



Agape Herald

The Newsletter of the Presbytery of Huntingdon
Mission: Loved by Jesus Christ, called to love others.
www.huntingdon.org

February 2005

General Presbyter :
Joy Kaufmann
gnrlpres@atlanticbbn.net

Treasurer:
Liz Armstrong
treasurer1@atlanticbbn.net

Mission Treasurer:
Joann Kimmel
hsk235@innernet.net

Stated Clerk:
Virginia Rainey
statedclerk@atlanticbbn.net

Pastoral Care Consultant
Lynn Illingworth
814-234-2415

Resource Center Coordinator
Marie Carlson
admina@atlanticbbn.net

Presbytery Office
Phone: 814-742-2200
Fax : 814-742-2214

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TIME TO STRENGTHEN OUR CHURCHES

Submitted by Joy Kaufmann, General Presbyter
"The folly of God is wiser than human wisdom,
and the weakness of God is stronger than human
strength. My friends, think
what sort of people you
are, whom God has
called." 1 Cor. 1:25-26a

You've heard the lament before. I've heard it over and over again round and about our presbytery. It goes like this, "We used to have (insert areas of grief here - 'young families', 'children', 'more people'), but now we don't and we don't know what to do about it." And yet I've also heard stories of profound faithfulness. Ministry within the congregations carried out by tenacious Christians - the perseverance of the saints - and mission extended even when resources are slim.

Yes, there are cultural factors involved in the decline of the mainline churches. Our people are eager to name those as well. Everything from "we are too lax" to "we are too rigid", "all the young people have left" and "all the young people in this town have to work on Sundays." Welcome to the 21st century in Central Pennsylvania. Chuck Dennison of our General Assembly staff tells us that as a denomination our Board of Home Mission actually voted itself out of existence in 1973 declaring that the United States of America had been fully evangelized and we didn't need to evangelize anymore. This was just as half the Baby Boomers confirmed in our churches were about to sashay *continued on page 2*



UPCOMING CONFERENCES

"A Pastors' Sabbath", shaped by Mark 6:30-32, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while." is coming. May 27th - May 31, this event is just for pastors serving congregations and their spouses. Worship will begin each day with preachers such as Barbara Brown Taylor, James Forbes and Tony Campolo. The retreat will be held at the Snowbird Resort in the majestic Wasatch Mountains just outside Salt Lake City, UT. There will be small church scholarships available. For more information, please call Joy at the presbytery office.

"Stewardship: Theology Meets Practicality (Reality or Fantasy)" - April 13 - 15, 2005 at the Double Tree Hotel in Austin, TX. Topics include "Generosity: Feeding the 5000", "Smaller Church Doing Stewardship", and "Discipline in an Age of Consumption" For more information, call Sandra Townsend at 888-728-7228 X 5676.

"Tending the Flame: Women Called to Lead" celebrates the various anniversaries of women's ordinations: as deacons in 1906, as elders in 1930 and to Word and Sacrament in 1956. Celebrations will be held in Atlanta, GA March 9 - 11, 2005 - please call Ruth Hicks at 404-898-0711 for information - in Princeton, NJ March 31 - April 3 - please call Janet Macgregor-Williams at 973-728-3081 and in San Francisco, CA October 6 - 8, 2005 - please contact Sarah Reyes at sarah@bethelcpc.org.

Time to Strengthen

continued

out the back doors of our churches, never to return.

But God is still good, and God has still given us everything we need to be the church. It is just that we need to wake from our slumber. To help us do just that, to give us practical skills that mainline Christians can use in evangelization with integrity, your presbytery will offer you a special training session.

Please mark this on your calendars now: Friday, October 14 beginning at 6:30 pm through Saturday, October 15 ending at 4:00 pm, Andrew Weeks of *The Magnetic Church* will offer a conference for all of us.

Andy is an Episcopal layman, originally from Canada but now hailing from the USA, who has felt called by God to leave a successful business career and become a teacher of evangelism. He truly wants us to learn how to communicate the distinct theological strengths, histories and insights we have as Presbyterian Christians here in the midstate. We know the training event will be in State College as Andy likes to use a real church building for a practicum, a walk-through with critique and suggestions as to how the church might become more welcoming.

As Andy says, "...rejoining the church in Rhode Island was both wonder-filled and frustrating....when I began to search for a new church community, I was astonished at the obstacles I encountered. I was hurt personally and amazed professionally by how totally unresponsive many churches were. I was appalled by their apparent attitude that it was 'all up to the visitor to figure things out' - and 'if visitors were really interested, they would figure it out.'" - ...continued

Krislund Korner: I'm Dreaming of a White 2005" Edition

Don't Miss the 2005 EARLYBIRD DISCOUNT....It's Feb. 28!!!

Fifteen dollars will buy a lot of pizza or make a lot of difference in the mission giving at your church. Postmark your summer camp application no later than February 28th and use the money you will save for other things. Another benefit this year is the reduction of the registration deposit from \$75 to \$50. Do not let finances keep your child from attending Krislund this summer. Talk with your church or give us a call to discuss scholarship opportunities or to order additional brochures (814.422.8878) or e-mail info@krislund.org.

OOPS: "Sports Sampler" Grades Clarified

A very alert mother discovered a summer brochure mistake regarding different grade listings for the summer Sports Sampler camps. Please note: the July 24-30 camp is for 3rd-5th graders, and the August 7-13 camp is for 3rd-5th graders. Grades were incorrect on the "Summer Schedule 2005" page in the brochure. For more information and an application contact the camp office or e-mail us at info@krislund.org.

Love God? Love Children? Love Ministry?

If you do, now is the time to contact Krislund and ask for '05 staff application packet. Counselors, lifeguard, and adventure team positions are available. Persons for most positions must be high school graduates. New this year are Counselor in Training positions for sophomores, juniors, and seniors in high school. For more information, contact the office at info@krislund.org.

One Youth Retreat Not Enough / Two This Spring

Jr. High Retreat will be held April 1-3 and the Sr. High Retreat will be one month later, May 6-8. Mark your calendars for an excellent weekend of fun, friends, and faith-stretching activities and talks. Brochures will be arriving at your church later this month.

Nite for Valentines, Feb. 12: It's Not Too Late To Register

Call now for a great Valentine's special time (814) 422-8878) **or check the website: www.krislund.org**

Those negative experiences sensitized Andy to the plight of new comers, and he adapted for churches the successful processes used by some of the world's most successful business. (Joy's note: No, I don't think the church should model itself after businesses. On the other hand, Andy has learned a lot from his business experience and wants to share it with us.) Andy now travels all over North America sharing how to reach out for Jesus' sake and how to do so effectively.

Do keep the October dates free for this event. Your presbytery Council believes it will be worthwhile and empowering for you and your congregation. If you receive the "Agape Herald", and others in your congregation do not, please share this article with them. And ask your session to send an entire delegation. Thus we can begin to better show God's wisdom in choosing us to be the church. See you at *The Magnetic Church* event.

Rev. Kaufmann may be reached at 814-742-2200

BOOK NOOK

Submitted by Joy Kaurmann

The Origins of Christian Morality: the First Two Centuries, by Wayne A. Meeks, explores the cultural distinctiveness of early Christian community.

The earliest Christians set themselves apart as a separate "people", an "ethnos" like the Babylonians or Egyptians or Jews, but set apart because they followed Jesus Christ. Their community norms formed them in ways sometimes like their neighbors and sometimes quite distinctively different from them. Meeks sensitively explores the tension between loving and hating the world, humility based in the cross, baptism and behavior, eucharist and group integration, how habit makes character, discerning God's will and the role of sin in early Christian thinking.

If you are looking for an early Christian "do this, don't do that list", this book will disappoint. But if you want an intelligent and clarifying reflection on the roots of Christian moral practice and ethical thinking as we know it, this book will intrigue you. *Rev. Kaufmann may be reached at: gnrlpres@atlanticbbn.net*

Clergy Profile

*Submitted by Dave Benfer, Pastor
Petersburg Bethel Church*

I have been asked to assume the responsibility of doing the Clergy Profile section of the *Agape Herald*. January caught me off-guard. Thus, I thought it would be appropriate to express my thoughts in regard to what I wish to accomplish with the Clergy Profile section.

Because of geographical distances we do not get to fellowship with one another very often, except on a limited basis at Presbytery and special meetings. Some areas have cluster groups which enables a more intimate fellowship and that is to be commended.

Knowing that ministry is tough, I desire to use the Clergy Profile to encourage each other's hearts. I appreciate Lee McCardle's vision in starting this column with that purpose in mind as well. I'm sure that you, like myself, have wanted to throw in the towel more than once. What kept you from doing so? Was it God's call? Therefore, I would like to challenge you to share how you have experienced God's call and share some encouraging words to assist your colleagues in ministry to "keep going, and going, and going" ... even when the batteries run low.

I believe this would also be an encouragement to each of our readers and our Lay Pastors.

I'm looking forward to your sharing. I'll be in touch.

Allow me to also say thank you for your prayers. I restarted my chemotherapy treatments in August of 2004 and after fifteen treatments my liver function is back to normal. I did lose my hair this time (it is coming back) and discovered the whole new world of 'do-rags' – they really do work! After Christmas my treatments were reduced to once every two weeks. PTL! We anticipate a CAT scan in April and that will determine the next step. It is and has been quite a journey but God has been faithful and I give Him all the glory!

*Rev. Benfer may be reached at
dbenfer@uplink.net*

Join other Presbyterians for a Fun Cruise

The Broad Avenue Church is planning a cruise to Bermuda. The ship, the *Norwegian Crown*, will sail from Philadelphia on Sunday, October 2, and return to that port on the following Sunday, October 9. The congregation is hoping to have a lot of Presbyterians sailing together on the Norwegian Line, leaving from Philadelphia.

For the church, the cruise is a fund raiser to help to defray the costs of a number of necessary improvements to the building and also assist in financing the church van.

For more information call Shirley Long at 814-941-4855 or the church office, 814-943-8459.

Officer Training Videos available at Media Center

254Pre "So, You've been Elected a Deacon" by the Presbyterian Church (USA) 44 min & includes study guide

254Edu "So, You've been Elected an Elder" by the Presbyterian Church (USA) 56 min & includes study guide

254Rog Jack Roger's Classes: Elder/Deacon Training by the Presbyterian Church (USA) 44 min

*Call Marie Carlson at 814-742-2200
or email at admin@atlanticbbn.net*

Presbytery Calendar

Feb. 1	1:30 Administrative Umbrella Team at Presbytery Office
Feb. 3	Noon 717 Clergy Cluster at McVeytown Church
Feb. 5	9:30am-3:00pm Presbytery meeting at State College Church
Feb. 7	10:00 am Leadership Umbrella Team at Huntingdon Church
Feb. 8	2 pm Forward planning meeting at Krislund 4 pm Financial Committee at Krislund 5:30 pm Joint Camp & Conference Comm. at Krislund
Feb. 12	Couples Valentines at Krislund
Feb. 13	2:30 pm Paula Curtis-Burn's Installation at Hublersburg United Church of Christ
Feb. 16	9:30am Staff meeting Presbytery Office
Feb. 17	Noon NW Clergy Cluster at Osceola Mills
Feb. 18-19	Annual Committee On Ministry Retreat at Krislund
Feb. 20	5 pm Ecumenical Service, Simpson Temple in Altoona
Feb. 21	Office Closed for Presidents' Day
Feb. 23-25	EP Forum and Synod Meeting
March 1	9:30am Personnel Committee at Presbytery Office 1:30pm Administrative Umbrella Team at Presbytery Office
March 3	4-7pm Discipleship Umbrella Team at Pine Grove Mills Church
March 5	9am Lay Pastor training at Tyrone Church
March 8	4pm Financial Committee at Krislund 5:30 pm Joint Camp & Conference Comm. at Krislund
March 10	1pm Committee On Ministry at Presbytery Office
March 15	1pm Council Meeting at Presbytery Office
March 23	9:30 Quarterly staff meeting at Presbytery Office
March 25	Presbytery Office Closed for Good Friday

Spiritual Healing

Submitted by Lynn Illingworth

Having Lymes Disease can be a miserable and painful experience. The symptoms are erratic. They move throughout the body with neck pain, facial numbness, tingling and swelling in the hands, flu like symptoms that come and go, leg pain, back pain and many odd sensations. It is an extremely difficult disease to diagnose because tests are often inconclusive.

Our daughter, who lives in Kinderhook, NY, has finally been diagnosed with Lymes Disease after many months of pain and suffering. Lymes Disease is endemic in this area of New York. It is named after the town of Lyme, CT. Treatment requires a strict diet, along with certain antibiotics. It requires a long healing process. Along with medical treatment, there is a need for spiritual healing as well. For my daughter, it began the Wednesday after Christmas when she wanted us to take her to her Presbyterian church, (She is a Presbyterian minister) for a service of laying on of Hands and the anointing of oil.

The minister, members of the congregation, my wife and I participated. It was a moving service of healing. It mobilized spiritual therapy. It united us with God in Christ who is the Great Physician. It awakened and brought out the grandeur of how the love of God can be expressed and vitalized through not only God, but loved ones who want to share their love in the process.

It is amazing how members of the Spencerville Presbyterian Church have responded. I feel that in our ministry it has become a lost or forgotten sacrament that needs to be recovered. For like our two sacraments, it helps to share our inner, intimate healing powers that we possess and a deeper vision of God in Christ for our lives.

*Rev. Illingworth may be reached at
814-234-2415*

Agape Herald is published monthly by the Presbytery of Huntingdon. It is the responsibility of the Communications Sub-committee of the Administrative Umbrella Team. **Editorial and Production Team**

Linda Vance, (lindaleevance@aol.com) 814-632-3804
 Spence Hauenstein (spencerw@atlanticbb.net) 814-742-8207
 Jim Davis-Petersburg (jimandbarbara621@aol.com) 814-669-4519
 Peggy Kendall (pkendall@penn.com) 814-238-7875
 Bill Conway (4conways@adelphia.net) 814-342-5930
 Jake Wagner (jacobew@acsworld.com) 814-717-543-5726
 Sara Guy (sguy@penswoods.net) 814-236-2658
 Nancy Kraybill) 814-944-3141
 Janet Brallier (presby12@penswoods.net) 814-652-2925
 Jane Illingworth (jti14@innernet.net) 814-259-3136
 Bob Himes (blkpatch@acsworld.com) 717-667-9673
 Chuck Hayes (chayes@clearnet.net) 814-378-8162
 Alice Meloy (ammrem75@innernet.net) 717-349-2685
 Mary Frances Jaymes (mfjaymes@yahoo.com) 814-259-3256
 Jean Haynes, (jeaness@earthlink.net) 814-387-6753
 Submission deadline is the 3rd Monday each month for the following month's publication.

It's That Time...

....continued from page 5
Only upon receipt of the Mission Pledge Forms from our churches can Presbytery know how much it has to allocate to the various mission and program projects. So, if your congregation has not already returned its Mission Pledge Form, please do so now. If your Mission Pledge Form has already been returned, thank you! Particulars on how to submit the funds pledged will be detailed in the next issue of the Agape Herald.

*Elder Kimmel may be reached
at: hsk235@innernet.net*

ANNUAL ECUMENICAL SERVICE

Sunday, February 20 at 3:00 pm
at the Simpson Temple Church
2212 6th Street, Altoona, PA

jointly sponsored by the members of the
Ecumenical Religious Leaders' Group

A SERVICE OF WORSHIP
for Protestants, Orthodox and Roman Catholics

preacher: **The Rev. K. Joy Kaufmann,**
Presbyterian (USA), Huntingdon Presbytery
liturgy planned by: **Bishop Gregory Pile,**
Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, Allegheny Synod
Bishop Joseph Adamec,
Roman Catholic, Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown

ALL ARE WELCOME!



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Presbytery of Huntingdon
323 Main Street Box 99
Bellwood PA 16617

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News in the Making....

submitted by Jim Steiner, Director of Development

Your Presbyterian Homes Management Team, based in Hollidaysburg, has come out of the '05 gate at a gallop.

As you may be aware, our "official" affiliation with PHI takes effect April 1, so we have a lot of "transitioning" to do! All departments have been sharing information and setting up procedures for a seamless coalition that, other than the flipping of a calendar page, you may not even notice!

Thusfar, the PHI folks have been great to work with and we look forward to an even stronger organization once PHPH and our five facilities join forces with PHI and their 14, soon to be under the same umbrella.

And...FYI, PDQ, RE: PHPH and PHI(!): All fundraising and donations made for our residents and facilities will remain under our management through the PHPH Foundation, just as before. Local dollars staying local.

But, in the meantime...lots of new projects are in the works and some, like the upcoming John P. Martin Society program, are being tweaked to, hopefully, become even more effective for the long run. We'll be asking for your help with some of the new things, and with others you can just sit back and enjoy!

Like what, Jim? Okay...like our new "Road Rally" that's being planned to include all PHPH facilities by organizing kind of a "mystery" tour for primarily antique and classic car clubs, motorcycle groups, and just about anyone who would enjoy a roundabout Saturday drive, touching down at each of our facilities. At the end of the day we'll all meet at one location, likely in Altoona, for a car show, music, prizes, and some great food! Details later.

Also, from top-secret PH think-tank in Philipsburg, comes a black-tie dinner affair to celebrate the historic significance of the Presbyterian Home of Moshannon Heights, formerly known as the Philips Hotel. Envision this: a dressy affair, a great classic meal, dancing and reminiscing with the "Big Band" sound in the Ballroom...all in the spirit of 1921. We'll get back to you on this one, too!

Of course, there will be the Dysart Society Luncheon, the Golf Outing, the Benevolent Care Dinner, and the presentation of the Meritorious Service Award.

One other little project is what we are currently calling our "Memorial Collage", a collection of photos featuring the many people in whose memory a donation has been made. We definitely need your help in locating pictures so that we can preserve the memories of our dear friends who were with us for such a short time. Have you made a memorial donation to the Homes, or plan to? Please see that we get a photo of the person(s) you felt should be honored and we'll make it a permanent part of our portable display. We suggest you select a photo that somehow shows the personality or the interests of that person.

...and don't forget all those Auxiliary projects. They get to share in the fun too! Look for a few more surprises along the way as 2005 presents new challenges and we're even creating a few of our own.

...hope to see you at the next event !!

Jim Steiner may be reached at 800-242-4037 ext. 305 or jsteiner@presbyhome.com

IT'S THAT TIME

Submitted by Harold Kimmel

When you see this, the holidays will be over and 2005 will have begun. With the coming of the New Year, Huntingdon Presbytery needs your interest, prayers and financial support to undergird our mission and program projects.

In order to do this, it is essential for the Presbytery to have an estimate of how much money it will receive for mission and program support. The instrument that lets Presbytery know this is the annual Mission Pledge Form.

The Mission Pledge Form for your congregation was mailed to your clerk of session and each pastor in November. Along with the Mission Pledge Form was a cover letter giving a sense of why we have and do mission. There is instruction for submitting the Form and a listing of Huntingdon Presbytery supported mission and program projects.

Your church pledge may be made as Unified Giving, in which case 55% will go towards Presbytery supported missions, 38% toward General Assembly supported missions and 7% toward Synod supported missions. However, if you do not wish to do Unified Giving you may select specific mission projects and identify an amount of money you will pledge for the selected mission project. There are also Special Opportunity mission projects such as Presbyterian Homes, Krislund Camp and Conference Center and Pakh 5 Nan Special Projects. Presbytery asks each church to make a pledge for Presbytery Mission and Program.

After the Session identifies the pledge amount it is essential that the Clerk of Session returns your congregation's Mission Pledge Form to the Presbytery Office as soon as possible.

Continued on page 6