

Eleanor Presbyterian Church Rededication Service

Eleanor Presbyterian Church in Putnam County will celebrate a Rededication Service on Sunday, Feb. 17 at 1:30 p.m. The celebration will include a bagpiper, the church choir, The Putnam County Ringers and the River Magic Chorus of Sweet Adelines. Light refreshments will be available after the program in Fellowship Hall. Bluegrass Harmony will provide entertainment during this time.

On April 2, 2016, a ½" water line break from a drinking fountain on the second floor of the church was discovered. The leak went undetected for two days. Significant water damage impacted walls, ceilings and floors throughout the building. Nearly \$100,000 in damages occurred.

Pastor John Yeager said, "When I arrived at the church, water was still pouring from the second floor on to the first floor and then into the basement. Pews were swimming in an inch of water. The ceiling and walls looking like a Salvador Dali painting as they seemed to be melting from the weight of the water."

The church's small congregation of about 20 members met at another church the week after the flood and in the second floor Fellowship Hall until July. Since they were able to move the chairs around, they began to have "participatory" sermons. This interaction brought members together in a way that had not been seen in a long time. When it was time to decide about the restoration of the pews, the session decided to do away with them and purchase chairs. The pews (and old hymnals) were given to United Holy Church, a predominately African-American church in Huntington, which was in need.

As they grew together and addressed the building issues, the congregation was reenergized. The activities that were conducted the Christmas after the flood bear witness to their spiritual rebirth. On Dec 12, 2016, they had their first ever Christmas Tree lighting. Over 450 lights adorned the 40-foot fir tree located on the church grounds. About 50 Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts and their families attended and sang carols around a bonfire as hot chocolate flowed and cookies were eaten. On Dec. 16, they participated in the community Christmas Parade. The float included a stable scene with their 11- and 12-year-olds playing Joseph and Mary, angels, shepherds and wise "women." Then, on Dec. 17, the church's newly expanded choir performed the musical comedy "An Unexpected Christmas" before a packed house of about 60, followed by soup and sandwiches.

One member who has been there for over 40 years told Yeager, "Our church has come alive again." Yeager added, "What we thought was devastating, God turned into an opportunity. What looked like a total disaster, God used as away to bring us together...and get a \$100,000 unplanned renovation in the process. He concluded, "I'm now beginning to understand what he means when he says, 'Follow me.'"

Contact the Pastor at 304-360-1198 for more information.