

# The Pipe Line

Beckley Presbyterian Church  
203 S Kanawha Street  
Beckley, WV 25801  
304-252-6289

Email: [office@beckleypres.org](mailto:office@beckleypres.org)  
Website: [beckleypres.org](http://beckleypres.org)  
[www.facebook.com/  
BPC.PCUSA.WV](http://www.facebook.com/BPC.PCUSA.WV)



September 29, 2021

## FROM THE PASTOR

When I was five-years-old, my mother took me by the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam. We didn't go in – we were passing through on our way to somewhere - but I remember her telling me a little about why this was an important place. Mom didn't tell the five-year-old me about six million dead. I learned all that later. But I still carry that heartfelt feeling of a child about how important Anne Frank was. I think part of the appeal Anne Frank has had to millions of people across the decades is that she became a face and a plight that even a child could recognize. It is almost incomprehensible that people could systematically kill six million Jews. In seeing the face of a child who we get to know through her writing, our brains and emotions are saddened and sickened at what happened to her, but we are not overwhelmed. We can see her as a person. We can think about how things might have been different. We can imagine ourselves in the role of someone who might have helped her.

As we watched television images of people fleeing Afghanistan, there were children among the more than 123,000 refugees. But I don't know of a face or a story I can grasp. Did you watch the U.S. military evacuation planes taking off from Kabul as crowds surged around them or the images of hundreds of people crammed into a cargo plane? Did you wonder: what happens now? What if you were forced to flee your home with the clothes on your back because you were going to be killed if you stayed? What would you do once the plane landed in another country? What would you do that night? How would your child get supper that evening? What would you do the next day?

About 64,000 Afghan refugees have already arrived in the United States, and the vast majority are staying for now at seven military bases across the country. Some of them served alongside U.S. forces at some point during 20 years of war, or they assisted the Americans in some way. They're in the process now of clearing rigorous security screenings before they'll be allowed to resettle in the U.S.

Sometimes lost in the conversation is that some 5.9 million Afghans have fled their homes since the war started in 2001.

It all seems overwhelming.

In a Virginia community near Fort Pickett army base, one of the staging areas for the refugees, there is a hard knot of people who don't want the foreigners around them. There are unfounded rumors of criminality and violence. But there are many more folks who are volunteering to help.

The folks at Massanetta Springs Conference Center, a Presbyterian camp and conference center in Harrisonburg, Va., are working in partnership with Church World Service (CWS) to help Afghan refugees make the transition from the military bases to their new lives in America. A grant from CWS is helping cover the expenses related to lodging. But the refugees also need food.

The Session of Beckley Presbyterian Church voted this week to send \$10,000 to help pay for meals for the Afghan resettlement efforts at Massanetta Springs. The money is coming from a church savings account. The Session is also challenging people to match that amount dollar for dollar in new donations by Christmas, so that Beckley Presbyterian Church can send \$20,000 to help the refugees.

I wish I had a picture or a diary of a little child who is among those refugees. It would help personalize the appeal of raising money for a cause that can seem overwhelming. But I don't know exactly who those people are yet. I don't know the details of their stories.

But I know an image I carry of a little child born in Bethlehem, who fled with his parents as a refugee to Egypt because King Herod was going to kill him. And I know his story. I know how he grew to be an adult, and told a crowd, "I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink: I was a stranger and you welcomed me." Perhaps in time we can learn the faces and stories of those people we are helping. For now, we see the face of Jesus and remember how he said, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me."

God bless you!  
Monte



To donate to the church's Afghan refugee resettlement efforts, please make your check payable to Beckley Presbyterian Church, and indicate "Afghan refugees" in the memo line. We want to raise \$10,000 by Christmas. The church will gather the donations, and send one check to the expenses related to Massanetta Springs' partnership with Church World Service. For more information about the effort, please visit the website of Church World Service at <https://cwsglobal.org/> or Massanetta Springs Camp and Conference Center at <https://massanettasprings.org/>



## MEMORIAL GIFT FUND

We are grateful for the following Memorial Gifts

- In Memory of Pamella Keyser: by Ms. Nancy Estep
- In Memory of William Hartling: by Ms. Nancy Estep, Ms. Susan Shaffer
- In Memory of Johnny Walker: by Ms. Nancy Estep
- In Memory of Albert "Mac" Tieche: by Ms. Nancy Estep
- In Memory of Barbara Gardner: by Mr. James Songer, Ms. Harriet Jones, Mr. & Mrs. John File, Ms. Ann Harkins, Ms. Nancy Estep, Mr. & Mrs. Joel Wagoner, Mr. & Mrs. David Abrams

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As we celebrate World Communion Sunday this weekend, on Sunday, October 3, we'll gather the special Peace and Global Witness Offering. This is one of four annual PC (USA) special offerings, and this one encourages peacemaking efforts locally and globally. Half the money goes to the Presbyterian Mission Agency. Twenty-five percent goes to the regional mid-council. Twenty-five percent stays local, and the Session has voted to give those proceeds to the Women's Resource Center. The WRC, with offices in Beckley, Fayetteville, Hinton and Summersville, provides services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, dating violence and human trafficking. Support and services are available 24 hours a day by calling the WRC hotline at 304-255-2559.



### PER CAPITA

In 2021, our Presbytery of WV Per Capita rate is \$30.00 per active, confirmed member. This is a set amount of money per member that Presbyterians pay to share the costs associated with operating, coordinating and ecclesiastical functions of our General Assembly, Presbyteries, and Synods.

While the cost for each of us individually is minimal, the total impact on the church budget is substantial. If you feel you can assist with the expenses for the current year, please make your checks payable to Beckley Presbyterian Church, with the notation, "Per Capita," on the memo line. Contributions can be received at any time during the year.

Your Contributions are greatly appreciated



## OCTOBER

- |                        |                   |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| 01 Helen Trader        | 12 Jessica Aubrey |
| 02 Jacob Morris        | 12 Jeff Harris    |
| 04 Mikaela Otte        | 13 Bill Bailey    |
| 06 Todd Scott          | 16 Helen Walker   |
| 08 Clyde A. Smith, Jr. | 25 Sam Yurick     |
| 08 Al Combs            | 28 Nancy Tieche   |

## LECTIONARY READINGS

### October 3

*World Communion Sunday*  
Job 1:1; 2:1-10 and Ps. 26;  
Gen. 2:18-24 and Ps. 8;  
Heb. 1:1-4; 2:5-12;  
Mark 10:2-16

and Ps. 91:9-16;  
Heb. 5:1-10; 2:5-12;  
Mark 10:35-45

### October 10

Job 23:1-9, 16-17 and Ps.  
22:1-15; Amos 5:6-7,  
10-15 and Ps. 90:12-17;  
Heb. 4:12-16; 2:5-12;  
Mark 10:17-31

**October 24**  
Job 42:1-6, 10-17 and Ps.  
34:1-8 (19-22); Jer. 31:7-9  
and Ps. 126; Heb. 7:23-28;  
Mark 10:46-52

### October 17

Job 38:1-7(34-41), 16-17  
and Ps. 104:1-9, 24, 35c;  
Isa. 53:4-12

**October 31**  
*Reformation Sunday*  
Ruth 1:1-18 and Ps. 146;  
Deut. 6:1-9 and  
Ps. 119:1-8; Heb. 9:11-14;  
Mark 12:28-34

## NURTURING FAITH IDEAS

**October 3** – Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost/Proper 22: Read Mark 10:2-16 Jesus told the disciples that whoever does not receive the kingdom as a little child will never enter it. We must disregard our goals of fame and fortune and turn to God as powerless children. How do you need to change your thinking to make this happen?

**October 10** – Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost/Proper 23: Read Mark 10:17-31 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God. Wealth and honor will not get you into the kingdom. How do you prioritize your need for wealth and your desire to enter the kingdom of God?

**October 17** – Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost/Proper 24: Read Job 38:1-7 Job has suffered greatly, and his friends give advice. Elihu puts Job in his place, so to speak, declaring his unworthiness to question God. God's response is a



rebuke to Elihu and friends who speak without knowledge. Job, in his anguish, yells at God; do you ever do the same? How does God respond?

**October 24** – Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost/Proper 25: Read Mark 10:46-52 Jesus heals Bartimaeus' eyesight because of the faith with which he shouted out to Jesus, and he becomes a follower of Jesus. Bartimaeus did not fear the rebukes of the disciples but continued to call out in faith. How can you and your family work to strengthen your faith, considering your trials and suffering, so you call upon Jesus for help?

**October 31** – Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost/Proper 26: Read Mark 12:25-34 Although Jesus is often critical of scribes, this one agrees with the most important commandments necessary to be a follower: Love God and your neighbor. How do you live out these commandments in your everyday life?