

April 2016



NEWS OF THE
CLINTON UNITED
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

REV. LAURA E. STRAUSS



Pastor Laura's Corner

But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was about to betray him), said, "Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?"

He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it.

– John 12:4-6

Then when Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he changed his mind and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders, saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." They said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself." - Matthew 27:3-4

'I don't know how to love him. I don't see why he moves me. He's just a man. He's not a king. When I'm cold and dead, will he love....does he love me, too? Does he care for me?'

These are the words of Judas as written in Andrew Lloyd Weber's rock opera *Jesus Christ Superstar*. The musical explores Holy Week from the perspective of Jesus' betrayer. Judas sings these words just before he becomes angry, and ultimately takes his own life.

Every year, as I listen to the soundtrack of this musical, I wrestle with the idea of Judas. As he laments later, has he been 'used'? Has he been 'tricked'? Or is he a bad man? How are we supposed to handle this man who is one of the disciples, but who ultimately betrays his Lord?

Well, to be frank, I don't know. Judas is a complicated character and the Bible doesn't give us much to go on. An exploration of Judas would warrant quite a few Sunday's with our 3M's class!

But, there are certainly blunt lessons for the church that we can take from Judas's story.

First, as long as there are people, the church is broken. Jesus is the perfect pastor. He is the greatest leader, motivator, teacher, organizer to walk this earth. He also happens to be God! And, yet, his disciples still screw up. Judas intentionally screws up. Judas steals, lies and manipulates. If this is going on in Jesus's very own congregation of twelve, who are we to expect perfection from a congregation of 160+?

Second, as long as there is Jesus, the church is redeemed. Even though Judas is a mess, Jesus calls Judas anyway. Jesus knows Judas's heart. He knows all of the rotten crimes that Judas has committed and will commit. Jesus calls him anyway. In

answer to Judas's question above, yes, Jesus does love him. Jesus cares for Judas. Because even though we are broken, in Christ, we are redeemed.

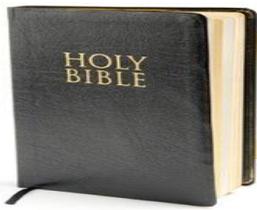
All of that said, beloved in Christ, the church is a broken place. The congregation of Jesus's disciples was broken. The churches that Paul led were broken. The church that composed our Nicene Creed was broken. The church that broke from the Roman Catholic Church is broken. The church founded here in 1797 was broken. Our church today is broken. And as long as we're here, it always will be broken.

But, in Jesus Christ, the church is also redeemed. We have received forgiveness through Jesus Christ our Lord. And through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are seeking to become more and more like Jesus to the glory of his gracious name. We have hope!

Therefore, as a broken and redeemed people, let us always be sure to forgive one another as Christ has forgiven us. A blessed and joyous Easter season to you all!

In Christ's Service, Pastor Laura





Let the Word of God Transform You.

SCRIPTURE READINGS IN APRIL

April 3, 2016: The Second Sunday of Easter

New Testament Reading:
Acts 5:27-32
Revelation 1:4-8

April 17, 2016: Fourth Sunday of Easter

New Testament Reading:
Acts 9:36-43
Revelation 7:9-17

April 24, 2016: The Fifth Sunday of Easter

Responsive Psalm: Psalm 148

Heavenly showers



All God's blessings go together, like links in a golden chain. If he gives converting grace, he will also give comforting grace. He will send "showers of blessing." Look up today, O parched plant, and open thy leaves and flowers for a heavenly watering.

—Charles H. Spurgeon

Confirmation

Save the Date! Confirmation AND Graduation Sunday is **Sunday, June 5** during the **11:00 a.m. worship service**. A luncheon will follow.



A **BIG** thank you to our deacons for preparing a delicious Easter sunrise breakfast for our congregation on March 27th. You are a blessing to us all and to our community!



We Need a Responsible Female Adult Who Likes FUN! Our summer youth mission trips are coming up and we are in the search of responsible, fun-loving, Jesus-following female to chaperon these mission adventures. See Pastor Laura if you'd like a part in this exciting opportunity!

The Sacrament of Communion will be observed on **Pentecost Sunday, May 15**. Please prepare your hearts and minds for the partaking of this sacraments by forgiving one another.



Holy Communion





Our next meeting will be **April 7th** and Leah will be talking about Peace. This will be the last regular meeting for this season as we get ready for our annual Ladies tea which will be held on May 7th at 12:30. We have Cindy Speck Ventriloquist this year and she promises to be very entertaining. Look for posters and tickets to go on sale in April. We have had a very good year, and even though there are so few of us, we work very hard to keep this group going. There will be more information coming as to what we are going to study next year and we hope that more of the ladies in our church come and join us and get involved in this active group.

Hoagie Fundraiser for the Women's Group

Order your delicious hoagie from Bowser's April 3-11th!!!

Hoagies are 16 inch long and come in three flavors; Italian (\$6.50), turkey (\$7.00), and roast beef (\$7.00). Or you can get 2 pepperoni rolls for \$5.00. Pick them up at the Church on April 20th from 11 -1 pm. Order forms are at the back of the church. Thank you!



Clinton Church Ladies Tea

Saturday May 7th 2016

12:30

Entertainment

Cindy Speck - Ventriloquist

Adult tickets \$8.00

Children under 12 \$4.00

For tickets and information call

Cindy Macek

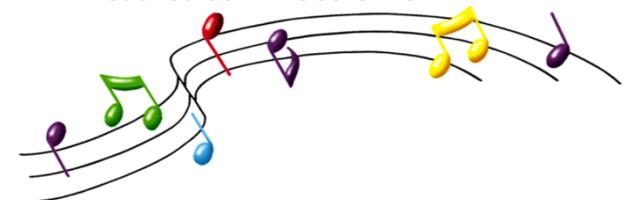
724-899-3755



- Lorrie Leonard.....1
- Sarah Metz.....1
- Aren Welte.....5
- Carol Elek.....7
- Betty Stickley.....15
- Josh Hilpert.....18
- Michael Ayers.....18
- Donnie Behnke.....22
- Apri Field.....23
- Beth McCullough.....28
- Faith Miller.....29

The Fox Chapel Festival Chorus and The Academy Chamber Orchestra will present Haydn's "Little Chorus Mass" and Mozart's "Vespers," K. 339 on **Sunday, April 17 at 4:00 p.m.** Guy Russo is directing with organist, David Billings. Admission is free for this concert.

Fox Chapel Prebsyterian Church is located at 384 Fox Chapel Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15238 and can be reached at 412-963-8243.



*Congratulations,
Michael and Rachel!*

Michael and Rachel Ludwig just celebrated 13 years of marriage. We look forward to welcoming them on Sunday, July 24th as they lead us in worship

3 M's Class

News

In April our class will be looking at "Restorative Faith" as the scriptures are from the gospel of Luke. We will be looking at our own acts of faith and faithfulness and how they can inspire those around us to believe. We pray that our faith in Jesus will keep us from the fears that keep us from proclaiming to others our belief. Please join us on Sunday mornings at 9:45 A.M. as we study God's Word!

It won't be long before August is here and we will be preparing for our Annual Attic Treasure and Bake Sale. Please keep the event in mind as your spring cleaning progresses and saleable items are found that you may no longer need. We do not have the storage space to keep the items at the church, so please keep them until August when they can be brought to the church. And remember the Bake goods that will be needed as well. If you have a favorite recipe keep it handy for the Bake Sale. Thanks so much for your continued support as we strive to do God's will through serving others! God Bless!



The Youth group will meet this month on April 10th and 24th 6:00 - 8:00 pm.

Youth Sunday is April 24th. The Youth Group will be leading us in worship!

Kid's group will meet on April 10th and 24th from 6:00 - 7:30 pm!



Understanding Alzheimer's: A Conversation with Dr. Lisa Genova
Pittsburgh Theological Seminary is hosting neuroscientist Dr. Lisa Genova on **June 16, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in Hicks Chapel on the seminary campus.** Dr. Genova is the New York Times bestselling author of *Still Alice*, *Left Neglected*, *Love Anthony*, and *Inside the O'Brien's*. She says, "Stories are a way into people's hearts, and when this happens, we have more than knowledge. We have real understanding, empathy, sensitivity, the ability to be better caregivers, and maybe the motivation to get involved." *Still Alice*, now an award-winning major motion picture, tells the story of Dr. Alice Howland, a renowned linguistics professor. When words begin to escape her and she starts becoming lost on her daily jogs, Alice must come face-to-face with a devastating diagnosis: early-onset Alzheimer's disease. **Individual tickets for this June 16, 2016 event are \$30 (\$25 for groups of 10+) and are available at www.pts.edu/Genova or at 412-924-1375.** This event - including lecture, Q&A, and book signing - is a great opportunity for health care providers, family and friends of those suffering from the disease, and book clubs to join the conversation.



West Allegheny Food Pantry

"Looking for Great Bargains!" Visit the Thrift Store **any Saturday from 8:00am to 12:00 Noon** and see the Spring and Summer clothes. There are new and gently used items for all members of the family. We are part of the WAMA Food Pantry, located at **520 Route 30, Imperial PA.**

CEMETERY BOARD

The Clinton U.P. Church is asking for a sealed bid for the mowing of the old and new sections of the cemetery. Also, sealed bids for trimming of the old section of the cemetery. **Bids are due by April 15th 2016.**



"His Glory"

God sends rainbows after showers
 arching 'cross the freshened skies.
 Every rainbow shows God's glory.
 Every wonder tells his story.

God sends Jesus down from heaven
 offering mercy, hope and life.
 On the cross he showed God's glory.
 Every blessing tells his story.

God sends me forth into this world
 sharing love that offers life.
 And I hope to show God's glory
 In the way I tell his story.

—MaryAnn Sundby

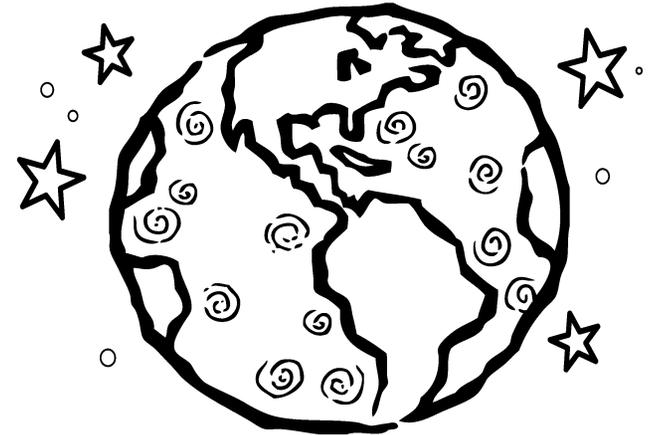


A SPECIAL GIFT

Give thanks to God for this amazing planet, which he filled with people, animals and plants.

Directions: Following the code below, fill in the blanks to complete the Bible verse. Then color the earth.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26
 A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



The _____ is _____, and
 _____, the
 _____, and _____
 _____ 24:1, NIV

Answer: The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it. Psalm 24:1, NIV