

Pastor's Report to Consistory-March 7, 2016

Since the last meeting of the consistory on February 1, 2016 we are well into Lent. We "Launched into Lent" with our Cluster churches on February 5 with a contemporary communion service at Hill's church, using the music of U2. 60 people attended and we raised \$373 for Church World Service. We had our own Ash Wednesday service on February 10 and it was a cold and blustery night. Though we only had 15 in attendance, as we believe, wherever 2 or 3 are gathered in Christ's name, he is there. I would like to thank my snow angels for clearing the walks as Wade's brother's Craig had passed away and the family viewing was that night. With the wind and snow, it was a challenge to keep the entrance to the Fellowship Hall clear. On March 2, we had our "Land into Lunch" with the Cluster, at First UCC. I worked on that program, though I was unable to attend because I was taking a week's study leave at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. There were about 30 in attendance and we raised \$113 for the Westmoreland County Food Bank.

I can't say enough of how much I gleaned from this program, "The Art of Transitional Ministry." This is one of those courses, where in retrospect, I wish that I could have taken 20 years ago. However, 20 years ago, the information may not have been as useful to me as it is now, and I may not have been able to integrate the material into the work that I do with the congregation as well as I feel that I can now. One of our instructors, Jan Nolting Carter, is in training as a coach in a program at Auburn Theological Seminary, and I have spoken with David Ackerman about the possibility of getting funding to get coaching with her through a mission grant from the Penn West Conference. It is like learning to drive by having an instructor as you learn on the road, beyond learning the driver's manual. I am currently in the information gathering stage, waiting to hear back from Jan as to the cost of coaching. The benefit of her being in training is that not only would I get input from Jan, she would be under supervision, and I would get the benefit of her instructors.

I have made a number of pastoral visits this past month to hospitals, care facilities and homes. I have also done visits via the phone. Ira and I met this month as well.

We had a wonderful celebration of Maureen Dumbaugh's birthday provided by her family, which took place after worship on February 7.

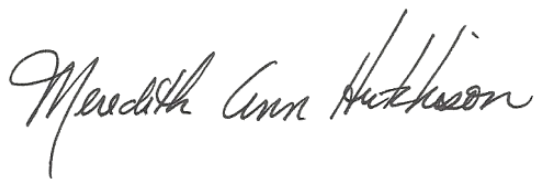
Rheba and I have been taking a course on Windows 10 at the YWCA in Greensburg on Wednesday evenings. It is very useful and is giving us both many tools. I would like to thank the Mixed Class and the Memorial Fund for providing a new laptop and also Don McIlvaine for taking care of purchasing the computer.

As we continue through Lent, we have one final Cluster service on March 16. This will be "One Small Step into Supper", with a pot-luck here at Denmark Manor. It will include worship and assembling and dedicating Hygiene Kits for Church World Service. Denmark Manor was assigned to bring the wash cloths and the Saturday Morning Bible Study Group is taking care of this.

The Christian Education Committee has changed its meeting time to 7:00PM, on the second Monday of the month. At our March 14 meeting, we work on our May 15 event, celebrating the child that the Sunday School Sponsors, Malek Saiid, and the school where he attends, Rawdat El-Zuhur. We are trying to think outside of the box, and create an intergenerational event that is educational and social as well. We are doing this instead of our usual June picnic, and planning to have the event in the Fellowship Hall. Also, the use of the Kindle Fire Tablets continues to morph. We have found one app of Bible stories that is quite engaging and Cyndee is integrating this app with her Little Disciple's program which is being held before worship. There will not be an Easter party on the afternoon of Palm Sunday. Instead, there will be an activity centered event between the two Easter morning services, after the Easter Breakfast.

My deepest sympathy goes out to Wade Anderson on the passing of his brother Craig and also to the Martin Family on the passing of Dorothy's sister Irene Criswell and niece Linda Reynolds. I officiated at Craig's funeral on February 15. Also, John Lackey now resides at Nature Park Commons in Greensburg, and Sheila Sharatz has been hospitalized and is now home in Jacksonville, FL under hospice care.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Meredith Ann Hutchison". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed name.

Meredith Hutchison