

APPLE BUTTER HILL NEWS

*For our children
and their families
and friends*

From the ABH Clubhouse

BY PELI

“We can surely count our blessings”, Peli thought as he strolled through the grove. “I can see flowers springing up. Some trees are in bud. After a long winter nap, the earth is waking up. I think I can put my muffler away soon.”

“Peli! There you are!” Grace called out. She fluttered faster towards him and circled around his head. “Did you see all of the flowers coming up- daffodils and the trees have leaves...”

“Yes, Grace I was just noticing how everything is coming back to life. It seems so appropriate right after Easter. We just came from the time of self-reflection during Lent. Then Easter brings joy because God loved us and gave His Son. We are alive again in God’s grace.”

“We are sort of like the flowers. We get to grow again after we died due to our sins.” Grace observed.

“That’s an interesting observation, Grace. Yes, we are made new through God’s grace and Jesus’ death and resurrection.”

“So we should have a party and count our blessings. Don’t you agree?”

Oh, dear thought Peli. She is determined to have this party. “Well, Grace I am not sure we need a party to celebrate Spring.”

“So you don’t think we should have a party....and celebrate God’s grace?”

“Well, I didn’t say we couldn’t.” Peli thought for a moment. “Grace, what would a count your blessings party look like?”

“Well...like a party. You know cake and ice cream and balloons and decorations and..”

“I see. How does that help us to count our blessings and share our gifts of the Spirit?”

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Clubhouse

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Count Your Blessings

“Grace landed on a flower. “Oh. Well... Well... It shows that we are happy for what we have.”

“Could we do something better with the funds to pay for a party? How could we be a blessing to someone else?”

“Well- what if we had a luncheon instead- you know like soup and sandwiches. We can leave out the balloons. And...We can have leaves for Johnny so he doesn't complain.”

“That's kind of you to show consideration for Johnny's preference. The members of St. Paul's have been generous during Lent to help buy the farms for families in need. When we reached out to the community, they donated fabric for the Blue Church Quilters.”

“So I can't have a party-or even a luncheon?”

“Grace are you still pushing for that party?” Johnny asked as he poked his head through some leaves.

“Johnny you startled me! Where were you?”

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father...” James 1:17

“I was munching on some of the tender new leaves I found. But about this party, do we really need it?”

“You are taking Peli's side.” Grace pouted. She knew she was losing her argument. “Parties are always good. They bring people together.”

“Well, what if ...what if...I got it...To enter the lunch you have to offer something from your blessings. Something that takes effort to think about- or to do for someone else- or for our church.”

“Hmmm. Tell us more Johnny. A Count your blessing luncheon-interesting.” Peli answered. Peli thought “This is good stewardship.”

“Whenever we have a luncheon people just take money from their wallet and give an offering. That's not bad, but we have so many other blessings besides a financial offering. What if we asked people to give something that is unique to them and the gifts they have been given by the Holy Spirit.”

“Interesting. Our garden ladies could use help. Maybe giving gardening time? Or serving on altar guild? Children could help usher or acolyte. And there are so many opportunities outside the congregation. A smile can make someone's day better. Is this what you mean? People would really have to reflect on all God has given them. Everyone has something to offer.”

“Yes exactly. We can announce a date and people have to offer a gift from their blessings to enter the lunch. They have to think about all God's blessings to them and what they will offer back to God.”

Grace was listening very intently. She thought This isn't exactly the party I wanted. But Johnny and Peli are right. One of the best ways to celebrate what God gave us is to use our gifts to glorify Him. And maybe I can still bring a few balloons. Peli used balloons as a way to see the Holy Spirit's presence as they dance on air currents. He said it was like the Holy Spirit being present.”

“What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits to me?...O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His steadfast love endures forever.”

PSALM 116:12; PSALM 118:1

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM (9:30AM)



Johnny Awards
Any child of God can be nominated for this recognition when they apply the Ten Commandments and Gifts of the Spirit.
KINDNESS-Being friendly, caring thoughtful, considerate
GOODNESS-Showing love through actions that benefit another person
JOY- Accepting and sharing our blessings
LOVE- Serving God





Adventures of Olivia & Liam

Olivia got on the bus and looked around for her friends. Then she remembered that Brooke was at her father's house this weekend, so she was on another bus. Emily had the flu. She found a seat and the bus moved on to the next stop. Olivia's thoughts wandered to the children's sermon yesterday. She thought about how Jesus can change lives. "Pastor compared becoming a Christian to a butterfly that goes from a selfish caterpillar to a beautiful butterfly" Then she began to think about Larry and all that had been going on, especially after he was in the hospital. She thought "Six months ago I never thought Larry would be eating lunch with us. He was so mean. We really didn't want him around. Now he is so different, so quiet. I prayed for Larry and prayer works-I guess. My Sunday School teacher always says prayer works. Maybe she is right." As the bus rolled on, Olivia stared out the window thinking about Larry and prayer and if God really changed him.

The bus stopped and issued its usual loud gasp as the driver opened the doors for the children to exit. Olivia gathered her book bag and walked down the aisle to the door.

"Hey, Olivia" Larry called to her as she reached the top step. To her surprise Larry was standing at the bottom of the steps.

"Hey" she called back. She looked around for Liam and Lucas, but didn't see them.

"You got a minute? I have a question to ask you."

"Sure. What's up? Where are Liam and Lucas?"

"I think they are inside. But I wanted to ask you about this guy Jesus. Is he for real? I mean why do you think he is so important? You keep talking about him."

Olivia stopped walking. She was never asked that question before, and she didn't know what to say. She knew she believed that Jesus was God's Son. She believed Jesus died and rose again to give us eternal life. "Oh, well , ahh ... Jesus is God's Son."

"Okay, but why do you think he is important? I was reading my Grandmother's Bible about this guy Paul and he believed in Jesus too. Everybody believes in Jesus but why? What's in it for them?"

"You asked a lot of questions. God sent Jesus. Jesus died on Good Friday. On Easter He rose from the dead. Now we have eternal life with God. Our sins are forgiven if we have faith. My teacher said that we are forgiven by God's grace through our faith. And it says so in the Apostle's Creed that we are studying."

"So how do you know if you have faith? How do you know if God forgives you?"

"The bell is about to ring. Can we talk at lunch?" Olivia didn't know what to say.

"Well. Okay." Larry started toward the staircase to go to his classroom. He thought "Do I need to be forgiven? I was pretty mean to Olivia and her friends. But they were with me when I came back to school. I wonder if God forgave me. But why should he? Why should they? And what's this grace stuff about?"

As Olivia walked down the hall she was thinking "Why did Larry ask me those questions? What do I say to him? I just never thought about *why* God loves me. God will help us answer Larry's questions. I will pray about it when we have lunch today." She walked into class.

SPECIAL CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

January 21

February 18

March 17

April 21

May 19

"Children's Special Events

THE FOUNDATION FOR OUR FAITH IS THE TEN COMMANDMENTS. THE APOSTLES CREED FORM THE WALLS AND FLOOR OF OUR HOUSE. GOD THE FATHER, GOD THE SON AND GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT SURROUND WITH LOVE EVERY DAY

JOIN US IN APRIL AS WE LEARN MORE ABOUT WHO GOD IS AND HOW AWESOME HE IS!

Be Kind



The Lunch Room

“Larry met me at the bus this morning. He asked me some strange questions.” Olivia told Brooke.

“Like what?” Brooke asked Olivia. But she thought “Olivia never even asked me about being at my father’s house this weekend. I thought she would care about what happened to me. We’re friends.”

“Why is Jesus important” Olivia replied. “Shush I see Larry and Liam heading over here. Don’t say anything.”

“Where’s Lucas?” Asked Brooke

“He said he would be here in a couple minutes. He was getting something from his locker” answered Liam.

The table was quiet as they watched for Lucas.

Brooke thought “no one has asked me about my weekend. It’s all about Larry.”

Finally, Larry spoke up. “What’s so special about this guy Jesus?”

Olivia and Liam looked at each other. “Well, Jesus is the Son of God.” Liam responded. “In the Bible, we learn how God created everything out of nothing-out of total blackness. He created us last to take care of everything else.”

“What does that have to do with Jesus?” Olivia was watching Larry. He seemed to really want to know about Jesus.

“Jesus is God’s Son” Brooke added. She wanted to be recognized.

Liam added “The creation story is the beginning of the Bible. The Bible is God’s Word for us. In the first half of the Bible we learn about lots of people who make lots of mistakes. Then in the second half of the Bible God sends His Son to show people that He really loves them.”

“Larry, that’s the story of Easter. Jesus died for us. When He came alive again on Easter it was God showing us that He has power over sin and any bad thing or person. God changes bad people because He loves them.” Olivia added.

Liam could see that Larry was getting uncomfortable with the direction of the conversation. “We better eat lunch before the bell rings for class.” he said.

Brooke was sitting quietly during most of this conversation. She was feeling that her friends had left her. The changes in her life and what happened this weekend were a big deal. She thought Olivia was her best friend, but now she doesn’t seem to care.

Olivia noticed that Brooke was unusually quiet. “Brooke how was your weekend with your Dad? What did you do? Did you go any place?”

“It was okay, I guess. We went to the dog park. He has a dog now.”

“Well that’s fun.” Olivia replied. “You can tell me about it on the bus going home today. The bell is about to ring.”

“Yeah, sure. We can talk on the bus.”

Olivia could see that something wasn’t right about her friend. Her weekend must have been difficult.



Letting your light shine

Let the light of God’s love shine through you so that others may get to know Jesus. A simple invitation, a kind word or a helping hand means that you are using the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Remember, the only God some people may ever know is the one they see reflected in you.

"Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God, I will strengthen you, I will help you..."

ISAIAH 41:10

FAMILY EVENTS

Johnny Awards are given to our children when they follow the Ten Commandments. Anyone can nominate someone for a Johnny Award. You can see the award on our home page.

April 14 Article 3
Apostle’s Creed

April 28- Soup &
Sandwich Luncheon

Family Bible Time

“The Apostles Creed”

INTRODUCTION

Martin Luther wrote the Small Catechism as a basic Christian instruction for families with children. He identified three doctrines that every family should know- The Ten Commandments, The Apostle’s Creed and the Lord’s Prayer.

In Article Three of the Apostle’s Creed, we confess that we believe in God, The Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the person of God who calls us through God’s Word to be holy, encourages us to gather as believers, and sends us out to share the Good News.

It is the Holy Spirit who guides us and our actions every day. The Holy Spirit brings us God’s Word and God’s plans for our life. The Holy Spirit encourages us and enables us to bring God’s Word to others.

We are saved by grace through the work of the Holy Spirit in and through us, and not our own efforts.



Our Bible Story

Romans 3:21-29

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sin, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

I believe in the Holy Spirit

Through our study of the Apostles Creed we learn that God comes to us in three ways. He is God, the Father and Creator. He is God, the Son and our Redeemer who gave his life for our sins. God is also the Sanctifier. God comes to us through the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit was present in the lives of many people in the Bible including David, Saul, Simeon, Mary and Jesus. The Holy Spirit enters into our lives calling us to faith and calling us to use and share the gifts we have-love, joy, goodness and kindness (Galatians 5:22-23).

The Holy Spirit is part of every aspect of our faith-lives. He comes to us through baptism, communion and prayer.

Breaking News

The Holy Spirit calls us to have faith and to share our gifts with others.

We are justified by God’s GRACE through FAITH

Holy Spirit + Church + Pastor + Building = God’s Mission in the World

What’s Important?

- *The Church is the people of God gathered together, not the edifice.*
- *Jesus is with us if just two people gather-anywhere*
- *Through baptism we are part of the community of believers!*
- *Through Holy Communion we are forgiven and blessed.*
- *Count your blessings- “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father” (James 1:17)*
- *“Be doers of the word and not hearers only” (James 1:22)*

Family Bible Time Con't



The holy catholic church,

We have faith in God because the Holy Spirit led us to a community of saints (believers), who can help us grow in our faith. Jesus told his disciples that whenever two or more are gathered in His name, He is with them (Matt 18:20). Using Jesus' statement, we can create a simple formula to understand this portion of the Apostles' Creed.

The Church = People of God (no building needed)

Jesus tells us that a church is not a building, but it is you, the children of God. He also tells us that "church" does not just occur on Sunday morning. Church happens whenever two people, of any age, gather together to pray, to have a meal or to play together in ways that please God.

The Holy Spirit empowered the apostles to courageously speak to everyone in Jerusalem about the gift of Jesus and our salvation (Acts 2:1-12). The Holy Spirit was at work through Paul as he started churches in cities outside of Jerusalem and as far away as Colossae and Rome.

The communion of saints, the forgiveness of sin

The church is the community of believers, headed by Christ (Colossians 1:18). We become members of His church through baptism. We hear the Word of God and receive the Holy Spirit when we are baptized with water and God's Word. Through baptism we are called and saved from the powers of evil. Jesus was baptized by his cousin, John before He began his ministry. He received the Holy Spirit. (Matt 3:13-17) After His resurrection (Easter) Jesus sent His disciples into the world to teach and to baptize others so that they would have salvation. (Matt 28:19). We are also sent to tell others about how much God loves us.

Baptism= Membership in God's Family (saints)

After we are baptized, we need to grow in faith and love of God. We learned in Article 1 that God created a beautiful world and - people messed up.

In Article 2 we learn God sent Jesus to take on all of our sins. Because we need forgiveness, Jesus gave us the "Lord's Supper". This is the meal first instituted on the day before He was crucified (Luke 22:17-20). It reminds us of God's love for us, despite our bad choices. The wine and the bread represent Jesus' crucifixion (Good Friday), but it is God's Word of forgiveness that blesses us. When we count our blessings, we must include communion for the forgiveness of sin.

Holy Communion=Forgiveness of Sins

Resurrection of the body and life everlasting

The Holy Spirit works in us through the Word of God. We study God's Word in the community of believers (church). We cannot on our own receive salvation. We cannot "earn" salvation by just doing nice things or following the laws (Ten Commandments). We studied how difficult it is to follow the laws. Jesus died for us so that we have forgiveness. God grants us that forgiveness if we have faith (Rom 3:28). This is called grace. God gives us a new life because we have faith through the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier.

Through God's grace we are His children. We will have eternal life in God's kingdom and be with God when our human life is over. When we lose a loved one we should not be sad because God has called them home to be with Him forever

Prayer

Heavenly Father,
Thank you for your promise
Help us when we face
challenges.
Guide our thoughts, words and
actions so we do not harm
others.
Help us to keep your
commandments. Amen.

Let your faith grow



Apple Butter Hill Mission Team

ACTIVITY Tic Tac Toe

Supplies

A board with Tic Tac Toe squares.

Two colored pens (Sharpies)

Directions ·Play a game of tic-tac-toe that will help your family understand the Apostles' Creed.

A correct answer allows the person/team to put an X or an O on the board.

·Determine if the correct answers have been given.

·The questions about the Apostles' Creed are as follows (answers in parenthesis):

- 1.The Apostle's Creed includes three persons in one God. (T)
2. The Apostle's Creed describes God as Creator. (T)
3. The Apostle's Creed includes the Ten Commandments (F)
- 4.It The Apostle's Creed talks about holy communion (T)
5. The Apostle's Creed confirms that the Bible is the Word of God. (F)
- 6.Jesus' life is summarized. (T)
- 7.The Apostle's Creed gives us rules for how to live our lives. (F)
8. The Apostle's Creed says God is the Father, the Redeemer and the Sanctifier. (T)
10. The Apostle's Creed is a statement about how awesome God is. (T)

ACTIVITY Getting to Know the Bible

Supplies:

A Bible

The creation story tells us that in the beginning God created _____ and _____ (Genesis 1:1). The Apostle's Creed calls God _____ and _____ (Article 1)

Jesus taught his disciples to pray " _____ who art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy name." (Matthew 6:9)

Jesus said "Let _____ come to me: for to them belong the _____" (Mark 10:14)

Paul wrote to the church in Rome "I thank my _____ through _____ for all of you, because your _____ is proclaimed in all the world." (Romans 1:8)

"Love is _____ and _____; love is not _____ or _____." (1 Corinthians 13:4)

God so loved the world that He gave His only Son. Why? _____ (John 3:16)

After his resurrection, Jesus gave the disciples a commandment to travel. What were they instructed to do as they traveled? _____ (Matthew 28:19)

"I believe in _____, his only Son, our Lord; " (Apostle's Creed, Article 2)

"I believe in the _____; the holy catholic church, the _____ of saints, the _____ of sin" (Apostle's Creed, Article 3)

About the ABH Mission Team

The Apple Butter Hill Mission Team are the children of our church.

Our key mission is to bring God's love to those around us.

We use our gifts of the spirit-love, kindness, goodness and joy to be light for others.

We share God's Good News of Jesus.

We invite everyone to join our team and God's mission to love and bless His world.

ABH Editor: Peli Cann
Contributor: Johnny Giraffe
Contributor: Grace Butter-Fly

*Stick your neck out for Christ
Do God things...every day*

Apple Butter Hill Mission Team

Draw a picture to help you remember that the Holy Spirit calls you to be part of God's family and gives you gifts that you can share with others.



Count Your Blessings

Make a list of the blessings you have received
Draw a picture of one of them here

Thank you God for the gift of the Holy Spirit