

Harmony Happenings

News of the People Who Are Harmony Evangelical Presbyterian Church

December 2020 – January 2021

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*Harmony Evangelical Presbyterian
Church exists to boldly lead others to
become followers of Jesus Christ.*

From Pastor Jeff ...



A letter from Dietrich Bonhoeffer, written from a German prison cell to family members in 1943; at Christmas.

"I need to tell you how great my longing for freedom and for all of you is. But throughout the decades you have given us such incomparably beautiful Christmases that the grateful remembrance of them is strong enough to make even a darker Christmas radiant. In such times it becomes apparent for the first time what it means to possess a past and an inner heritage that is independent of the changes of time and circumstance. The awareness of being borne by a spiritual legacy stretching through centuries gives one the secure feeling of safety in the face of all passing afflictions. I believe that those who know themselves to be in possession of such reserves of strength don't need to be ashamed of softer emotions, which to my mind still belong to the better and more noble human feelings, when memory and a good and rich past evoke them. They will not overwhelm anyone who holds fast to the values that no human power can take away.

Viewed from a Christian perspective, Christmas in a prison cell can, of course, hardly be considered particularly problematic. Most likely many of those here in this building will celebrate a more meaningful and authentic Christmas than in places where it is celebrated in name only. That misery, sorrow, poverty, loneliness, helplessness, and guilt mean something quite different in the eyes of God than according to human judgment; that God turns toward the very places from which humans turn away; that Christ was born in a stable because there was no room for him in the inn - a prisoner grasps this better than others, and for him this is truly good news. And to the extent he believes it, he knows that he has been placed within the Christian community that goes beyond the scope of all spatial and temporal limits, and the prison walls lose their significance.....

Presumably it will be a very quiet Christmas everywhere, and the children will think back on it later for many years to come. But perhaps precisely this will reveal to some for the first time what Christmas really is. Give my siblings and the children and all friends my love. May God protect us all."

The importance of observing and celebrating Christmas well, with love, mirth, reverence, and joy cannot be overstated.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New A Year!

Focus on Missions

Supporting the Ministry of...

Feed My Sheep Food Cupboard



November Statistics: Total Family Members~ 207
Families: 86, Adults: 106, Children:57, Seniors:44
New Families: 6

Wish List: condiments: for Christmas
cake mix, icing, hot choc, marshmallows

*"When peace like a river, attendeth my way,
when sorrows like sea billows roll; whatever my
lot, Thou hath taught me to know it is well, it is
well with my soul."*

I find myself singing this hymn often; especially this year. Whether in good times or in hard, I am grateful that the Lord draws me back to himself. And, I am deeply moved when I consider the circumstances that led Horatio Spafford to pen these words. The events were tragic. And, even so—because of Christ's death and resurrection—it was well with his soul.

As I reflect on 2020, I am overwhelmed by the Lord's faithfulness. In light of a multitude of obstacles, He provides. The largest obstacle we faced came at about this time last year. Through prayer and the wisdom of great friends, I recommitted to this ministry. Doing so included the work to raise an additional \$30,000.00 annually. To me, this seemed fool-hearty. Yet, the Lord was already at work.

I found great peace and enthusiasm to climb the mountain set before me. In this process, new friendships were cultivated and old ones deepened. It is a great joy to share this ministry with you and others. I am grateful that my work provides me the opportunity to regularly connect with many wonderful friends and family.

In only 4 months of work, the Lord—working through you and many others—met our entire 2020 financial need. There was much rejoicing! Thank you for your part in meeting this goal.

Whether through financial support, prayer, or encouragement, your contribution is not overlooked.

- Josh Hayes (CCO)

2021 Mission Offering Schedule

Mission Offering will be collected on the second Sunday of each month excluding the months of Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas when Special Holiday Offerings will be collected.

Dear Friends at Harmony E.P.C.,

Thank you for your generous gift!

A few weeks ago a young woman called us asking about an abortion. She did not want one, but the baby's father insisted that abortion was her only choice. At the end of the phone call, she agreed to come in for an appointment.

At her appointment she was able to talk about her options and learn that even without the support of her baby's father she could have her baby. She left uncertain about what choice she would make – but was encouraged that she had options.

A week or so later we heard that she had chosen life her baby! She also plans to enroll in our New Beginnings parenting program, where she will continue to receive support and encouragement along with practical help.

Thank you for being part of her story and being part of her choice. This baby will live because of you. Thank you!

Changing Lives Together,
Sarah M. Bowen
Executive Director
Promise of Life Network
(Formerly the Alpha/ Omega Center)

The deadline for the weekly bulletin is

Thursday at 5:00 pm. The newsletter deadline for the February/ March issue of the *Harmony Happenings* is Wednesday, January 27. Thank you notes, articles, and information for the "News of the People" column need to be submitted in writing to the office or sent as an attachment to harmonypepc@zoominternet.net.

Greeters Schedule



If you wish to serve as a greeter before and after worship, please call the church office and your name will be added to the schedule. If you are scheduled to greet and you cannot, notify the church office two weeks in advance; please call 724-735-2854 or you may also send an email to harmonyepc@zoominternet.net. Thank you!

Greeter Schedule

Greeters may stand at the elevator entrance or the back of the sanctuary from 10:45am – 11:00am and at the close of worship. Greeters may be singles, couples, or families.

Greeters will need to welcome people with love even while maintaining social distancing. They will need to direct guests to appropriate seating, approximately every other pew. We want everyone to be safe and to feel safe.

December

- 6 Jerry and Harriet Grossman
- 17 Veronica Norcross and Diane Hyatt
- 20 Ralph and Maggie Oakes
- 27 Dane and Carol Sloan

January

- 3 Pastor Jeff, Pam, and Family
- 10 Jerry and Harriet Grossman
- 17 Veronica Norcross and Diane Hyatt
- 24 John and Marge Elmer
- 31 Ron and Mary Lou Phipps

February

- 7 Jon and Becky Miller
- 14 Dane and Carol Sloan
- 21 Joe and Patty Ridley
- 28 Ralph and Maggie Oakes

March

- 7 Pastor Jeff, Pam, and Family
- 14 Ron and Mary Lou Phipps
- 21 Jon and Becky Miller
- 28 Dane and Carol Sloan

Thank you to all who serve as greeters!

Board Meetings

Deacons meet on the **Second Thursday** @ 7:30pm
Session meets on the **Third Monday** @ 7:00pm.
Trustees meet on the **Fourth Monday** @ 7:00pm.

Birthdays in December and January



December Birthdays: 5th – Pauline Pearson; 6th – Maggie Oakes & Mike Norcross; 10th – Michelle Flynn; 18th – Carolyn McCandless; 21st – Ellen Arnold; 23rd – Veronica Norcross; 27th – Erma Burrows

January Birthdays: 5th – John Elmer; 6th – Imogene Sloan; 13th – Trilby Grivas; 23rd – Jon Miller; 29th – Diane Hyatt; 31st – Jonette Isacco

Please let us know if we missed your birthday. If you want to be added to the list, call the church office at 724-735-2854. Thank you.

Upcoming Events

Worship Committee Events for the second half of 2020 / 2021:

December

Sunday Dec. 13 – Jane Gregg – Violinist and musician

Sunday, Dec. 20 & 24 – Emily Hayes – Harp Player

**Thursday, Dec 24 – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
7:30 pm**

January

Sunday Jan. 10 – Ordination and installation of new officers

**Wednesday Jan 27 – Congregational Meeting, Part 11
6:15 pm for dinner and 7:00 pm for the meeting
(possible Covid-19 changes to come)**

See weekly bulletin for more details.

Expressions of Gratitude

Harmony Church Family,

Thank you for thinking of me as I have almost completed my first semester at Kent State University. I appreciate the gift card and all of your thoughts and prayers.

Thank you, Amber Flynn

Thank you so much for donating quilts to the Feed My Sheep Food Cupboard.

Our clients always look forward to have a chance of “winning” one of the quilts.

Your hard work is very much appreciated.

Gratefully yours, Shirley Osbern, Secretary

Thank you so much for donating the “blessing bags” and money to the Feed My Sheep Food Cupboard.

Your donation will help us to respond to the needy families in this area.

Gratefully yours, Shirley Osbern, Secretary

Dear Friends,

I hope this finds you well and persevering in your faith in these peculiar times. This past year has confirmed upon me this calling to ministry. Thank you for all you do to strengthen me in this work. I am truly grateful.

Thank you specifically for the most recent and unexpected financial gift. It is timely. I am grateful that we are sharing in this ministry of the Gospel together.

In Love, Josh, Chrissy, & Baylee

Greetings Harmony E.P. Church

We wanted to thank you once again for your gift to Hope For Renewal. It means so much to us to have partners who continue to support and care for us in so many ways. We look forward to the day when it is possible for us to visit and share some updates with the Harmony family.

The Hope for Renewal Ministry Center is entering its last stages of renovations. We hope to start ministry at the building early in 2021. Our young worshiping community is also doing well. This year has been difficult in some ways yet we are witnessing God’s love and power touch broken lives and bring healing and growth in their relationship with Jesus.

I am praying that all of you have a great Thanksgiving and may God’s abundant blessings fall upon you. Thanks again for your partnership with our ministry. It is greatly appreciated!

Blessings, Gary and Cindy

Dear Harmony Church Family,

On the behalf of the Grossman and Mershimer family we would like to thank each and every one of you who called asking how we were all doing, dropping off food, sending cards, and especially praying for us. Glad to report Jerry and Harriet are doing great and have made a full recovery. We don’t know what we would do without this Church Family. Thank you again!

With Love, Grossman & Mershimer Family

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Last week, Jeff called and asked if I would like to meet for coffee. We’re good friends and have gotten together in the past, so I was delighted to visit.

The visit was great but I had no idea what a marvelous surprise waited for me. Thank you so much for your gift to help with our medical expenses. The financial support is greatly appreciated and your support and prayers are felt in our hearts. Harmony EPC is a special place, and has always been special to me. As you pray for us, we’re praying for you!

In His Love, Pastor Bill, Cindy, and Josh Woodman

Thank you Jackie Williams and Linda Stirling for the decorations in the church. You have made it feel like Christmas!!

Please see the Thank You Card on the Bulletin Board in the church Fellowship Hall for handwritten expressions of gratitude from the ladies at the Hope Place!

A Time of to be Grateful

Every year EduNations sets aside a week to focus on the spiritual aspect of our lives and work. This year from October 30th to November 6th, the pupils and staff of EduNations were encouraged to focus on improving their moral and spiritual lives. Opportunities were given for a time to do personal meditations, prayer, group Bible study and congregational prayers. Many administrators, teachers, and students fasted and recommitted their work and studies to God, thankful for the many blessings received throughout the year.



In a year like 2020, we were especially grateful to God and our contributors for continual provision in a year full of special challenges and tragedy due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While many organizations have suffered acute lack or been forced to close, EduNations is very grateful that God and EduNations sponsors have continued to provide for us.

Our attitude during the week was summarized as, "God's blessings we cannot fully tell! He whose hand has guided us deserves our praise." Seeing how our needs have been supplied in the midst of such uncertain times has been so encouraging to us. Thankful for the many donors whose giving has allowed us to continue to educate the children of Sierra Leone, we pray God's blessing on you and your families this Thanksgiving season.

- EduNation in Fintonia and Sierra Leone

MISSION & VISION



The Glenwood Playground Outreach Ministry



On October 28th, at our last 2020 community picnic, we were able to have a very small version of our Fall Fun Fest. We had our incredible hot dogs but also added baked beans to the menu. We were blessed with the use of a cotton candy machine which turned out to be amazing for the children and adults. We also were able to give a small bag of candy to everyone who attended. This year was a very different year at the playground but God was so faithful to gather people to experience the love of Christ.

Community Worship

This fall we moved Sunday worship indoors into our living room. We have just completed our study of the book of Philippians. God continues to add to our numbers and we have just about maxed out the space in our living room. The numbers are exciting but the real joy comes in presenting God's Word each week and to watch this group form unity and purpose in the mission here.

We have recently seen the majority of our group go through times of major crisis but then watched God work through that crisis to bring growth and more purpose in their lives and our church family. It will be awesome to move our Sunday worship to the ministry center in the near future. With great joy on November 1st we celebrated our 1 year anniversary of worshipping together.



Hope For Renewal Ministry Center

During the next six weeks we hope to see a number of major projects completed. These projects include installing the fire suppression hood in the kitchen, finishing the plumbing and electric, putting in a dropped ceiling and floor tile, and the café coffee bar. We also hope to update the security system, doors and finish the painting. Soon to follow will be installation of kitchen equipment and café equipment and furniture.



Kitchen Waiting on Ceiling and Hood

As you can imagine we are very excited to see the incredible progress at the ministry center. We are also waiting with great anticipation to finally use the facility that God has given us to present and proclaim the love of Christ and the Gospel message to this precious community.

- Hope For Renewal – Gary Koerth

Guess Who?



The inimitable Charlotte Byers!

She has hardly changed. Who would have thought that two years of consecutive Sunday School attendance would lead to a lifetime of faithful service to the church?

Thank you, Charlotte. You are an example of devotion, service, and love to the Lord.

Dear Hearts,

Jazz Nite has been postponed to February 2021 and it's hoped you can bring your sweetie to complete your Valentine's weekend. Jane Gregg and Friends have graciously agreed to exchange hot chocolate & December's cappuccino for fragrant flowers and February confectionaries. Watch for more heartfelt

details to follow and all that jazz!



Harmony Evangelical Presbyterian Church
P O Box 406, 234 North Main St.
Harrisville PA 16038

Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Jones, Pastor

Come & Worship With Us!

9:45 am – Sunday School

11:00 am – Worship

Visit us at www.harmonyepc.org



Victorian Christmas

In the English speaking world, the union of gifts, trees, and Christmas was due to the influence of Queen Victoria and her husband Prince Albert, a native of Saxony (now part of Germany). German immigrants had brought the custom of Christmas trees with them in the early 1800s, but it spread widely after Victoria and Albert set up an elaborate tree for their children at Windsor Castle in 1841. At this point, Christmas presents were usually hung on the tree itself.

German and Dutch immigrants also brought their tradition of trees and presents to the New World in the early 1800s. The image of happy middle-class families exchanging gifts around a tree became a powerful one for American authors and civic leaders who wished to replace older, rowdier, and more alcohol-fueled Christmas traditions – such as wassailing – with a more family-friendly holiday. This family-centered image was widely popularized by Clement Moore’s 1822 poem known today as “Twas the Night Before Christmas” (which also helped give us our modern picture of Santa Claus).

As many of us make trees and gifts the center of our own Christmas practice, we would do well to remember that they are ultimately symbols of the One who gave himself to unite heaven and earth, and who brings all barren things to flower.

By: J.L. Williams (c.1815-77)

