

THE PARK BENCH . . . Pastor's Page

Greetings in the name of The Lord,

I trust and pray that everyone had a great Christmas and is preparing their heart and home for the coming year.

As this year ends, and another is about to begin, we may find ourselves reflecting on our lives, especially considering the accomplishments and failures of the past year. This verse of Scripture out of Romans is one that should serve as a general guiding principle in the life of every believer— every single day. *Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.* **Romans 12:2** Because we live in a fallen and broken world we must be getting our instruction from a place that is 'other worldly' while we wait for the great and glorious day of His second coming into *this* world. It is because of this broken world (and all that it offers in its enticements) that leads us to make resolutions for the coming year which, (if we are honest with ourselves) are often forgotten and broken by mid-January....or even sooner!

But, even if we are prone to failure, such self-examination is still necessary for the Christian.... not only at the beginning of a new year, but every day. The Christian must take stock of him/herself in relation to their service and accomplishments for the Lord and the growth and maturity in their character. The Christian must ask, "Am I doing all I can to insure my growth, stabilization and maturation as a child of God? Am I studying God's Word to *show myself approved unto God, a workman that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth?* **2 Timothy 2:15** Am I lending my abilities to the congregation to help it grow and prosper both physically and spiritually?" Am I exercising the spiritual gifts God has lent to me and am I doing so in humble gratitude for all He has done for me? Am I giving of my time, money and other material resources?

If the professing Christian finds themselves lacking in these things, he/she needs to resolve to do better and to do more for the Lord in the future. And such a resolution must not be abandoned but must be persistently and devotedly retained in one's heart. Why? Because your Pastor says so? No...but because the apostle Paul possessed this attitude. It is what allowed him to be successful as a disciple of the Lord. He said, "*...but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus*" **Philippians 3:13-14**.

As Christians, we must be looking forward. We should not dwell upon or worry about past failures. Neither should we sit back and rest upon or gloat over past accomplishments. The child of God never reaches a point where he does not need to continue to grow. He never reaches a point in his service to Christ where he has done enough. Diligence in these areas must always be given to make "our calling and election sure" **(2 Peter 1:10-11)**.

Continued . . .

The following are some questions that all of us need to ask ourselves to see if we are what we should be in the sight of God or if we need to change some of our attitudes.

- Do I study the Bible diligently? Bible classes and sermons do not supply all the needs of the Christian do grow as he/she should. Personal, diligent study on his part is essential if he is to gain the knowledge of God's word necessary to function and mature as he should.
- Am I present at every service that I can attend? Attendance is usually a barometer of faithfulness and obedience. Again...not because your Pastor says so, but because God's word reminds us of it... Each of us must ask, "Are worship assemblies important to me or do I let just anything, or anyone keep me from them?" The assembling of ourselves is important enough for Christ to be there (**Matthew 18:20**), what could be more important to you? And Scripture commands us to: "*not be forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near*" (**Hebrews 10:25**)
- Can I be counted on to support the efforts of this church? Am I concerned about my brethren and my relationship with them? Each of us ought to be actively involved in the work of the church in any way we can. No one is to be passive and depend upon others to do the work. If one possesses a proper love for the Lord and his brethren, he will want to be working and doing his/her part. He will also seek to be aware of his brethren who need his help materially, emotionally and spiritually and do what he can to meet those needs.
- Am I really concerned about saving the lost? God's desire is that all should be saved (**1 Timothy 2:4**). His desire is so strong that He sent His Son to earth to save all who believe and obey Him (**Hebrews 5:8-9; John 3:16**). The Christian is to have that same desire. If he does, he will do what he can personally to take the gospel to the lost. Sometimes the lost are right next to you....and **maybe even in Church!!!**

Do you see some things in which you may be lacking? Join the crowd! But do NOT let the fact that we ALL struggle with our Christian walk be an excuse for apathy or laziness. If so, resolve to change and set things in order, then, "press on." If you struggle, Call Me!!! (**724-601-3111**) I wrestle with issues too! But let's fight to win.... *Fighting the good fight of the faith—taking hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.* **1 Timothy 6:12**

Resolve this year to come and pray with me at the church occasionally....or just to chat. I am FOR YOU! You can even come and complain (constructively of course) and we can reason through God's Word with one another for mutual encouragement. **Together** we can discover how the Book of Proverbs inspires us to maturity when it instructs us...*As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.*

With much love,

Pastor George

RECENT BABY DEDICATIONS



The Liebenguth Family
Garrett, Rianna, JR and **Eli**



The Meteny Family – Jon, Erin, Jack and **Cate**



The Doria Family
Anthony, Kristen, Luca and **Bodie**



The Lopez Family dedicating
Aliyana Grace



*Annual reports from all **Church committees and boards** are due in the church office on January 14, 2018. Report booklets will be ready for pick-up on Sunday, January 21 in preparation for the annual business meeting to be held after church service on **Sunday, January 31, 2018.***



SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 2018
After the worship service

A sign-up list for Children’s Sunday School Leaders is now available. Talk to Laurie Dauer if you can lead a Sunday and get the lesson information. **“Building Faith Brick By Brick”** will be the focus for this quarter. Also, Legos are needed to emphasis the lesson point to the children. If you have any to donate please let Laurie know.



www.abcopad (*American Baptist Churches of Pennsylvania and Delaware*) is where you can check for our denomination happenings and missionary news. Also the monthly *Notes and News* of our area churches. We were noted in last month's issue : *Franklin Park Baptist hosted a Christmas concert by "One Voice," a vocal ensemble from the Pittsburgh area. Their music represents a wide variety of styles from classical to contemporary, and the concert was presented with Scripture passages and dramatic narration, interspersed throughout the musical presentation."*

Each year the church receives Christmas cards from former members and friends Pat and Ned Martin and Margaret Bowen. They are posted on the bulletin board in the narthex with a Christmas note to all of you. **Keith English and his wife Celia, his aunt Arlene McKinney and grandmother Dorothy McKinney, the oldest member of our church at 103,** visited here on Christmas Eve morning for our worship service. Keith was raised here at Franklin Park and Dorothy and Arlene raised their families here also. It was an emotional moment when Keith spoke on behalf of his family for the love and support his family has continued to receive from this congregation over the years even though they live too far to attend each week. He thanked everyone for the monetary donation and love recently given to his niece's family – The Frances' – after they lost their home in a fire. He praised our church as a wonderful, caring family full of love and compassion. It was a blessing to have them with us.

Winter gift

"God ... does great things beyond our knowing. He says to the snow, 'Fall to the earth'; likewise to his heavy, drenching rain. He shuts up all humankind indoors, so that all people may know his work" (Job 37:5-7, NABRE).

Snow, ice and cold can make winter a hassle. "Snow days" due to a blizzard may thrill students but usually inconvenience parents. But now and then, winter blankets the earth so heavily that it seems to quiet everything. We're granted permission to hunker down at home, snuggle close with family or pets, enjoy a book or movie, make cocoa or cookies, and rest. It's like a surprise Sabbath – the gift of grace-time – when no one's expected to get out the door or the driveway.

Perhaps indeed, as Job declared, God sees fit on such days to put our busyness on hold and shut us all indoors so we pause and remember his work – his place – in our lives. Praise God for snow days!

- ^ **Jeremy Styron** underwent a bone marrow transplant on Friday, December 1. Please remember Jeremy and his parents, Jack and Wanda for strength as they deal with this very serious procedure. **Wanda** has had some health concerns herself and has not been able to see Jeremy.
- ^ **Bill Mooney**, was hospitalized for a possible blood transfusion.
- ^ **Ann Dobson** has been suffering with cellulitis.
- ^ **Jean Willoughby** had hip surgery last week.
- ^ **Steve Maxwell's dad** is in very serious condition and prayer is asked that he be kept comfortable in his last days.
- ^ **Ron Reibie** brother of Nancy Hurley has begun treatments for mesothelioma. His attitude is very positive. Ron is also a member of the Franklin Park Fire Department.
- ^ **Karen Off** would like to thank everyone for their prayers, cards and phone calls during her recent recovery from surgery. She is doing much better. Also, her dad is receiving therapy for his eyesight and hopefully will be able to resume driving.
- ^ **Prayer for all** the policeman and first responders who are in danger as they are out there doing their job. Especially Shawn McNaughton who is a member of this church family and works in Cecil Township.
- ❖ **Answered prayer and praise for** : **Rick and Sandy Hughey** will be welcoming a new grandchild in May. Their son Rich and his wife are expecting their second child. **Ruth and Bob Cunningham** had the Radford family visiting at our worship service recently. Hap Radford was a constant visitor at their home when their son Larry was growing up.
- ❖ **Those Who Have Lost Loved Ones** : **Rich and Leslie Worst, Justin and Danielle** continue to deal with the loss of Rich's dad, Gene Worst in November. **Mark Norman**, nephew of Carol Jean Keefer, lost his father-in-law last week and it is exceptionally difficult for his family at this time of year.
- ❖ **Continued Concern For**: Bill Craig, John Cress, Cindy Foight's father Bill, Mary Glassburn, Katie Jones, Tim McCrory, Edith Yockel, Christians around the world who are being persecuted.
- ❖ **Those With Cancer**: Bill Smith, Kaitlyn Frances, Matt O'Leary, Robert Stinebiser, Mary Ann Yoder.
- ❖ **Missionaries** : **Becky and Larry Stanton** (Hungary); **Peter and Sarah McCurdy** (Dominican Republic / Cuba); **Carol Sydnor** (Nepal); **Nora and Pieter Kalkman** (Prague, Czech Republic), **Brian and Lynette Smith & their boys** (Haiti). **Valerie and Aaron Osterbrock** (East Malaysia), **Ted Parks** (Kazakhstan).
- ❖ **In Service of Our Country** : **Major Doug Bauer**, his wife Hope and children, Walker & Mackenzie in North Dakota serving our country.

Happy New Year ♥ *Happy New Year* ♥ *Happy New Year*

	Dorothy McKinney Creek Meadows Personal Care 1630 Ellwood City Road Zelienople, PA. 16063	Albert (Buck) Bucklew Chicora Medical Center 160 Medical Center Road Chicora, PA. 16025-2612	Peggy Bucklew Chicora Medical Center 160 Medical Center Road Chicora, PA. 16025-2612	
Janet Tehois Broadmore Senior Living 3275 Washington Pike Apt. 221 Bridgeville, PA. 15017 412-559-2813		George Green Cranberry Place 5 St. Francis Way Room 122 Cranberry Township, PA. 16066		Mrs. Shirley Wright Passavant Retirement Community Trilium House Room 215 Zelienople, PA. 16063 Telephone 724-452-5400
Homebound - Jane Nagel & Dale, Jr. 4015 Wick Place Wexford, PA. 15090		Gloria Meinert 2915 Salisbury Court Wexford, PA. 15090	Jean Downing	Bill and Eleanor Mooney 221 Chickasaw Avenue Pittsburgh, PA. 15237



- 1 **Gordon Bonham**
- 6 **Rick Hughey**
- 12 **Ricky Raraigh**
- 13 **Steve Maxwell**
- 15 **Pastor George**
(began his pastorate with us 2017)
- 16 **Gloria Meinert (her 87 th !)**
- 16 **Amanda Carver**
- 17 **Dorothy Cress**
- 20 **Scott Hofstetter**
- 22 **Marissa Whipple (her 19th !)**
- 25 **Pastor George Palombo**
- 27 **Naomi Stewart (her 9th !)**
- 29 **Angie Cochran**
- 29 **Benjamin Carver (his 8th !)**
- 30 **Ed Cress**
- 31 **Michele O'Leary**

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We will be taking down the Christmas decorations around the church after the worship service on Sunday, January 7, 2018. Anyone you would like to stay and help it will be greatly appreciated by the committee.

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If you miss a service or would like to hear it again just send an email to the church ([franklinparkbaptistchurch@gmail.com](mailto:franklinparkbaptistchurch@gmail.com)) with your request and we will send you the link to the drop box where you can access it.

### Special dates

- New Year's Day, *January 1, 2018*
- Epiphany, *January 6, 2018*
- Baptism of the Lord, *January 7, 2018*
- Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday  
Observance, *January 15, 2018*
- Week of Prayer for Christian Unity,  
*January 18-25, 2018*

### THANK YOU CHOIR



for the giving of your time and commitment to bring us very inspiring music over the Advent Season. Also thank you to Erik for his leadership and directing of this group as they brought the Christmas season to us through song.

### Attention Youth :


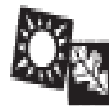
**Winter Blast at Camp Judson in Erie  
February 3 – 5**

**Winter Jam  
PPG Paints Arena, Pittsburgh, PA.  
Feb. 16 @ 7 p.m.**

**Please let Ralph or Randy know  
if you are planning to attend.**



# A NEW CREATION

 The apostle Paul says everyone who believes in Jesus becomes brand new. 

*Directions: Cross out every third letter. Then write the remaining letters in the blanks to complete 2 Corinthians 5:17, NIV.*

THIEROEFQORXEIDFAMNYAON  
 SEILSITNCVHRKISDTTBHEWNE  
 QWCDREYATMIOCNHFASWCOR  
 MEGTHWEOFLEXHASSGZONL  
 ETJHEWNEQWIDSHREROE

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\_\_\_\_\_ ! 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17, NIV

*Answer: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! 2 Corinthians 5:17, NIV*



# NEW YEAR'S NOISE-MAKERS

Ring in the New Year with these fun noisemakers!



### What you need:

- Wooden craft sticks
- Metallic paint (gold and silver)
- Paint brushes
- Jingle bells (gold and silver)
- Hot glue gun
- Metallic ribbon
- Scissors
- Adult help

### What you do:

1. Paint half the sticks gold and half silver. Let dry.
2. Glue three bells to each stick.
3. Cut a six-inch piece of ribbon for each stick. Tie a bow and glue it to the noisemaker. Celebrate!



**ONGOING FUND RAISERS FOR OUR CHURCH INCUDE :****AmazonSmile**

(when you order from Amazon designate Franklin Park Baptist Church when you sign in)

**aluminum cans**

(collected in the enclosure in back of the church by the dumpster) YOUTH GROUP

**Gift cards (Scrip.com for a list of participants)**

(ordered the first week of each month by Ellen McKenna) YOUTH GROUP

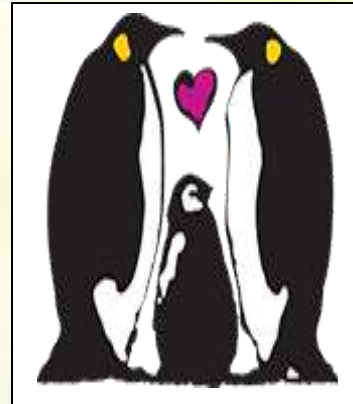
**Sir Pizza Coupon Day**

(the second Wednesday of each month) YOUTH GROUP

**We are no longer recycling your newspapers/junk mail. The container has been removed.**

**North Allegheny Schools have a receptacle on their site at Marshall School Campus.**

During storms, emperor penguins huddle for warmth, taking turns at the center and on the perimeter of the group. While incubating eggs, up to 6,000 male penguins have been observed clustering for shelter against the harsh Antarctic winter. Partially grown chicks gather in protective "crèches" (French for "cribs"); often surrounded by a colony of adults, these groupings ward off predators and cold.



In stormy times, humans also need supportive groups; we can't survive alone. A church family allows us to take turns giving and receiving care. Amid social upheaval, injustice, illness, natural disaster and any loss or crisis, God invites us to gather for protection and warmth. In the church community, we support and strengthen one another and are empowered to go out again into the less-sheltered world.