



# Agape Herald

The Newsletter of the Presbytery of Huntingdon

Mission: Loved by Jesus Christ, called to love all others

[www.huntingdonpresbytery.com](http://www.huntingdonpresbytery.com)

June 2008/  
July 2008

General Presbyter:

Joy Kaufmann  
[joyk2@verizon.net](mailto:joyk2@verizon.net)

Treasurer :

Liz Armstrong  
[Larmstrong8@verizon.net](mailto:Larmstrong8@verizon.net)

Mission Treasurer:

Joann Kimmel  
[jkimmel@pennswoods.net](mailto:jkimmel@pennswoods.net)

Stated Clerk:

Virginia Rainey  
[vfainey@verizon.net](mailto:vfainey@verizon.net)

Pastoral Care

Consultant:  
Lynn Illingworth  
[suelynni@verizon.net](mailto:suelynni@verizon.net)  
814-234-2415

Resource Center

Coordinator:  
Marie Carlson  
[mariecarlson1@verizon.net](mailto:mariecarlson1@verizon.net)

Presbytery Office

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

## PREPARATION FOR GENERAL ASSEMBLY

As we enter the last few weeks prior to the 2008 General Assembly meeting in San Jose, CA, I would ask that you keep our commissioners and Youth Advisory Delegate, Elder Leeanne Gill Peters, The Rev. Mr. Carl Campbell and Andrew Bhasker, in your prayers. These three persons will worship and pray, fellowship together and vote on many, many issues. Also attending the GA in an observer status will be The Rev. Bill King (interim pastor, Lewistown Church), Stated Clerk Ginny Rainey and General Presbyter Joy Kaufmann.

There are several items about which you might have an interest. These include the Stated

Clerk of General Assembly Cliff Kirkpatrick's "Top-Ten List of Issues", the four candidates for moderator and the election of a new Stated Clerk. Here is a bit about each of these items.

*Stated Clerk's "Top-Ten":*

**A Revised Form of Govt.**  
– The Form of Government

Task Force was created by the 217<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2006) to propose a revised polity that would be more flexible, foundational, and appropriate for a missional Reformed church in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The task force is bringing a revised Form of Government for adoption by the assembly and recommendation to the presbyteries.

**Partnership in World Mission** –

The 217<sup>th</sup> General Assembly called for a consultation between the General Assembly Council world mission program and a variety of

mission initiators in the PC (USA). The fruits of that consultation will be before this assembly in a call for an "Expanding Partnership in God's Mission" that involves a wide variety of groups working together for the renewal of PC (USA) world mission.

*"He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"*

Micah 6:8

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## PREPARATION FOR GENERAL ASSEMBLY (CONT. FROM PAGE 1)

**PC(USA) Ecumenical Stance and Covenants** – The 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly will take action on a number of ecumenical items, including a proposed new policy on the ecumenical stance of the PC(USA) and covenant agreements with four different churches: the Korean Presbyterian Church in America, The Episcopal Church, the Catholic Church and the Moravian Church.

**Peace, Unity and Purity of the PC (USA)** – Several proposals concerning the peace, unity and purity of the church will be before this year’s assembly, including fresh ways to use discernment in our life together, reconsideration of some or all of the actions of the previous assembly in this area, and proposals to change the constitutional standards for ordination.

**The Belhar Confession** – This assembly will be asked to act on a proposal to take the first step toward adding the Belhar Confession to *The Book of Confessions*. This confession grows out of the experience of Christians in South Africa and is an affirmation of the biblical call to Christian unity and racial reconciliation.

**Middle East Concerns** – Before this General Assembly will be a variety of overtures and advocacy committee proposals to strengthen the PC(USA)’s witness to peace with justice in relation to both Israel/Palestine and Iraq.

**Elections** – A Moderator of the 218<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2008) will be elected to a two-year term, and a new Stated Clerk of the General Assembly will be elected to a four-year term.

**Ordination Exams** – The findings of the self-study of the Presbyteries Cooperative Committee on Examinations will be before the assembly. The study identifies a number of concerns related to ordination exams and the preparation for ordained ministry and calls for a study to identify new directions both for the ordination exams and the partnership between presbyteries, seminaries, and the General Assembly.

**Domestic Social Justice Concerns** – This assembly will address a large number of social justice concerns, including the adoption of a new Social Creed, as well as the adoption of major policy papers on serious mental illness, energy and global warming, pay equity for women, homelessness, and electoral reform.

**A Church for Future Generations** – One assembly committee will do generative thinking as it focuses on the church’s ministry to and with youth to ensure a church for future generations.

**Election of a Moderator**– A time tested process for the election of a Moderator will play out in the early hours of this General Assembly. Four persons have been endorsed by their presbyteries as candidates for Moderator of the 218<sup>th</sup> GA. They are: The Rev. Bill Teng, endorsed by National Capital Presbytery, The Rev. Bruce Reyes-Chow, endorsed by San Francisco Presbytery, The Rev. Carl Mazza, endorsed by New Castle Presbytery and Elder Roger Shoemaker, endorsed by Homestead

Presbytery. Each candidate will make an initial statement, be endorsed in a spoken statement by someone chosen by the candidate, and then answer identical questions from commissioners. Following all the statements, voting will occur (sometimes over and over) until a clear majority candidate emerges. That person will become the next Moderator of the GA, serving for a two-year period until the 219<sup>th</sup> GA is held in 2010.

**Election of a Stated Clerk of General Assembly**– The Stated Clerk Nomination Committee has overseen a nationwide application process that resulted in 14 applications for the office of Stated Clerk. Telephone interviews were held with all 14 applicants, and face-to-face interviews were held with five of them. From those five, the Committee selected The Rev. Gradye Parsons, currently Associate Stated Clerk, as their

candidate of choice. Three of the other 14 applicants have also put their names in the election “ring” for the vote at this year’s GA. They are the equivalent of “nominations from the floor” in congregational or presbytery elections.

Again, as we move toward the largest democratically elected governing body of our denomination, I solicit your prayers that all the deliberations and decisions will be made in a Christ--like spirit.

In Christ’s love,  
Joy K.

AGAIN, AS WE MOVE TOWARD THE LARGEST DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED GOVERNING BODY OF OUR DENOMINATION, I SOLICIT YOUR PRAYERS THAT ALL THE DELIBERATIONS AND DECISIONS WILL BE MADE IN A CHRIST-LIKE SPIRIT.

## REVEREND STANLEY BHASKER

The Reverend Stanley Bhasker, pastor of the Huntingdon Presbyterian Church since 2007, is our featured minister this month. He was born in Chitter, India on June 2, 1960 to parents Maggie and Thangaras, who were both elementary teachers. Stanley grew up in the church and was involved in the student Christian movement. His Bishop at the Church of South India encouraged him to become a minister but he chose initially to become a social worker and was employed in the church's auxiliary for social action – funded by a Presbytery in the Diocese of Vellore, India.

ON MAY 1, 1988  
REVEREND BHASKER  
WAS ORDAINED IN  
THE CHEYYAR AND  
ARNI CHURCHES IN  
THE DIOCESE OF  
VELLORE, INDIA.

In 1981 Stanley received his Bachelor of Arts (English, Economics, and History) degree from Sri Venkateswara University in India. The South India and Sri Lanka

Church of South India is the second largest union after Canada and comprises the Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Congregational faiths.

On May 1, 1988 Reverend Bhasker was ordained in the Cheyyar and Arni Churches in the Diocese of Vellore, India. That same year he married his wife Sarah, a union arranged by his parents as is customary in India. The Bhaskers have two sons – Andrew, 18 and Clifford, 16. Both are accomplished musicians – Andrew plays the guitar, violin, and saxophone and Clifford plays the trumpet and piano and is involved in soccer as well. Andrew just graduated from high school and plans to attend Penn State University in the fall to take computer science. Since coming to the United States, Reverend Bhasker's wife Sarah has worked 13 years as a social worker in Cambria County.

In 1991 Stanley received his Doc-



tor of Ministry degree from the Union Theological Seminary in New York City and assisted the Chaplain, Church Center for the United Nations in New York. Before coming to serve the Huntingdon Presbyterian Church, Reverend Bhasker was Honorary Pastor, Indians for Christ, Washington Tamil Christian Congregation in Washington, D.C. and was (Cont. on Page 4)

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION FROM THE BOARD OF PENSIONS

All ministers are eligible to save for their retirement through the Board of Pensions 403(b) plan.

Here is how it works:

- The minister puts money into the plan through a salary deduction.
- Since this is part of his/her effective salary, the church pays dues on the amount.
- The money is not taxable for Federal withholding or SECA for the minister.
- Upon retirement, the minister collects the money as housing so it is still not taxable.
- When the clergy member dies, it is no longer considered "housing" so the spouse is required to pay taxes on it at that time.



Churches can make contributions for the minister.

Here is how that works:

- The church makes a contribution up to the amount the minister contributes through payroll deduction.
- There is a \$46,000 per year limit.
- If the minister is contributing, his/her contribution is still subject to dues.
- The contributions are nontaxable for Federal and SECA purposes.
- The church contribution amount is not subject to dues as long as it does not exceed the minister contribution.
- Any amount that the church contributes which exceeds the minister contribution is subject to dues.
- If the minister does not have a salary deduction for the 403(b), the church can still contribute but it will be subject to dues. (Cont. on Page 4)

# REVEREND STANLEY BHASKER (CONT. FROM PAGE 3)

Pastor of the Colver and Revloc Presbyterian Churches. In addition, he has served as Moderator of the Cresson and Patton Presbyterian Churches and also currently as Moderator of the Mount Union and Mapleton Presbyterian Churches. Reverend Bhasker is a member of the Discipleship Umbrella Team in Huntingdon Presbytery, is Chairperson of the General Assembly Committee on Representation and is a Clergy Representative to the Synod of the Trinity. He feels strongly that young people need to have hands-on involvement in mission.

Reverend Bhasker has led mission trips to Frontiero De Cristo in Aqua Preita, Mexico in 1999, a mission exploratory trip to the Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church in Sudan, Africa in 2003, and a youth group mission trip to Midnight Run in Dobbs Ferry, New York.

In 2005 he led a mission trip back to his native India during which the group assisted in building three elementary schools in the Diocese of Vellore, India. In 2007, on another mission trip to India, he assisted in building two churches and one elementary school. Mission is one of the pastor's main focuses. Reverend Bhasker would like to see more stressing of mission in Huntingdon Presbytery and the Synod. He would also like to hear more communications between the pew and altar – our churches need to hear more stories of witnessing to Christ.

REVEREND BHASKER HAS LED MISSION TRIPS TO FRONTIERO DE CRISTO IN AQUA PREITA, MEXICO; TO THE SUDAN PRESBYTERIAN EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN SUDAN, AFRICA; AND TO THE MIDNIGHT RUN IN DOBBS FERRY, NEW YORK.

In 2006, Reverend Bhasker attended General Assembly and our General Presbyter Joy Kaufmann sat behind him in worship. They had previously met at an environmental conference in Camp Hill and a Board of Pensions meeting. In their conversation, Joy indicated that we were looking for a pastor to serve the Huntingdon Presbyterian Church and the Pastor said that he was also looking for a new pastorate. She encouraged him to send in his PIF to the Huntingdon Church and he was called to be their Designated Pastor in 2007.

Reverend Bhasker has been the recipient of the Leonard Academic Excellence Award in 1987, the Doctor E Stanley Jones Memorial Prize for Homiletics in 1987, the Rev S K Page Award for Advanced Hebrew in 1987 and the Peacemaking Award from the Synod of the Trinity in 1996.

We are honored to have this dedicated and accomplished servant to God in our Presbytery and ask for God's richest blessings on his ministry here, his family, and the members of the Huntingdon Presbyterian Church as they continue their journey together.

Submitted by Bill Croyle

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION FROM THE BOARD OF PENSIONS

(CONT. FROM PAGE 3)

This would be a good way for the church to give a minister a pay raise. The only problem with this is when the minister's salary is above the median. In this case it can hurt his/her retirement since it lowers the credits earned by the minister.

THIS WOULD BE A GOOD WAY FOR THE CHURCH TO GIVE A MINISTER A PAY RAISE.

Joy Kaufmann, our General Presbyter, has asked to do this for 2009.

- Assume the pay raise for Joy will be \$2,283.62.
- Housing and SECA remain the same as last year.
- Joy will receive half of the raise as a salary increase.

- Joy will contribute \$1,141.31 into her 403(b) account using a salary deduction. This counts as part of her effective salary.

- The Presbytery will contribute \$1,141.31 into Joy's 403(b) account—not subject to dues.

- The entire \$2,283.62 is not taxable for Federal or SECA for Joy.

- The Presbytery will pay dues on Joy's contribution but not on ours. This saves \$359.83 in dues.

Submitted by Liz Armstrong

# UPDATES ON VARIOUS DISASTER RESPONSES

Several parts of the world have been hard hit lately by natural disasters. Tornados struck the American mid-west, China has been hit by a massive earthquake, and Myanmar (formerly known as Burma) suffered a major cyclone. The area hit by Hurricane Katrina still recovers from that catastrophe. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) always steps in to help.

If you want to aid the victims of the three most recent tragedies, here are the PDA numbers that will help your gift go where you designate. For the Myanmar cyclone, please use DR000145 on any check or correspondence. For the Midwest tornados, use DR000015. For the China earthquake relief, use DR000138. We have persons on the ground in each place, which enables your aid gifts to reach those who have survived and are seeking to rebuild.

The General and Executive Presbyters of the five presbyteries hardest hit by Hurricane Katrina, along with the pastors and elders who have helped coordinate disaster aid, have sent a letter thanking the larger church – that’s us! They want us to know that in the midst of the continued chaos of response and building, your dollars have

THEY WANT US TO KNOW THAT IN THE MIDST OF THE CONTINUED CHAOS OF RESPONSE AND BUILDING, YOUR DOLLARS HAVE BEEN AND WILL BE WISELY USED.

been and will be wisely used. They also ask for our continued prayers, as many homes, congregations, businesses and persons’ lives have been devastated and still need rebuilding.

Here are the ways in which your gifts are being used:

- Initial amount of financial gifts received in 2005 \$22,415,091
- Total financial gifts as of Nov. 30, 2007 \$26,797,451
- Total amount of gifts spent as of Nov. 30, 2007 \$13,157,245
- Projected amount of four year (2008-2011) recovery plan \$17,400,000
- Estimate of resources available including interest and village fees \$15,900,000
- Needed additional gifts to meet on-going challenges \$ 1,500,000

As a denomination, we are using some of the funds not only for rebuilding, but also to pay for church staff while congregations regroup and try to stabilize their membership. In this manner, we will assure that there are churches for people to come back to, as they return to the affected areas.

Thank you for your prayers, and thank you for your gifts. You really do make a difference for Christ’s sake!

## NEW WILMINGTON CONFERENCE 2008

Come spend a week surrounded by 1,000 Christians with a heart for the world. The New Wilmington Mission Conference is one of the nation’s premiere mission events, featuring spirited worship, fun and friendships and service projects. Plus you will meet many missionaries who are “walking the walk” of service to Jesus Christ in many parts of the globe.

To find more information or register go to [www.NWMCmission.org](http://www.NWMCmission.org) or call the presbytery office at 814-742-2200 for information by surface mail.

## SYNOD SUMMER CONFERENCE “JESUS SENT THEM...WHY ARE WE HERE NOW?”

JUNE 4-6 2008

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE

Come discover how various congregations are joyfully and faithfully meeting the challenges of changing times. Come participate in motivational morning prayers, diverse and exciting services of worship, workshops with representatives from transforming congregations and Bible studies with wonderful leaders. The keynote speaker is The Rev. Dr. Patrick Keifert and Bible studies will be led by The Rev. Dr. Kenneth Bailey and The Rev. Dr. Kang-Yup Na.

THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER IS THE REV. DR. PATRICK KEIFERT AND BIBLE STUDIES WILL BE LED BY THE REV. DR. KENNETH BAILEY AND THE REV. DR. KANG-YUP NA

To find more information or register go to [www.syntrinity.org](http://www.syntrinity.org) or call the synod office at 717-737-0421.

## Presbytery Calendar

## Prayer Request Calendar

### JUNE

- June 4-6 Synod Summer Conference at Westminster College,  
New Wilmington, PA
- June 9 6pm – Krislund staff dinner
- June 11 9:30 – Quarterly Staff meeting and Picnic  
4pm – Personnel committee meeting
- June 17 4:40pm Committee on Ministry at Winburne Church  
6:00pm – Presbytery Meeting at Winburne Church
- June 18 Noon – NorthWest Clergy Cluster at Clearfield Church
- June 21-28 General Assembly in San Jose, CA (Staff leaves on the 19<sup>th</sup>)
- June 28 9:30am CLP Training at State College Church

### JULY

- July 4 Offices Closed for Independence Day
- July 8 6pm—Krislund Joint Camp & Conference Committee
- July 9 9:30am Staff meeting at Presbytery Offices
- July 18 Agape Herald Deadline
- July 20 6pm - Clearfield Church, installation of the Rev. Rob Mellgard
- July 19-26 New Wilmington Mission Conference

### AUGUST

- Aug. 6 9:30am Staff Meeting at Presbytery Offices
- Aug. 14 9:30am Discipleship Umbrella Team (DUT) at  
Pine Grove Mills Church
- Aug. 16 9:30am CLP Training at the Presbytery Offices
- Aug. 19 1pm Committee on Ministry (COM) meeting at Presbytery Offices
- Aug. 20 3pm – Nominating Committee Meeting
- Aug. 26 1pm - Council meeting at Presbytery Offices

## *The Summer Collegium*

The Summer Collegium, a project in support of small congregations, is now accepting applications for the Summer 2008 event, which will take place at **Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, VA, from June 25-July 3, 2008**. This nine-day, all expenses paid conference for clergy and their spouses or partners is open to those who pastor small congregations (100 or fewer average Sunday attendance) and are committed to small church ministry. Singles and non-ordained pastors are welcome to apply for one of the **25 openings**. The conference consists of keynotes and workshops on all aspects of small church ministry, with a special emphasis on worship and preaching. Keynotes include Tony Pappas, who has written extensively on small church life, and Peter Bush and Christine O'Reilly, authors of the new book *Where 20 or 30 are Gathered: Leading Worship in the Small Church*. John Bell of the Iona Community in Scotland will be our music leader. This is an ecumenical project sponsored by the Lilly Endowment Inc.

Applications may be downloaded from our website, [www.vts.edu/education/collegium](http://www.vts.edu/education/collegium), or contact Marilyn Johns ([mjohns@vts.edu](mailto:mjohns@vts.edu) or 703-461-1760); applications must be postmarked by December 15, 2007.]

### June 2008

- Synod of the Trinity**  
Synod Staff Elder Deb Hetrick,  
Commissioner
- 1** Rev. Duncan Nichol,  
Commissioner
- Rev. Stanley Bhasker,**  
Commissioner
- Spring Creek Congregation in Lemont**  
Rev. David Meyer,
- 8** Stated Supply, Moderator  
**Highland Park Congregation in Lewistown**  
Rev. Christina Trimble, Pastor
- Lewistown Congregation**  
**15** Rev. William King, Interim  
Pastor
- Lower Spruce Creek Congregation**  
**22** Rev. John Dean, Moderator  
Rev. Norman Huff,  
Stated Supply
- Clearfield Congregation**  
**29** Rev. Daniel Ledford, Moderator  
**Curwensville Congregation**  
Rev. Daniel Ledford, Pastor

### July 2008

- McAlevy's Fort Congregation**  
**6** Daniel Morris, CLP  
**McVeytown Congregation**  
Rev. Jeanette Mater, Pastor
- 13** **Milesburg Congregation**  
Rev. Barbara Mosch, Pastor
- Osceola Mills Congregation**  
**20** Rev. Richard Berggren,  
Temporary Supply  
Rev. Duncan Nichol, Moderator
- Orbisonia Congregation**  
**27** Rev. Geoffrey Huish, Moderator  
**Upper Spruce Creek Congregation**  
Rev. John Diller, Pastor

Thank you very much, and please contact me if you have any questions. Marilyn Johns, D. Min. Project Manager, The Summer Collegium Virginia Theological Seminary 3737 Seminary Road Alexandria, Virginia 22304 703-461-1760

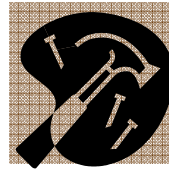
# Krislund Korner

## WELCOME

### KRISLUND CAMP MAINTENANCE MANAGER

Position Available:

Krislund Camp Maintenance Manager



Krislund seeks a mature person of faith and good health for immediate hire to maintain buildings and grounds, participate in new construction, assist work groups, and provide limited hosting for overnight guests. Candidate must be a team player; skilled in construction, remodeling, plumbing, carpentry, landscaping, masonry, and electrical. Terms: \$15,000 plus housing, and medical insurance; \$19,500 without housing. Job description and related documents are available by calling 814.422.8878 or e-mailing [info@krislund.org](mailto:info@krislund.org). Submit resumes and references to: Krislund Camp, Attn: Maintenance Manager Search, POB 116, Madisonburg, PA, 16852. Direct questions to: [info@krislund.org](mailto:info@krislund.org) weeks, call Dan Alex at 691-1471(h) 717-599-4283(cell) or email [danalex@comcast.net](mailto:danalex@comcast.net).

### SPECIAL REQUESTS AND JOB OPENINGS

The staffing situation is looking very good right now. We are especially excited about seeing some alumni staff return this year, and we are sure that combined with the new faces on the staff team, Krislund will have a strong spiritual base for this summer. The few remaining open positions still needing filled are:

Lifeguard (18 years and older)

Maintenance person (18 years and older), experience with machinery and valid driver's license are required; must be able to lift heavy loads and work extended hours

Two male senior counselors (19 years and older)

One male and two female assistant counselors (16-18 years old)

### FOCUS ON CARLISLE

This issue's focus is on the Carlisle Presbytery. Carlisle has registered a total of 116 campers. The churches sending the most campers from Carlisle Presbytery are St. Andrew Presbyterian and Silver Spring Presbyterian Church. Way to go!

The next Krislund Hot Sheet will focus on Northumberland Presbytery.

The total number of registered campers is now 335, with a little more than a month left before summer camps begin. The number of campers from Carlisle Presbytery (116) has exceeded registrations from Northumberland or Huntingdon Presbyteries. There are also more campers registered from regions outside of Pennsylvania. Seven campers are coming from Maryland and from Virginia. Campers from Florida and Utah probably have the longest journey. We are still far from this year's goal of 800 registered campers for the summer, so we need your help encouraging more kids to come to camp this summer.

THE NEXT  
KRISLUND HOT  
SHEET WILL  
FOCUS ON  
NORTHUMBERLAN  
D PRESBYTERY

Krislund is getting ready for its busiest time of the year. In only a few weeks, the first campers arrive for an unforgettable week of camp experience. Until then, there is a lot that still needs to be done. The number of registered campers is approaching the 350-mark, which means that in order to reach our goal of a total of 800 campers, we still have a long way to go. To achieve this, we need your help!!! Please keep encouraging children and youth in your church, school, and other organizations to come to camp this summer. With your help and support, Krislund will be able to touch hundreds of lives this summer!

Contact the camp for a list of registered campers from your church! Would you like us to send the Krislund Hot Sheet to someone? If so, contact the camp office with name and e-mail.

Krislund Camp, 189 Krislund Drive, P.O.B. 116, Madisonburg, P.A. 16852; website: [www.krislund.org](http://www.krislund.org); phone: 814-422-8878

Send your questions and comments to: [info@krislund.org](mailto:info@krislund.org)

### WEST KISH COFFEEHOUSE PRESENTS:

**Kerri Smith - singer/songwriter**  
**Mike Bratt - singer/songwriter**  
**Chris & Tom - acoustic duo**

**Saturday June 14, 2008 - show starts promptly at 7:00pm**

**Call 717-935-5065 or e-mail at the address below for further information or directions**

West Kish Coffeehouse  
[westkishch@embarqmail.com](mailto:westkishch@embarqmail.com)  
[www.westkish.org/  
coffeehouse.html](http://www.westkish.org/coffeehouse.html)

# Agape Herald Editorial and Production Team

## 2008 Publication Sched-

| Submission deadline: | Publication: |
|----------------------|--------------|
| Jan. 18              | Feb/March    |
| March 21             | April/May    |
| May 16               | June/July    |
| July 18              | Aug./Sept.   |
| Sept. 19             | Oct./Nov.    |
| Nov. 14              | Dec./Jan     |

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### Editorial and Production Team:

Jill Sajeski ([alwwilson@verizon.net](mailto:alwwilson@verizon.net)) 814-669-5047  
 Peggy Kendall ([w\\_kendall@comcast.net](mailto:w_kendall@comcast.net)) 814-238-7875  
 Bill Conway ([4conways@comcast.net](mailto:4conways@comcast.net)) 814-342-5930  
 Jake Wagner ([jacobew@verizon.net](mailto:jacobew@verizon.net)) 717-543-5726  
 Sara Guy ([sguy@pennswoods.net](mailto:sguy@pennswoods.net)) 814-236-2658  
 Nancy Kraybill ([nwkraybill@yahoo.com](mailto:nwkraybill@yahoo.com)) 814-330-0621  
 Bob Himes ([blkpatch@embargmail.com](mailto:blkpatch@embargmail.com)) 717-667-9673  
 Chuck Hayes ([chayes@clearnet.net](mailto:chayes@clearnet.net)) 814-378-8162  
 Alice Meloy ([ammrem75@innernet.net](mailto:ammrem75@innernet.net)) 717-349-2685  
 Mary Frances Jaymes ([mfoyaymes@yahoo.com](mailto:mfoyaymes@yahoo.com)) 814-259-3256  
 Bill Croyle ([Larmstrong8@verizon.net](mailto:Larmstrong8@verizon.net))



Please send all information and potential articles/photos to Al Wilson - [alwwilson@verizon.net](mailto:alwwilson@verizon.net) or 1449 Curtin St., State College, PA 16803 by the submission deadline. We also need additional persons to serve on the Editorial Team which gathers information on congregational events, ministries and missions to share through the newsletter. Please contact Al if interested.



Agape Herald  
 Presbytery of Huntingdon  
 323 Main Street  
 Bellwood PA 16617

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