

The Echo

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF HILLSIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
MAY 2016 – VOLUME 61 NO 5

From the Pastor's Desk

As many of you know I am spending the first week of May at a retreat that our denomination hosts for pastors to help them rejuvenate and develop ways to maintain spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical health. Preparing for this retreat (they gave us lots of homework) has gotten me thinking about the ways in which we often neglect our own well-being for those things in our life that we simply "have to get done."

If you're like me, it seems like your to-do list seems to stay about the same length no matter how much time you spend working on it because there's always something more to do. Or maybe, just hypothetically, as soon as you cross one item off your list your spouse likes to add two more items as she laughs like the stepmother from Cinderella. [Ok. That's not how it happened, but it makes for a better story.] Hard work is part of the American psyche: there is nothing we can't do if we put our minds to it. Our ancestors left everything behind and worked themselves into the grave in the hopes that their descendants might have a better life. Here we sit with the highest standard of living than any other humans in the history of the planet, and we are still driven to work harder to do more. Sometimes it seems like our pursuit of a better life causes us to fray around the edges and burn out to the point that we no longer enjoy life as it is.

Between mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual health, I generally find that most of us are weak in at least one or two of those areas. When we feel frayed our shortcomings tend to be all the more visible, and it is in those moments we need to heed a call to self-care. When I am hungry, I get cranky. When it gets really late at night, I lose the ability to think clearly. And when I have been burning the candle at both ends for too long, my spirit is drained.

This call for self-care has been calling to me loud and clear the past few months as my gradual weight gain has reached an all-time high. So I am trying to take this retreat as a turning point for my life. Right before I left I joined the Anytime Fitness gym here in Greenville, and I even hired a personal trainer to help me get back in shape. I encourage you to identify the areas in your life where you need to take better care of yourself and make it a priority. Let your own well-being be the thing that you simply have to get done today.

During the next year or so, I would really appreciate your encouragement as I try to get in shape. If you're a member of Anytime Fitness, let me know, and I would love to meet you there for a workout. Or if you're not a member at the gym, give me a call on a nice day and let's go for a walk together. And vice-versa, if you are trying to work on your mental, emotional, or spiritual health, give me a call, so I can encourage you on that journey.

For me, the journey towards any health starts with the realization that God loves us and wants us to thrive. God wants us healthy in every way so that we can help others grow and thrive also. It's hard to take care of others if you struggle to take care of yourself, so let's rely on one another as a community of faith for encouragement as we seek to lift up our brothers and sisters in the name of Christ.

In Christ, Pastor Sean



CONGRATULATIONS!



Hillside's Kaitlyn Vale has achieved her Girl Scout Gold Award!

Since 1916, Girl Scout's highest award has stood for excellence and leadership among those who earn it. Gold Award recipients join the ranks of generations of young women who have made a difference in their communities and the world!

The Gold Award in Girl Scouts is the equivalent of an Eagle Scout in Boy Scouts. Hillside is honored to have recipients of both distinguished awards!!

Kaitlyn began her scouting experience when she was in just first grade. In order to achieve her Gold Award, Kaitlyn's project involved, hosting a reading program for first graders, offering snacks and three reading stations a day including crafts, games and reading. She had some great friends helping her during this program.

Kaitlyn is the daughter of Troy and Tracey Vale and is a senior at Commodore Perry High School. Upon graduation, Kaitlyn will attend Venango College of Clarion University, majoring in Paralegal Studies. Congratulations Kaitlyn!

Member Profile Page ~ Pat Brugler & Ray Brugler

Questions posed through the Tech and Communication Team at Hillside



What year did you join Hillside? - *Pat 1999; Ray Member of Shenango PBY.*

What committees or positions have you been a part of? *Pat: Christian Ed (1 year), Presbyterian Women, Circle, World Service ; Ray: Bible studies leader, occasional guest preacher (since 1985), and Parish Associate (2005 to 2015).*

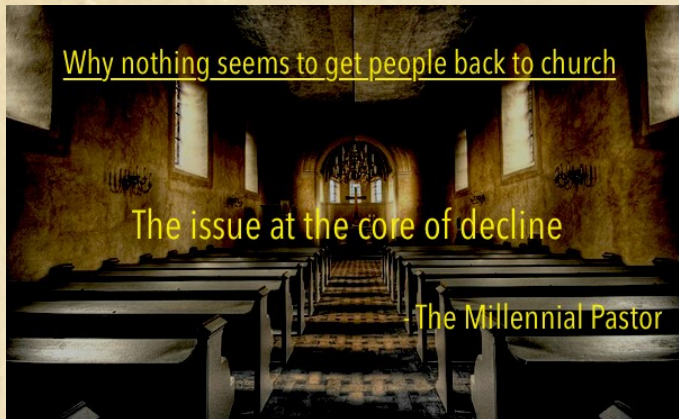
Tell about your conversion to Jesus Christ? - *Both born and reared in active Church families, Pat Methodist and Ray Presbyterian; our faith was nurtured through the ministry of the saints among whom we participated in church school classes, summer camps, mission and study groups, youth groups, vacation schools; and who encouraged us to assist in teaching and leading church activities. Both baptized as infants, and confirmed as young adults.*

What would be some of your fondest memories at Hillside? - *The warm and sincere welcome of the congregation, especially receiving a loaf of freshly-baked bread and a visit with Jean Mentch on the Monday morning following our first attendance at worship; KERYGMA studies under Dr. Walther, mission trip to Sheldon Jackson College (Sitka, AK), Seder meal and rite prepared by the C. E. Committee.*

There are always downsides in every organization, but we would like to know what/who at Hillside inspires you in your Christian walk;

Past - *The Rev. Pam Maloney, Dr. James Walther, men who built a cabin at the Highlands.*

Present - *Karen and Lee Kirchhofer and their family, the skilled and committed Adult Choir, the Praise Band, and all the faithful officers and members of the congregation.*



April 16, 2015 by [Rev. Erik Parker](#)

“People just aren’t committed like they used to be”

This week, I came across this satirical [article](#) from the site BabylonBee “After 12 Years Of Quarterly Church Attendance, Parents Shocked By Daughter’s Lack Of Faith”

The article humorously reveals an issue facing many churches today. I can’t tell you how many times (56,819 times) I have had the conversation where someone talks about the fact that young people aren’t as committed as they once were. People aren’t coming to church like they did in decades past, and those left behind have started to notice. Many congregations are feeling older, thinner, and tired out. The future feels bleak. The studies tell us that the church is declining.

And so churches try any number of things to attract people back to church. Youth group programs, re-vamped and modern music, renovated worship spaces, hip and cool pastors with tattoos and any number of other gimmicks.

But nothing seems to work. At least I haven’t heard of any churches successfully bringing back all the members who drifted away. And yet we keep at it, week after week, year after year worrying about people who were once here. Our grand plans for revitalization is to try and appeal to people who have already chosen to leave. Sure, it works once



Large, 2-Topping
Pizza for \$12.99

In supporting local businesses, be sure to tip your wait staff generously and thank them for giving the church this generous coupon!

in a while, but this is probably not a strategy for success.

Yet, while churches fret and worry about those who were once there, we rarely take the time to understand what we are asking people to come back and commit to.

Commitment to church

A lot of sermons, bible studies, meetings, conferences, lectures, consultants, coaches and more have been spent analyzing and communicating the message that the social advantages of church that drove attendance in decades past no longer exist. It just isn’t the case anymore that good citizens born here are expected to become good church members. Schools, work, neighbours, businesses, governments don’t do – society-at-large doesn’t do – our evangelism for us anymore.

Church isn’t an expected social commitment any longer.

Yet, almost always when we speak of getting people to start coming back to church, we say it just like that – ‘back to church.’ And the issue goes deeper to than that. So often when I ask church members what reason keeps them coming to church, there is almost always one thing at the top of the list: Church feels like family, church is a community.

Churches should be communities where we feel connected to each other in deep ways. But family and community are still social commitments at the end of the day.

Social Commitment

Most churches are, at their core, institutions formed around a social or societal commitment. The core of churches have been based on the fact that people are expected to attend because of societal pressures. And when society taught us through family, friends, neighbours, schools, workplaces, TV, movies, newspapers, courthouses, and governments that being church attenders was important, churches organized around social commitment worked well.

These churches did good ministry, they reached people with the gospel and they were servant communities.

But now that society is no longer providing the pressure to be church attenders, attracting people to a social commitment doesn’t work.

In fact, it may be the very thing that is driving people away.

Our pitch for church has often become some version of “come to church because you should” or “come to church for your family” or “come to church for the community”

Yet, people are choosing sports or music or clubs or brunch with friends or sleeping in with family because they love those things. People are choosing things that they are passionate about, things that they love. Social pressure doesn’t hold much sway anymore, even if our society did push church on people.

When you love soccer, finding a team to play on is also finding a community with a shared passion. When you love brunch, finding a brunch club means joining a community that shares your love of brunch. When you love lazy Sunday mornings with family, you have a community that also loves sleeping in.

But what is our shared love at church? Are we just communities to join without a shared passion?

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Commitment to Jesus

If I had to guess, the vast majority of people who still might be looking for a church in 2016 are not looking for a social commitment to church.

As a millennial, I never lived in the era of social commitment or social pressure to go to church. While most of my peers growing up weren't interested in church, nor exposed to it beyond Christmas and Easter, the ones who did express interest did not do it for the social commitment.

My church going peers were interested in following Jesus. Now, imagine someone is looking for a church. They are looking for a church with a commitment to following Jesus at its core and they show up at a social commitment church. It would be like showing up for a soccer team that stopped playing soccer years ago, and who instead gathers for coffee and donuts with friends and family. But this gathering of people still call themselves a soccer team.

Now imagine members of that "soccer team" wringing their hands week after week over the fact that no one wants to join the team to clean up coffee and pick up the donuts. You can see why soccer players looking for a team wouldn't join. You can see why many members of the team left a long time ago.

As churches try to understand why all the attempts to attract people back to church haven't yield better results, I think it is because the core foundation that brings most church communities together is fundamentally at odds with what people who are looking for churches are seeking today.

If I had to guess, that if people are looking for church these days, they are doing it in the same way that someone would look for a soccer team. A soccer player looks

for a team because they love soccer. A church seeker is looking for a church community because they love Jesus and want to follow him. They are not looking for a church because they love church.

And it goes deeper than that. If getting people to church is the chief concern, than we will always be looking to draw people in.

But if following Jesus, and letting people know about this gracious, merciful and compassionate God, is at our core, we will reach out. And reaching out to let people know about Jesus, may or may not include more bums in pews. Either way, building the church is not the goal, but at best is a symptom of reaching people with Jesus.

So how can churches address this? How can churches built on the social commitment to church have the conversation about the fact that the very thing that brings them together as a community is their biggest problem?

With a lot of soul-searching, a lot of questions, a lot of discerning and a lot of prayer. Changing our foundations and cores will not be easy. In fact, many churches will choose to die instead of changing to the core of following Jesus.

Despite the social commitment at the core of our churches, I think that many churches and church members do want to follow Jesus too. And it isn't that a church has to choose between being a community or following Jesus. One doesn't exclude the other.

But churches DO have to choose what is at their core. Churches need to choose the foundation that gathers their community.

Is it a social commitment to church?

Or are we followers of Jesus whose shared passion brings us together?

Rev. Erik Parker is a Lutheran pastor who writes a blog that can be found at www.millennialpastor.net To see his original post, click [here](#). Article reprinted with permission.

Hillside Deacons

The Hillside Deacons do many things for the members of the church. Just for starters, we visit the shut-ins, taking them news of happenings in the church. We make meals for people who are unable to do so because of hospital stays or injuries. We started a new way of including our church members in our daily prayers in our own home.

We open our church directory and choose a few families per day to spend time praying for their needs. I even touch the pictures of those I am praying for.

We send cards and make phone calls to the shut-ins. We also provide gift cards and mone-

tary donations to people traveling back and forth to Pittsburgh hospitals. We take fruit baskets to members being discharged from a hospital.

Keep your eyes and ears open as we are planning a Potluck Strawberry Festival in early June. More to come.

The Deacons care about you.

**May Good Shepherd Item:
Peanut Butter/Breakfast**

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!

Ahh Strawberries, Yummy Yummy Strawberries.

The Deacons are hosting a **Strawberry Festival on Sunday, June 12, 2016** immediately following worship. This will be a pot-luck luncheon with a strawberry theme. So get out your strawberry recipes, hit the strawberry patches early, and plan to attend!!! Let's see how creative we can be with strawberries (strawberry salad, strawberry balsamic chicken, strawberry salsa, strawberry pizza, strawberry shortcake, strawberry pie, chocolate covered strawberries, the ideas are endless – especially on Pinterest!) The Deacons will provide ice cream and strawberries to top off our pot-luck luncheon with a strawberry sundae!

Camp Brochures and postcards are available for any children interested in going to camp this summer. Hillside has camp scholarships available for anyone who requests them. You have until May 31st. See Jill Redfoot.

FINANCIAL NEWS - 1st quarter expenses \$42,067.07 income \$42,469.83. Great job by everyone. Please remember we must increase our giving over last year by 5% in order to continue meeting our budget. Thanks from your Trustees.

Communion for May will be on Sunday, May 15th.

The Trustees will host a "Sunday Brunch" following worship on May 22, 2016. The menu includes:

<i>Pork loin</i>	<i>Eggs</i>
<i>Cheesy potatoes</i>	<i>French Toast</i>
<i>Green beans</i>	<i>Fruit salad</i>
<i>Breakfast pastries</i>	<i>Beverages</i>

Please give as generously as you can, as all proceeds will benefit mission programs. Look for sign-up forms in the bulletin.

JUNE

ECHO DEADLINE:

SUN., MAY 15



Recipe Corner STRAWBERRY JICAMA TOSS

POPPY SEED DRESSING (below)

6 CUPS BITE-SIZED PIECES MIXED SALAD GREENS

½ PINT STRAWBERRIES, SLICED

1 CUP ALFALFA SPROUTS

¼ CUP 1"X ¼" PIECES JICAMA

2 KIWIFRUIT, PEELED, CUT IN HALF AND SLICED

- Prepare Poppy Seed Dressing
- Toss dressing with remaining ingredients



POPPY SEED DRESSING

2 TBL. VEGETABLE OIL

2 TBL. HONEY

2 TBL. ORANGE JUICE

1 TBL. RICE VINEGAR

1 teas. POPPY SEED

2 teas. DIJON MUSTARD

Shake all ingredients in tightly covered container.

Dear Friends,

Our sincere thanks to our Hillside family for all the kind words, thoughts and prayers offered during Glenn's illness. Thank you also for the beautiful dish garden and to the Women's Association for the delicious dinner provided after the funeral. And to Pastor Sean it is with grateful hearts we thank you for capturing Glenn's loving spirit through your visits with him and our shared stories. God bless all of you!

With Love, The Mathieson Family

Hometown Heroes

Please continue to pray for these loved ones who are serving our country. Keep them, their families, our country, and our world situation in your constant prayers.

HANNAH BATTLES
RAYMOND PELSH
JASON COATS
JOSH PIPP
PATRICK DANGROW
MICHAEL PSCHIRER

JUSTIN SMITH
CRAIG TRUMBULL JR.
KRISTOPHER HIRSCHMANN
DAVID TURNER
JON LEXINGTON
BRIAN GEARHART

May

9:30 S.S. 10:45 Worship 4 Youth Group 5 Praise Team 1	6:30 Membership Mtg. 2	2-4 Knitting 6:30 Girl Scouts 3	6:30 Choir 4	6 All Women's Dinner 5	6:15 E.R. 6	7
9:30 S.S. 10:45 Worship Cantata 8	9	2-4 Knitting 6 Trustees 10	6:30 Choir 11	12	6:15 E.R. 13	9-12 Postal Can Campaign 14
9:30 S.S. 10:45 Worship Communion 4 Youth Grp. 5 Praise Tm. 15	6:30 PW Mtg. 16	2-4 Knitting 6 Autism Sup- port Grp. 6:30 Girl Scouts 17	6:30 Choir 18	7 Tech & Com. Mtg. 19	6:15 E.R. 20	21
9:30 S.S. 10:45 Worship 12 Trustee Brunch 4 Youth Grp 5 Praise Tm 22	6:30 Christian Ed. 23	2-4 Knitting 6:30 Session 24	6:30 Choir 25	26	6:30 E.R. @ Pax- ton's 27	28
9:30 S.S. 10:45 Worship 4 Youth Group 5 Praise Team 29	30	2-4 Knitting 6:30 Girl Scouts 31	Find up-to-the-minute updates at www.hillsidepresby.com/calendar where you can find details and even add items to your personal calendar.			

Birthdays

5/2 Bo Arthur Mosconi
5/9 Catelynn Titus
5/10 Adrianne Ferguson
5/18 Jason Ealy
5/20 Laurel Dangrow
5/25 Pat Bees
Raina Tokar
5/30 Chris Mentch
6/2 Matt McClimans
6/3 Eva Sicignano
6/5 Sandy Barr
Jane Heile



6/7 Sherry Hodge
Marsha Titus
6/11 Josh Mull



MAY

Anniversaries

5/3 Tina & Gary Jones
5/8 Lynn & Madge Ferguson (45 yrs)
5/15 Martha & Joe Piper
5/18 Steve & Linda Pinney (25 yrs)
5/19 Barb & Dan Shrock
5/23 Mark & Marianne Holiga
5/24 Tom & Joanne Knapp
5/30 Rod & Jenny Daughterty
Debbie & Ralph Jones
6/7 Carl & Bonny Sheesley (20 yrs)



The Hillside Echo

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