



The Presbyterian Church of Llanerch

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OCTOBER 2017 News and Notes

What Did They Find There?

A Presbyterian candidate for ordained ministry has six semesters of seminary to collect as much of the assortment of testable knowledge that might appear on the five exams for ordination (the “ords”) as possible and then, after successful completion of these exams, must decide what to do with the knowledge in the day to day, week to week, season by season, year after year practice of pastoral ministry. Rarely beside a hospital bed, or in the middle of a committee meeting, or on the floor of presbytery, does occasion arise to quote the esteemed theologians of the past—although it can happen. But in the normal course of events, only the weekly sermon serves as the best, most frequent opportunity for a pastor to dispense her theological acumen.

“The eminent Augustine tells us...”

“Luther, the Great Reformer, pointed out...”

“Calvin, Father of Reformed theology, said...”

“As the German theologian Karl Barth put it...”

I wonder from time to time how many among those of us in the sanctuary care for these brief, but weighty insights. After all, the stories of such theologians might seem nothing but a few facts and dates from the *Who's Who in the History of the Church*.

Not long ago, I read a statement about how profound an impact Paul's Letter to the Romans has had on the Christian church, especially on some of the most influential from our *Who's Who*. I have been chewing on that statement ever since. The four men I just named—Augustine of Hippo, Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Karl Barth—each in their time found in Romans a life-changing revelation. They were lost in the middle of catastrophic personal and world crises, but from somewhere among Paul's words to Rome, God found them. They each made a sharp left turn, and each turning redrew the part of the map on which we modern Christians find ourselves.

These four are not the only ones who have found the Letter to the Romans extraordinary—men and women from all over the world have had their faith set free in the sixteen chapters—but the four above are our theological ancestors and their stories are among those I know best from my six semesters of Presbyterian seminary.

In this month that will end with us celebrating the five hundredth anniversary of a small act by a passionate Augustinian monk, an act that changed the course of the Church of God in Europe and spread across much of the world: On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther tacked his *Ninety-five Theses* on a church door in Wittenberg, Germany, broadcasting that he would like to argue against the sale of forgiveness as a means to raise funds for Vatican construction projects.

Over the five Sundays of this month, I want to tell again with you to the stories of God reforming and remaking small, individual lives and in so doing, making the Church of Jesus Christ, and with it the Presbyterian Church of Llanerch, what it is today.

Follow with me as we read these stories of life-changing words.

Grace and peace,

Bill

Worship in OCTOBER!

October Sermon Series

What Did They Find There?

DATE	WORSHIP TEXT	
October 1	Romans 6:12-23; 13:13-14	Theologian: Augustine of Hippo
October 8	Romans 5:1-8; 1:17	Theologian: Martin Luther
October 15	Romans 8:28-30	Theologian: John Calvin
October 22	Romans 2:1-3	Theologian: Karl Barth
October 29	Romans 12	Theologian: Presbyterian Church of Llanerch



SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Sunday School begins at **10:00 AM.**



CARE CLOSET CANS are collected in worship on the First Sunday of the Month—Sunday, October 1st! Bring your family's care closet can with you to worship!

Join us, **TUESDAY, OCTOBER 31st** at the Church for Trunk-or-Treat from 6:00 to 8:00pm. Come along and join the ghosts and goblins!

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

- * Volunteers to decorate trunks/vehicles (there will be a sign-up sheet!).
- * Donations of candy and other give-away items for "treats." (You can bring donated items to the Church Office). Any leftover candy will be used during Connect-ByNight in January/March
- * Please let Joanne Janos know if you can help in any way.
- * Georgia will be playing haunting music, as we invite the community into our sanctuary to share the organ experience.



OCTOBER – THE MONTH OF CELEBRATION!

It is finally here – the month we observe and celebrate two highly significant Anniversaries. You have been hearing frequently about the big celebratory service honoring the 300 years of the Philadelphia Presbytery at 10:00 Saturday morning, October 7, at Enon Baptist Church, 2800 West Cheltenham Avenue, Philadelphia. This event will be “as major as it gets” – thrilling, inspirational and rousing, with a 200+ member choir and stirring preaching. Let the church office know if you would like to be in a carpool.

On October 29 we will commemorate that momentous day, October 31, 1517, when Martin Luther nailed a list of 95 Theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany and thus began what is known as the Protestant Reformation – 500 years ago! That morning we will have a celebration service including added professional musicians, and we will enjoy fellowship afterward with a covered-dish luncheon.

Luther’s reforms brought about highly significant changes in theology, worship, liturgy and music. These reforms reverberated throughout Europe and impacted theologians including one of our founding fathers, John Calvin.

Corporate worship during most of the first millennium to the late Middle Ages had morphed from the small, fervent gatherings of the early church to the large spectator-only gatherings in large, ornate, works-or-art buildings where all was chanted or spoken only in Latin and only by priests and choral scholars. The people did not speak, pray, sing, or even take Communion. Luther’s reforms revitalized worship on every level by insisting on vernacular language and congregational participation, especially in singing. Luther said, “Next to Theology, I give the highest prize to music.” Luther was not only a priest, but also a composer and author. He translated into German paraphrases of Psalms and existing Latin hymns, and he composed new texts. These were set to new tunes composed both by him and other church musicians of the day. The creation of these new hymns was so prolific that a hymnal was published in 1524 – only seven years later! These new text and tune combinations were called chorales, not hymns and were sung in union until,

very gradually, four-part harmonies were added, culminating in those of the master harmonizer, J.S. Bach, around the turn of the 18th century.

It is Luther’s passion and love of music and his imperative for integrating music in worship that greatly influence how we conduct worship in our time. This, my friends, is why we Presbyterians should care about the Reformation. This is why we need to celebrate!

This month of October marks a milestone for me personally. October 2 will be my 40th Anniversary of service here at Llanerch as Minister of Music. Forty years make up 37% of this church’s 108 year existence. Before I came here, I had served in two other churches, thus making my grand total 50 years. Fifty years represent one sixth of the time since the Presbytery was formed and one tenth of the time since the Protestant Reformation! These for me are truly astounding and humbling revelations. As long as God gives me the ability, I will continue to “press on”, as Paul says, and serve to the best of my ability the call God has chosen for me to do. I appreciate the love and support of this congregation more than you will ever know. I am truly blessed to do what I do and to have this special place in which to do it.

Soli Deo Gloria

Georgia Marshall Schrom

Support the Music Program!

We are looking forward to the special commemorative service in October and to the guest musicians who will share in that service. To replenish our fund for special musicians, we have been offering a commemorative hymnal opportunity. This is your chance to celebrate, remember, or honor a loved one, near or far, by dedicating one of our new hymnals with a special book plate for a donation of \$20 per hymnal. Of course, we would be happy for a donation to this fund, even if you have already dedicated a hymnal. Donations marked "Music Fund" can be put in the collection plate.



MISSION NEWS

Last month we reported on the beginnings of the work on the part of the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance in helping recover from Hurricane Harvey in Texas and Louisiana. Now, others in Florida and Georgia have also suffered a blow from this storm season, and many communities.

Here's a report from the First Presbyterian Church of Dickenson, Texas, which took on more than four feet of water in the sanctuary:

"Pew cushions were everywhere and even the pews themselves were moved across the sanctuary," said Connie Almendarez, a nurse and church member. "A large ice machine floated across the freeway and settled by the front door of the church. When I opened the door to the church, a snake came slithering out. Later, we had found a fish in the wall that had come from the bayou, which is not close."

Dirt and sand and the musty smell of damp wood filled the air in the church sanctuary, but that wasn't as bad as what church members found in the food pantry, located on church property.

"The water was deep and the raw meat from the freezers was floating in the dirty water. We got in there as soon as we could to clean it up," pastor Kathy Sebring said. "We took the damaged canned goods and packages of crackers to the street to be removed by cleanup, yet people were still coming by and taking many of the items home because they were so desperate for food."

Because of damage to the sanctuary, Sunday services are currently being held in the church's front yard.

"We had some people pass by and ask if they could take communion," Sebring said. "One couple had just moved here the Monday before the storm and lost everything. They were very distraught and we invited them to join us. They later said they thought it might be time to get back into church."

Of course, PDA is also on site in communities affected by Hurricane Irma, and has teams helping those impacted by multiple forest fires in the northwestern states of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. To be part of the connected churches of our denomination, we support the PDA through our donations to One Great Hour of Sharing. In addition, we are joining with other churches in Havertown to fill 5-gallon plastic buckets full of clean-up supplies that will be provided to families and church members across areas of need. We will be accepting full buckets, supplies to fill buckets, and money to buy supplies and pay for shipping. St. James UCC will coordinate the storage and shipping but we are ready to do our part! Here is the list of supplies needed for *one* bucket (not counting the bucket, which can be used but clean):

- Five scouring pads (green, scotchbrite type)
- Seven sponges, assorted sizes (the shiny kind last better than cellulose in a moldy environment)
- One scrub brush
- Eighteen cleaning towels (reusable, like Easy Wipes ®)
- One 50 oz. or two 25 oz. bottle(s) of liquid laundry detergent
- One 12 oz. bottle of liquid concentrated household cleaner (like Lysol ®)

- One 25 oz. bottle liquid disinfectant dish soap (like Dawn ®)
- Fifty clothes pins
- Clothesline, two 50 ft. or one 100 ft.
- Five dust masks
- Two pairs latex gloves (dishwashing type)
- One pair work gloves (cotton or leather palms)
- One 22-27 count box heavy-duty trash bags (contractor type 33-45 gallon)
- One 6 to 14 oz. bottle of insect repellent (pump/lotion, not aerosol)

Look for the sign-up sheet and supply depot at the church to help make this project work. It is a way to offer direct and loving support to people who have lost almost everything. Let Kate Hiebert know if you have questions.



Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it. — Song of Solomon 8:7

Hurricane Harvey may have been downgraded, but the torrential rains are still pounding parts of Texas and Louisiana. Historic flooding has forced rivers and streams from their banks and submerged homes, churches, businesses and roads, stranding thousands of people. We are relying on the generosity of Presbyterians to provide financial and hands-on support to help the whole church stand with these communities and the Presbyterian family as it responds to its neighbors.

The needs for the response are great. God's people are once again called on to stand in the "GAP" — Give. Act. Pray.

GIVE: Please give generously to support Presbyterian Disaster Assistance's emergency response and long-term recovery work in the areas affected by Hurricane Harvey. Designate gifts to DR000169-Harvey.

ACT: Put together Gift of the Heart kits for survivors in the affected areas — hygiene kits and cleanup buckets are especially needed. For more information, go to pda.pcusa.org/page/kits/.

Contact the PDA Call Center to be notified of volunteer opportunities.
Call (866) 732-6121 or email pda.callcenter@pcusa.org.

PRAY: God, our Shelter, be a strong presence in the lives of neighbors who, having survived the winds and rains of Harvey, now face grief, uncertainty and weary days. May our generosity in prayer and in tangible signs of support overflow more than floodwaters, to sustain your work of healing and rebuilding and to bring comfort and strength to those who suffer. Amen.

Keep up to date on long-term recovery efforts at presbyterianmission.org/pda or [facebook.com/PDACARES](https://www.facebook.com/PDACARES)

SCOUTING NEWS



Boy Scouts from Troop 434 are deep in their year of programming in the Church. A new crop of scouts is part of the group now, and many of these younger scouts went to summer camp in July with the rest of the troop. Their first camp-out of the year was a trip to Rickett's Glen State Park, a beloved chance to tent camp, hike around the waterfalls, and finish by diving right in. In addition, you'll see them around the town this month as two Life Scouts begin the projects that will be part of their Eagle Rank advancement. Josh Angell will be planting trees along the Karakung Creek banks to provide a riparian buffer to slow down runoff and prevent flooding. He'll need volunteers to help dig holes, plant trees, and restore work areas on October 14. Everyone is welcome to come by and help; more details will follow. Kevin Dougherty will be building and installing a tactile walkway for the playground at Chatham Park; individual panels will help children interact with different textures and materials. Details on that will follow as well.

Of course, Haverford Township Day means Scouts from Llanerch staking their claim to the corner of Brookline and Darby before, during, and after the parade. The Cub scouts from Pack 462 will be selling drinks and snacks; the Scouts from Troop 434 will be making and selling funnel cakes from their secret recipe. If you are not at the celebration of the 300th anniversary of the Presbytery that day, be sure to stop by and help yourself to a treat on October 7. Proceeds will go toward new tents for the camping program. See you there!

The Community Pot Luck was a success with new neighbors, community folks and church members attending of all ages.

A fun evening of fellowship enjoyed by all with perfect weather! If you were unable to attend, we'll try another Friday evening fellowship in the future.



CONVENIENT PLEDGING. GIVE IT A TRY!



WE'RE GLAD TO MAKE ONLINE GIVING AVAILABLE FOR FINANCIAL GIVING TO OUR CONGREGATION.

You can make secure, online gifts to our congregation by using our web portal provided by the Presbyterian Foundation. It takes less than a minute, and your pledged giving can go directly from your checking/savings account to our Church account. You can schedule your gifts for the whole year, make contributions monthly, or give weekly. If you haven't tried it, you might like it!

Access the "Give Now" Button on the "Donate" tab on our website, or use your smartphone or tablet to scan the QR code on the right!

