacons are teaming up to provide a delicious Easter dinner for our church family on Easter Sunday, April 4. We want to ensure that everyone has a meal to enjoy on Easter Sunday. Although we can't gather together to eat, these meals will be provided for pick-up following the worship service or delivered RIGHT TO YOU! The menu consists of ham, scalloped potatoes, vegetable, dinner roll and dessert.

If you are interested in receiving a meal, all you need to do is make a reservation by March 26. Call the church office at 717-248-4561 or email lewispres@comcast.net. Your assigned Shepherd Team Deacon will be calling you to share this information and you can RSVP through them, too.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Susan L. Ferguson, Church Treasurer

Budgeted Income and Expense as of January 31, 2021

	<u>Jan 2021</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>% of Budget</u>
Income			
BUDGETED INCOME	13,892.55	198,990.00	6.98%
INVESTMENT INCOME	6,205.06	139,560.00	4.45%
Total Income	<u>20,097.61</u>	<u>338,550.00</u>	<u>5.94%</u>
Expense			
BENEVOLENCE	444.19	30,000.00	1.48%
MINISTRY OF THE WORD	5,952.03	82,979.00	7.17%
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	84.79	4,700.00	1.8%
MUSIC AND WORSHIP	1,966.07	2,000.00	98.3%
PROPERTY	2,647.09	50,365.00	5.26%
ADMINISTRATION	735.98	25,722.00	2.86%
PERSONNEL	10,664.81	139,984.00	7.62%
FELLOWSHIP	0.00	1,800.00	0.0%
PRESCHOOL	0.00	1,000.00	0.0%
Total Expense	<u>22,494.96</u>	<u>338,550.00</u>	<u>6.65%</u>
	<u>-2,397.35</u>		

Note January 31 marks 8.33% of the Year to Date

CHRISTIAN ED *(continued from page 3)*

beloved and you bring me great joy." A second nudge from the Spirit brings to mind words from The Song of Songs, "The one I love calls to me...Come away with me!" Even into the wilderness. "My heart has heard you say, 'Seek my face.' And my heart responds, 'Lord, I will seek your face.'" "Those who seek you will find you." Especially in the wilderness.

Scripture references: Luke 3:22, Song of Songs (Song of Solomon) 2:10, Psalm 27:8, Jeremiah 29:13

PRESCHOOL *(continued from page 6)*

and Miss Maela Mitchell (who graciously passed along kitchen toys and dolls that she had outgrown). A very big THANK YOU!! We are so excited and grateful! A special "thank you" also, to Miss Kathy and Mrs. Mitchell for being the "adult assembly required."

Building friendships is the very best "construction" work that any of us can do! Even after our "I Build! I Create!" theme is completed we will continue to work on building relationships, both with God and with each other. These are pleasant priorities!



BOOK BUDDIES! Thank you for your generosity in giving to our Preschool's Book Buddy Program!! Every student is able to get a new book once a month!!

PRESBYTERIAN PRESCHOOL

Ginny Westover, Preschool Director

It's been a particularly **Puh, Puh, Puh** kind of month in the PreK classroom with **Pizza, Parties, Penguins, Pajamas, and Playful** surprises. (could we also include **pesky precipitation?**) All of this under the theme of, "I Build! I Create!"

We began our new unit with a week of construction terms and a review of shapes. Circles and squares? Easy-peasy. Rectangles and triangles? A little trickier. As for those rhombuses and octagons? They still tend to be called, "kites" and "octopuses!" Practice makes perfect however, so when the McDermott family generously offered to supply both morning and afternoon classes with Domino's Pizza we gratefully accepted the tasty treat and another opportunity to review shapes! (in hindsight, I suppose we *could* have cut the pizza into those more challenging shapes, but we stuck with the basics!) We've been jumping, tossing beanbags, and sliding into masking tape shapes on the floor throughout the rest of February.

It's important for builders to know their shapes and also the names and functions of the tools they use. So, during week two of our building and creating theme, we learned about tools and machines. It was the perfect time to dig a big (BIG) box out of the basement and turn it into a "house under construction". With the help of a few You Tube building songs we learned about the process, tools and materials needed. Thankfully, the box withstood two days of imaginative building efforts as a learning center. One morning class carpenter was quite proud of successfully making a back door. No small accomplishment with a plastic Fisher Price hand saw! Other centers that week gave kiddos practice with small motor movement as they worked with nuts, bolts, padlock and key, and phonetic practice as they matched tools with their beginning sounds.

Valentine's Day preparations fit nicely into our overall theme. Each kiddo "constructed" his/her own heart shaped cake, using kitchen tools to measure and stir just the right amounts of "material" into their bowl and pour the batter into their very own cake pan. What a fun learning experience! We may be "building" some future bakers! Both classes enjoyed icing and eating their cakes at our Valentine's parties. Unfortunately, the weather made the morning class wait a few days for theirs, but they were able to celebrate at last!

The children's creativity and cutting skills got put to good use making Valentine cards for their grown-ups. Lots of colorful love snippets everywhere! There's a good reason the material used for making the cards is called, "construction" paper!

Two other classroom friends had fun constructing some projects of their own. Star and Magic Wand, our rather mischievous and adventuresome pointers that help with the daily calendar and counting activities, have been recently found "hanging out" in different parts of the classroom. One morning we came in to find them suspended from the ceiling admiring the snowman they had constructed; and the piles of "snowballs" they had left next to Frosty. No one needed to consult an instruction manual – we knew just what to do with the snowballs! Then, on the day of our Valentine party, the two plastic pranksters were once again poised in mid-air – this time on giant hearts- we supposed the hearts were Star's and Magic Wand's way of wishing us a Happy Valentine's Day and decorating for the party. But their biggest and best surprise came during Penguin week (which, after winter weather delays and cancellations, actually turned into two weeks, making Mrs. Mitchell extra happy to enjoy more learning fun with her favorite critters and to wear penguin pajamas!). The night before the "big surprise reveal" Mrs. Mitchell posted a picture of Star and Magic Wand holding a mysterious note in front of the closed curtain door that separates the toy and art area from our circle time area. When the kiddos arrived at school that day there were many wide eyes and curious questions. After making a few imaginative guesses about what the big surprise could be, the children closed their eyes and turned away from the curtain. The countdown ended with a "swish" of the curtain opening and a rush of footsteps running toward a brand new kitchen playset, complete with a refrigerator/freezer, stove, oven, dish washer and microwave and a stacked washer and dryer unit! Lots of excitement followed as every closed door was opened and every new toy was tried out. More meals were served and cake and ice cream sliced and scooped than we could keep track of! Our playful pointers tell us that the chief benefactors of this big surprise are Mrs. Marlene Creighton (who very generously established a fund for the preschool in memory of her late husband, Dr. Dan Creighton)



Lewistown Presbyterian Church
17 East Third Street
Lewistown, PA 17044

Address Correction Requested



Our Worship Schedule for Lent

March 7	Bread of Life; Communion
March 14	The Gate
March 21	The Vine
March 28	Palm Sunday, The Good Shepherd
April 1	Maundy Thursday Worship
April 2	Good Friday Online Worship
April 4	Easter Sunday
	Who Do You Say I Am?; Communion

Please contact us if you would like more information.
Phone: 717-248-4561 Email: lewispres@comcast.net
Visit us at Website: www.lewistownpresbyterian.org
Find us on Facebook!

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