

# Revelations

Community Presbyterian Church of Ben Avon ~ Pittsburgh, PA 15202

**It's A New Year!**

**We'll Welcome New Members...**

**Install New Officers...**

**Provide New Ministry Opportunities...**

**And Confirm A New Class of 8th Graders**

**It Will Lead to a Whole New You!**

*Happy New Year*

## **New Members Class to Be Held Saturday, January 20 9:00 a.m.**

Those interested in inquiring about membership in our church are invited to a continental breakfast and discussion time with our Interim Pastor, Jean Henderson, staff members and church leaders at the church on Saturday, January 20 from 9:00-11:30 a.m.

At 11:30, those who wish to join will meet with Session members to be received into membership. On Sunday, January 21, new members will be recognized at the 10:30 worship service.

Statistics show that most people join a church because they've been invited to do so by friends or neighbors. Here's your chance! We need **you** to help us grow in faith and service. Share the good news!



## **New Officers to Be Installed Sunday, January 14 at 10:30 a.m. worship service**

On January 14 at the 10:30 service, our new officers - Elders and Deacons - will be ordained and installed for their new terms of service. An age-old tradition of shared leadership among clergy, elders, and deacons in the Presbyterian Church USA brings new servants to our officer boards every year. Come support these members who are answering a call to use their gifts in a unique way.

## **New Prayer Shawl Ministry to Begin in the New Year**

Watch for news this month of the new Prayer Shawl Ministry here at CPCBA. Judy Hay and Jean Henderson are preparing a brochure inviting all kinds of participation - not just knitting or crocheting.

Prayer Shawls are gifts to those in need - body, mind, or spirit - and a tangible sign of our commitment to pray for them. We'll supply patterns and rely on you for your time to knit, crochet, or deliver shawls; to help keep a database; to make donations of money or yarn; to give us your suggestions for recipients; and much more - whatever you can do!

## **Eighth Graders Invited to Confirmation Class 2007 Kick-Off Lunch—January 14**

Spring is the time for new life, new growth, and new challenges. Though it's early yet and chilly, our 8<sup>th</sup> Graders will warm to all of these experiences during their time preparing for Confirmation.

8<sup>th</sup> Graders are invited to take part in this passage to maturity, but also a time of fun, play and study about who they are, what they believe, how they fit into the life of the church and how God fits into the rest of their lives. Look for a letter coming soon!

Our first meeting is a luncheon for all 8<sup>th</sup> graders **and** their parents, Sunday, January 14th at 11:30 a.m. at the church.

## **Adults Needed to Participate in the Confirmation Mentoring Program**

The mentoring program will once again be part of the Confirmation experience. Any member of the church is eligible to be a Mentor—no Bible or Theological genius required. Please feel free to contact Todd Tracy or Melanie Hughes-Holcomb at 412-761-1233 with any questions.

Phone: (412) 761-1233/766-1800 Fax: (412) 766-1801 E-mail: [cpcba@verizon.net](mailto:cpcba@verizon.net) Web site: [www.cpcba.com](http://www.cpcba.com)

## The Mendocino Presbyterian Church Sends a Letter to the Community Church Congregation

November 5, 2006

Dear friends at Ben Avon Community Presbyterian Church,

We are sisters and brothers in Christ who are more than half-way across the continent and who share your anguish and grief today in the loss of your pastor, Brent Dugan.

Although we only had a short time to become his friends, we shared an immediate bond and sense of partnership in the ministry of Christ. Surely, your long ministry together has been filled with many times of joy and celebration, laughter and tears. We learned of some of these through your wonderful website, as well as newsletters and articles telling of the imaginative and loving outreaches to your community which you have shared with Brent. He spoke to some of us of these ministries and it was apparent that he shared a love and justifiable pride in his Ben Avon flock.

Yes, it's true. We had hoped that Brent might soon come to be our new pastor. Just ten days ago, on October 29, he was chosen by the voice of our congregation to become just that. Isn't it ironic, that in this strange and wonderful world of the Presbyterian church, that would have made us, in some sense, rivals for his affection? Instead, as things have turned out, we are now partners in our profound grief and loss.

For eighteen years, you dear friends have learned to know, love, and be served by your beloved pastor Brent. For a few days---two short weekends, our Pastor Nominating Committee and our congregation came to love him too, as a man and as God's choice servant. Now, as you gather there to mourn your loss, we send our love and deepest condolences in your loss. Brent's home-going was announced to our congregation last Sunday as well, and we can feel just a portion of what your loss must be.

Please know that our hearts and our prayers are with you, dear friends and partners in Christ, and we rejoice with you in the hope of our faith, that one day we shall be united in the presence of our Lord, we shall know as we are known, and the people of Ben Avon congregation and Mendocino congregation shall share together at the table the Lord, and in the presence of our brother Brent.

In Christian love,

Rev. Bill McGuinness Interim Pastor  
on behalf of the members and friends of:  
Mendocino Presbyterian Church  
Mendocino, California

## My View on Church Avenue

by Pastor Jean Henderson

New Year's Eve is a mysterious time for me... looking back and ahead at the same time seems to lift my spirit out of real time into some other dimension for just a few seconds. Each year the feeling almost frightens me, but I strangely look forward to it somehow... Perhaps it reminds me of the tension between our earthly time (chronos) and God's eternal time (kairos). New Year's Eve has become a kairos moment for me.

Years ago I discovered remarks by King George VI of England. It was 1939 - war time for them - and he addressed his people with these words...kairos words for me this year. I offer them to you as we begin 2007.

*"We are at the New Year. We cannot tell what it will bring. If it brings us peace, how thankful we shall be. If it brings us continued struggle, as it no doubt will, we must remain undaunted. In the meantime, we may all find encouragement in these lines:*

*I said to the man who stood at the Gate of the Year, 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.' And he replied, 'Go out into the darkness, and put your hand into the Hand of God. That shall be better than light, and safer than a known way.'*

*May that Almighty Hand guide and uphold us all!"*

## Sunday School Teachers Needed Won't You Volunteer 4 Hours of Your Time? Sign up on the Bulletin Board in the Narthex

Please prayerfully consider sharing your time as a Sunday school teacher. It only requires one hour every Sunday for only one month. We're looking for a Christian with a good heart, love for life, and ability to learn. Bible literacy is not required. You'll learn along with the children. The format is simple, the lesson plans are fun and easy, and there is no set-up or shopping.

You can pick a month and the type of room you have an interest in such as Games, Drama, Art, Computers, Kitchen or Movies. Sign up is easy on the board in the Narthex.

Call Melanie Holcomb at 412-761-1233 with any questions.



# SESSION CORNER

by Peter Herchenroether  
Clerk of Session

Session met in December and recognized the Elders who have served for the past three years: Patrick Abramowich, Pack Bryan, Patty Coghlan, Maurice Cohill, Judy Fockler and PJ Jones. We appreciate their service to CPCBA and our congregation. We also welcomed the incoming Elders, Ed Butcher, Kim Cuneo, Doug Fowkers, Jen Knuth, Rebecca Kurtz, Steve Mellon, and Leslie Miller.

At the Congregational Meeting in November, Judy Fockler reported that the Nominating Committee was in need of filling positions for Auditor, Nominating Committee and Deacon and asked for volunteers. Several members volunteered for each position! The Committee will report nominations for these positions at a special congregational meeting on December 31, 2006 so that elections can be held and these officers can be installed during worship on January 14, 2007. We are thankful for the willingness of our members to accept all positions of leadership, both elected and unelected, especially during this time of transition.

Speaking of transition, I would like to report on the process of calling an Interim Pastor. As you probably know, Jean Henderson retired last August. This allowed her to be available as our Interim Pastor following Brent's death. At such a tragic time, we were fortunate to have someone as capable and familiar to us to be called to lead our congregation. However, retirement also means that she is unable to serve in a fulltime capacity for any extended period of time. In addition, she and David had made plans for travel in 2007 to begin to enjoy their well-earned retirements. Accordingly, Jean asked that Session call an Interim Pastor beginning February 1. Chris Skerlong, Personnel Chair, and I, as Clerk, together with Jody Jackson, as a member of the Congregation, have been considering candidates to recommend to Session. Our goal is to have a candidate called by Session during January.

Throughout 2007 we, as a congregation, will continue to deal with changes in our life together as we accept new leadership and prepare for the process of calling a new Pastor. We have demonstrated our faith in God and a deep commitment to the Church by the manner in which we have dealt with Brent's death. The spirit of support for each other and our Church is strong. We will need to continue to work together to fulfill our mission.

## Week of Prayer for Christian Unity January 18-25, 2007

Every year in January, Christians around the world pray together for unity among themselves. During this special week, you are invited to pray daily with millions of Christians this prayer:

God of grace, together we turn to you in prayer, for it is you who unite us:

You are the one God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - in whom we believe.

You alone empower us for good.

You send us out across the earth in service in the name of Christ.

Open our hearts to believe that all people are made in your image.

Help us care for creation and affirm life in all its wondrous diversity.

Transform us to become partners with you as we strive for the full, visible unity of the one Church of Jesus Christ.

Transform us to become neighbors to all, as we await with eager longing the full revelation of your rule in the coming of a new heaven and a new earth.

Amen.

## Fellowship & Evangelism Introduces CPCBA Welcome Packet

In December, a **Welcome Packet** was introduced to the congregation. It was designed for visitors who are interested in our church and potential new members. This packet tells about *us* – Community Presbyterian Church.

We would like you to see this packet. There will be copies available on the table at the front door and on the desk in the Narthex. It is green with a Celtic cross on the front.

What we are asking you to do is to look at one packet, become familiar with it, and then please take one *only* when you would like to give it to someone who is interested.

It is the Fellowship and Evangelism Committee's mandate to reach out to potential new members – but it is important that you the members of the congregation also join in this endeavor of *welcome*.

A current *Revelations* will be kept in these packets. This is a work in progress - and Kristin Thompson & Gail Buchanan welcome feedback.



**A Special Plea from Community Theatre Players**

You probably expect this is a request for donations. Fear not, we are not asking for money at this time. However, we need your help to survive. It was about 17 years ago that Brent Dugan got a group together to talk about putting on plays. That idea evolved into Community Theatre Players. When Kate and Jim Lawrence added their considerable talents and energy, the evolution continued with more elaborate sets and productions. Over time, the group has gotten wonderful support from our church. Community Church has provided space, tasty dinners, actors, officers, board members, backstage crew, patrons and much of the audience. In return, CTP has been part of what makes our church welcoming and vital, not only to our members but also to the larger community.

Wouldn't it be a shame if the group was to fade away? Sadly, that could happen. While the board would like to continue, especially to honor Brent's vision, there is a serious issue about how to continue when there is a lack of people to take on key roles--production manager, stage manager, set design, set construction, officers and board members. Thanks to our patrons we are financially healthy, but this is not something money can fix. The issues have been brewing awhile and we have hit a critical stage with so many of our regulars gone, "retired" or just tired. We can and will look at alternatives such as simple readings, or just one production a year but even these require an infusion of new talent.

If you are interested and willing to contribute significant energy to keep this group going please contact Mary Witul 412-734-2772.

**Wooden Ladder Preschool Needs Your Used Printer Cartridges and Cell Phones**

Are you tired of throwing away your printer cartridges and not always knowing what to do with your outdated cell phones? Well Wooden Ladder Preschool has an answer for you. They are collecting them and returning them to the Fundraising Factory in exchange for money! So when you run out of ink, don't run the cartridge to the trash, put it with your Bible and bring it with you to church. There is a small collection box in the Rostrever entrance and one downstairs by the Wooden Ladder classrooms.

If you have questions about whether we can take your donation, place in the box and we will sort them out. For once we are not asking for your money! If you have questions about this program, feel free to contact Board President, Brenda Mellon, at 412 766 7658.



**Hospitality, An Evangelism Imperative**

by Laurie McBride

for the Fellowship & Evangelism Committee

We shouldn't expect hospitality in our churches to change people. Rather, it offers them a friendly church environment where change can take place. It provides a quiet sanctuary for reflective commitment to be pursued or strengthened.

In truth, hospitality is an important gift of the spirit. Those who practice it can express it openly and genuinely with others. When new worshipers attend our services, those gifted members seek them out and in doing so, discover talents that each has to offer which make our community of believers more complete. As a congregation, we become wiser, stronger and more versatile when we "extend hospitality."

Our unqualified acceptance of new worshippers and our recognition of their unique value systems is an evangelism imperative. We must continue to strive to have our congregations become even more welcoming and hospitable communities of faith where our members are treated in a friendly, caring manner; where there is genuine interest shown in their faith journeys; where new members can be themselves and share their gifts freely and where people who are strangers can become brothers and sisters in Christ.

The Apostle Paul has summarized these ideas in Romans 12:9-13 as follows:

*Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord, persevere in prayer, extend hospitality.*

It is no coincidence that it all begins with *hospitality*.

**When All the Pieces Fall Into Place... It's a Community Christmas Festival!**

Many thanks to *all* those who participated in the Community Christmas Festival and helped make it such a success!

John and Gail Buchanan



**2 Cents-a-Meal Collection—January 21**

Please bring your 2-cents-a-meal can to church on Sunday, January 21 when the little red wagon will make its way up and down the aisles collecting your donations. Proceeds will be used to fight hunger both locally and worldwide. Hear how good it sounds to give!



**Choir “Storytime” in the New Year**

by David Anderson

The old southern gospel hymn goes, “Tell me the Story of Jesus, Write on my heart ev’ry word. Tell me the story most precious, Sweetest that ever was heard.” The hymnal is full of references to the “story” of Jesus.

As children we learned about Jesus, not through the uppity Elizabethan prose of the King James, but by stories gently told us by parents and teachers. This is how the early Christians learned about Jesus for the four or five centuries between the death of Jesus and the church’s acceptance of the Bible, as we know it.

As choir members, it is our calling to keep on telling that story. Story time occurs every Sunday morning at 10:30 a.m. When our collective minds are uniformly focused on the “story” we tell it all the better. “We’ve a Story to Tell to the Nations.” Do you?

**Barbara McKelway to Play at Heinz Chapel Compline Service, Sunday, January 21**

Barbara McKelway will be the guest organist at the Compline service at Heinz Chapel on Sunday, January 21 at 8:30 p.m.

Developed in the medieval church, Compline was the service which said “good night.” The Heinz Chapel service, unique in the area, continues the tradition in a beautiful space. One can either end the week with the service or use it as the beginning of the new week - it is up to the worshipper.

**New Year Provides Opportunity for Involvement in Church Choirs**

A new year is a good time to join a choir, and CPCBA has three for you to choose from.

- ◆ The **Junior Choir** is for boys and girls in grades 3-6. They usually sing about once a month for worship and occasionally for other occasions. They rehearse Sundays after church (11:45-12:30) in the choir room. All boys and girls in those grades are welcome.
- ◆ The **Bell Choir** is an intergenerational group that rehearses Thursdays in the choir room at 7:00 p.m. They usually play once a month for worship. They have fun with their learning and like to welcome new members.
- ◆ The **Chancel Choir** rehearses Thursdays at 8:00 p.m. Anyone High School age and up is welcome to participate. We have welcomed several new members lately and would love to welcome more!

**Handbell and Junior Choir Share Their Gifts with the Community in December**

In December two of our choirs brought Christmas cheer to others. The Handbell Choir played for North Hills Kane Hospital’s “Light Up Night” on December 12.

Members of the Junior Choir added to the festivities at Reilly’s Summer Seat Farm December 16 by singing carols and popular Christmas songs.

**Community Presbyterian Church of Ben Avon Directory**

Interim Pastor.....	Jean Henderson
Christian Education Director.....	Melanie Hughes-Holcomb
Director of Youth & Young Adult Ministries.....	Todd Tracy
Music Director.....	David Anderson
Organist.....	Barbara McKelway
Administrative Assistant.....	Mary Susan Anderson
Hostess.....	Claire Wilwohl
Maintenance Manager.....	Don Evanochko
Clerk of Session.....	Peter Herchenroether
Treasurer.....	Barbara Barcoucky
Trustees, President.....	Pack Bryan
Deacons, Chair.....	Susan Dismukes
Junior Church, Coordinator.....	Jan Davis
Wooden Ladder Preschool.....	Brenda Mellon
Financial Secretaries:.....	John Ferguson
.....	Steve Fockler
.....	Royce Rice
.....	Dick Schneider
Web Masters.....	Susan and Marty Houser

**Committee Chairs:**

Christian Education.....	Ken DiNino
Fellowship & Evangelism.....	Nancy Hamilton
Nominating Committee.....	Judy Fockler
Outreach.....	Judy Hay
Property.....	Andy Kolenda
Stewardship & Finance.....	Ross Dillon
Worship.....	June Weletz

**Deacon Comfort and Joy Contacts**

(for meal assistance, transportation, grief support, etc.)  
Sue Herchenroether (412-761-0479) or Mary Witul (412-734-2772)

**Deacons Visitation Ministry**

Frank Somerville at 412-931-6584

(Please help the Deacons share the concern of our community by letting us know whether you, or a friend or family member, would welcome a visit. Requests can be made to any Deacon.)

**Church Office Hours are Monday-Friday—9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.**

† Phone: (412) 761-1233 766-1800 † Fax: (412) 766-1801 † E-mail: cpcba@verizon.net † Web site: www.cpcba.com  
Chapel is open daily from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm for prayer and meditation.

**Community Presbyterian  
Church of Ben Avon  
Mission Statement:**

Community Presbyterian Church of Ben Avon aspires to a greater service of God through a ministry mindful of the needs of our congregants, neighbors and, through the Presbyterian Church (USA), the world community.

We actively bind together this community of Jesus Christ through warm fellowship, inspiring worship, nurture, learning and a long, rich tradition.

We are led by the Holy Spirit to use our abundant blessings and diverse talents progressively for evangelism, discipleship, stewardship and mission.

**Revelations**

Community Presbyterian Church of Ben Avon  
7501 Church Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15202

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"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen." Revelation 22:21



**On the Importance of Music in the Church**

by Elder and Choir Member Laurie McBride

How many members realize music, played by the church organist, sung by the congregation or presented by the church choirs, represents nearly fifty percent of each Presbyterian worship service?

When you consider that the other 50% of worship is the spoken word, silent meditation and prayer, one realizes the importance of music in the life of the congregations.

Historically, Christians have been a singing people for 2000 years. First there were early chants of monks sung to Scripture and the Psalms written in musical verse by poets. Next came harmony and then contemporary words and music. Our musical heritage is as varied as it is old—all forms speaking the eternal truths of God's Word.

In a topically-indexed Bible Concordance, one finds God's word instructing His people to praise Him well over 300 times. If frequency has any relationship, praise, joyfulness, thanksgiving, song and rejoicing must be an attitude of life God considers highly significant.

The great advantage we have over our Christian ancestors is the opportunity to enjoy the richness of the past along with the creativity of the present. Formerly, it took years for a hymn or song style to become an established part of the Christian repertoire. Today, with a skillful music director, talented organist, dedicated choirs and a cooperative congregation, this can be accomplished in a few weeks. And we have all of those elements in high gear at Community Church.

Many of our children, youth and adults have the talent to sing in our Junior and Chancel Choirs or play in our Handbell Choir. Our needs? Someone interested and dedicated with a modicum of raw talent. Think about it. Then pray about it!

Those interested in joining the Handbell or Junior Choirs should call organist Barbara McKelway; those interested in singing or providing instrumental support enriching the anthems of the Chancel Choir should call our music director, David Anderson. They can both be reached through the church office at 412-761-1233.