News & Views

Brownback’s United Church of Christ February 2019

Spring City, Pennsylvania

# Online Giving

In an effort to help our overall church giving become more consistent and to offer our members multiple giving options to suit personal preferences, Brownback's now offers online giving.

**How it Works**: On the Home page of the church website ([www.brownbackschurch.org](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5CKris%5CDownloads%5Cwww.brownbackschurch.org)), click the button titled "Click for Online Giving" to set up one-time or recurring (e.g., weekly, monthly) donations. By setting up a recurring donation, you no longer need to remember to write a check – the donation is automatic at whatever frequency you choose. And you can always give to special offerings in the offering plate.

If online giving doesn't work for you after trying it, you can always cancel and return to the offering plate.

Your online contributions will appear in your annual tax report.

Please reach out to Kaitlin Iezzi or Anne Behe with any questions.

Sincerely,

*Brownback's Consistory*

## Calendar of Events

| Date | Time | Event |
| --- | --- | --- |
| February |
| 3 |  | Souper Bowl Sunday |
| 5 | 7:00 PM | Consistory Meeting |
| 11 | 8:30 AM | Men’s Breakfast |
| 14 | Noon | Young at Heart |
| 21 | 6:30 PM | Theology on Tap (note date change this month)*News & Views* deadline |
| March |
| 5 | 6:00 PM | Fat Tuesday Pancake Dinner |

## Recurring Events

Sunday Worship:

Adult Sunday School – will resume on March 10

10:00 AM –Worship Service, Worship Time for Children, Kids JAM

Faith Formation:

Women’s Bible Study – 10:00 AM, Tuesday

Men’s Breakfast – 8:30 AM, 2nd Monday

Music:

Chancel Choir – 9:15 AM, Sunday

Worship Ensemble Rehearsal – 5:30 PM Wednesday

Good News Singers Rehearsal – 6:00 PM, 4th Wednesday

Chancel Handbells – 6:45 PM, Wednesday

Fellowship:

Fitness Classes – Monday/Wednesday at 8:45 AM,

Young at Heart – Noon, 2nd Thursday

Theology on Tap – 6:30 PM, 2nd Thursday

## Pastor’s Ponderings

As I begin to write this article, I am still wishing for some good snow this year and my hopes for the Eagles to repeat as Super Bowl champions have come to an end. As the big game is played, we get to participate by donating cans of soup through our Souper Bowl collection. The collected soups will go to one of our local food pantries, so please gather a few cans of soup and vote for your team (St. Louis Rams or New England Patriots) on Sunday January 27 and Sunday February 3.

As we help keep families full with a nice bowl of soup, I wanted to let you all know of a couple of goals that I have set for myself and the church. The first goal is to become more visible in the community. One way we are doing that is by changing where we meet as a group of Christians looking to further our learning in Christ through fellowship. Our newest venture, Theology on Tap, is continuing with new places to gather and new topics. I asked for feedback from our last gathering and will use this to tweak how February’s time will take shape. We are going to gather at 6:30 instead of 7:00 in February to see how the earlier time change affects our gathering. The topic for February 21st will be shared soon! (I’m still working on some ideas!)

I am also looking forward to some time away with my family at the end of February through the first week in March. We will have a supply preacher to cover for the Sunday, March 3rd.

As this month’s article wraps up, I hope that all of you have found some time to add a spiritual practice to your lives. Whether it is adding in something new or adapting your prayer life, I encourage everyone to think about the upcoming Lenten season where we will all look closer at this very important piece of our Christian lives.

In the meantime, please check out Kim’s articles regarding this topic in our newsletters to give yourself ideas or jumpstart your spiritual practices!

Sincerely,

*Rev. Mark Stryjak*

## Young at Heart

All 65 attendees who came for the luncheon at Brownback’s U.C.C. on January 10 were greeted with a wish for a good and healthy 2019. Snowmen graced the tables and reminded us that winter is here and will soon show us its seasonal side… cold, ice, and snow.

After the opening by Nancy Peiffer and Grace said by Pastor Mark Stryjak, everyone flowed to the serving tables for vegetable and meat lasagna with sides and desserts.

Nancy introduced Rexine Krause, an educator and oral historian, who presented the program “Christmas Folklore, Fact or Fiction”. We heard many old, favorite stories and some new ones, all related to the Christmas season from Biblical Times to the present. All stories were interesting but not all were based on facts – it was left up to the listener to decide.

The door prize of a $5 gift card from Wawa was awarded to Maggie Shick for having the winning number.

Nancy announced that on **February 14** at Noon, Carol Spacht will present the program “Martha Washington” about the United States’ First Lady. We’ll hear answers to questions about how she created her role as wife of our first President, and did she really serve ice cream to her guests at Mount Vernon? We’ll get to know the real Martha Washington. Come, join us for an interesting program

 *--Pat Diener*

## Men’s Breakfast

The men of the church are invited to breakfast at The Ridge Restaurant on **February 11** at 8:30 AM.

Breakfast is BYOB – Bring Your Own Bible. We will discuss Luke 6:17-26.

## Daily Walk With God

### 4. Grounded

Have you been struggling with your prayer practices? Have you forgotten about your prayer time or have had a hard time hearing God speak to you? Have you felt yourself drifting to other thoughts, to do lists and busyness of the season? **That is okay.** Attending to our spiritual life is not always easy, there are times when we feel very connected to God and times when it’s hard to hear or notice God with us. An author we read about in our class described our spiritual lives like seasons. There are moments like spring, bursting with awakening of our spirits and then moments of winter where praying hurts or it is hard to focus.[[1]](#footnote-1) These highs and lows are part of our spiritual journeys so don’t be discouraged because even in winter growth takes place underground in quiet, unnoticeable ways.[[2]](#footnote-2) So continue to stick with it, because as we said in the beginning it is the intention that is important.

So as we move into our next prayer practice, this month we are going to pray with an object. It is my hope that this object might help you if you are in a season of winter in your spiritual journey, or just might help enhance your prayer time. You can choose any object you would like; I would suggest it be smaller in size so that you can hold it in your hand. Some examples are a stone, cross, beads, maybe even sand in a container you can run through your figures. It can be anything that will serve as a reminder, anchor, and tactile-learner tool to help us arrive and remain in a prayerful state—an outer manifestation of inner spiritual life.[[3]](#footnote-3) Bring this object to your prayer time. As you get comfortable in the space, hold your object in your hand as a concrete reminder to your intentions to be with God. Begin to examine why you choose this object, how God speaks to you through your object. Does its texture remind you of God’s grace, does its weight remind you of God’s presence? Let this object ground you in your prayer and help you to notice God present with you in your prayer time.

As you move through the month, continue to bring this object with you to your prayer time as a connection with God. Let yourself rest into the presence of God without expectations and with a willingness to be surprised by God. Reflect on how this object connects you to God. Pray for all those who sit in silence in this very moment in a variety of meditation and prayer practices around the world. Pray for those who can’t find silence in their world or hearts. Allow yourself to open up and go deeper in your prayer time for wisdom far greater than your own.

Blessings,

Chaplain Rev. Kimberly Stryjak

## Theology on Tap

Theology on Tap provides an opportunity for members and friends to gather together in a relaxed setting to enjoy a presentation or group discussion, learn more about their faith, and to engage in meaningful conversation. Theology on Tap is typically held on the second Monday of every month at various establishments in the area. However, this month due to Valentine’s Day, Theology on Tap will be delayed one week to **February 21** at 6:30 PM at Spring Hollow Golf Club.

There is no cost to attend or to register! Participants are welcome to purchase food and beverage from the menu. Contact Pastor Mark if you have questions.



## Souper Bowl Sunday

****Join us on **February 3** for a “Souper” Bowl Sunday. Bring in a can of soup (or two or three) to cast your vote for the team that you want to win the Super Bowl – Los Angeles Rams or New England Patriots. This will be our 17th Annual Souper Bowl tailgate after church. We will have some of the hottest wings on the east coast, pretzels and drinks.

## Visioning Process Update

The Vision Team reports that meetings with each of the church’s committees is complete. The Team will be meeting with the Consistory to gather additional feedback about actionable ways to implement the goals identified and described in the all-church surveys. Thanks to everyone who attended the meetings and took part in the discussions.

Contact any of the Vision Team members – Pastor Mark, Lara Faust, Kaitlin Iezzi, Greg Siwik, and Mark Sweitzer – with any input you have for implementing our church goals.

## Fat Tuesday Pancake Dinner

We will celebrate Easter near the end of April this year. The Lenten season begins 40 days earlier on Ash Wednesday, March 6.

It was traditional in many societies to eat pancakes or other foods made with the butter, eggs, and fat that would be given up during the Lenten season. Similar foods are fasnachts and pączkis. The specific custom of British Christians eating pancakes on Shrove Tuesday (or Fat Tuesday) dates to the 16th century.

We at Brownback’s will join together on Tuesday, **March 5** at 6:00 PM to enjoy our annual Fat Tuesday Pancake Dinner.

## Cemetery Reminder

A friendly reminder from our Cemetery Board… No trees (potted or planted), monuments, flowers, shrubbery, or plants of any type may be planted or erected on graves or lots anywhere in the cemetery. No corner stones, iron railings, or enclosures of any type may be put about a lot or grave.

All Christmas and winter decorations will be removed from the gravestones starting **March 15th**.

## News & Views Deadline

The deadline for the March issue of the
*News & Views* newsletter is **February 21**. To include information in the newsletter, you can leave information in the News & Views mailbox in the church lobby or email information to Penny Sallade at pennysallade@yahoo.com.

## Flower Chart

The Flower Chart for 2019 is now available on the bulletin board in the lobby near the Sign-Up Center. Please consider sponsoring the purchase of flowers to decorate our sanctuary during Worship. Flowers cost $40 per week, with checks payable to “Brownback’s UCC”. Sign up for a week now! Spots fill quickly.

## Paper and Plastic Grocery Bags

The Spring City Food Pantry is in critical need of paper and plastic grocery bags (particularly paper bags). Please consider donating your used bags at church to be delivered to the pantry. Boxes are labeled and located under the table at the back of Fellowship Hall.

## Prayer Concerns

“And whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith.” –Matthew 21:22

For those who serve:

* Reed Bauer, West Point, The United States Military Academy
* Derrick Boaman, Army Reserves
* Nathaniel Cherubini, Chief Warrant Officer 3.,
United States Marine Corp. Nephew of Rick and Jeanette Francesco
* Brock Fasnacht, nephew of Doug and Sue Kandler, Army National Guard
* Paige Juliette Freeman, Trooper First Class, Delaware State Police
* Andrea Shade, second year cadet at West Point Military Academy
* Thomas Shade, 1st Lt in the 130th Engineers Brigade based in Hawaii

**Members**: Mike Behe, Kris Houck, Joe Kandler, Sr., Bob Keeley, Sr., Michelle Kullen, Marie Painter.

**Friends of Brownback’s**: Chris Clark, Eli Hallock, Fred Robinson, Leroy Sadler.

## February Birthdays

We rejoice with those of our church family who celebrate birthdays in February.

2/2 Cameron Miller

2/3 Dina Copenhaver
Randal Ruilova

2/4 Kyle Gdowik
Taggart Houck
Ella Matusheski
Patrick Nelson

2/5 Lorey Wiand

2/6 Derrick Boaman, Jr.
Dan Shade

2/7 Kelsey Timmins

2/15 Jody Kull

2/16 Janet Garges
Amy Matusheski

2/17 Assunta Schmoyer
Mark Sweitzer

2/18 Scott Wysocki

2/19 Daniel Garges
Danielle Hewitt

2/20 Landon Ford

2/21 Brittany Kolb

2/25 Joe Kandler, Sr.

## February Anniversaries

We congratulate the following in our church family who are celebrating wedding anniversaries in February.

2/18 Bob and Denise Maciora

## Our Church Leaders

Rev. Mark Stryak, Pastor and Teacher

Barry Vining, President

Linda Raifsnider, Vice President

Amy Stone, Secretary

Anne Behe, Financial Secretary

Holly Vining, Current Treasurer

Kaitlin Iezzi, Benevolence Treasurer

Calvin Idler, Major Improvements Treasurer

#### Elders

2019 Pat Diener Linda Raifsnider

2020 Earl Brungess Barry Vining

2021 Randall Ruilova Mark Sweitzer

#### Deacons

2019 Amy Stone Judy White

2020 Derrick Boaman Kaitlin Iezzi

2021 Calvin Idler Anne Behe

#### Cemetery Board

2019 Calvin Idler Bob Jacob

2020 Rick Francesco

2021 Brian Iezzi Greg Siwik

#### Endowment Board

2019 Rich Bauer John Stone

2020 Mike Houck

2021 Bob Keeley Barry Vining

#### Our Church Staff

Kris Houck, Parish Administrator

Penny Sallade, Choir Director

Patricia Kandler, Organist

Larry Simmers, Sexton

Kaitlin Iezzi, Christian Education Chair

Greg Siwik, Cemetery Superintendent

Brownback United Church of Christ

640 Ridge Road

Spring City, Pennsylvania 19475

Address Service Requested

1. Renita J. Weems, *Listening for God: A Ministers Journey through Silence and Doubt* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1999), 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid., 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Mary McCarthy, "Use Prayer Objects to Boost Your Prayer Life," Cokesbury Commons, September 30, 2016, 1, accessed May 24, 2018, https://cokesburycommons.com/2016/08/01/use-prayer-objects-to-boost-your-prayer-life/. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)