



December 2018

The First Presbyterian Church of Clarks Summit

Church Family Advent Celebration

Please join us on the first Sunday of Advent, **December 2**, as we deck the halls, enjoy fellowship and song, and begin the season with giving.

Following worship, come downstairs for:

- Lunch (provided by the church)
- Advent hymn sing
- Hanging of the Greens
- Cookie baking
- Assembling Hygiene Kits for PDA

To prepare for the hygiene kits, we are collecting the following items: hand towels (16"x28"), washcloths, wide-tooth combs, nail clippers, bath-size bars of soap, tooth brushes, and band aids.

For those who wish to share their singing, carolers will depart the party to sing at Clarks Summit Senior Living at 1:00pm. All are welcome to carpool from the party or join us at the facility.

This is our church-wide party. All are welcome. Come celebrate the season of Advent with us!



December Dates to Note

- Sunday, December 2 11:15 a.m.
Advent Celebration (see above)
- Monday, December 17 7:00 p.m.
Blue Christmas Vespers (see page 3)
- Monday, December 24 Christmas Eve
Family Service at 6:30 p.m.
Lessons and Carols at 9:00 p.m.
Jazz Communion at 11:00 p.m.
- Weekly worship services at 10:00 a.m.
- The WAY on Wednesday nights, with the exception of December 26 and January 2.
- The Church Office closes at noon on December 24 and 31, and will be closed December 25 and January 1, 2019.

Table of Contents

Page 2 -	Session Notes, Deacons, Financial
Page 3 -	From The Pastor
Page 4 -	Presbyterian Women, Thank You, Memorial Service
Page 5 -	Mission and Justice, Website, Annual Reports due, Alleluia and Chapel Choirs
Page 6 -	Adventures in the Bible, Holiday PJ Drive, Youth Fellowship, Christmas VBS, Online Advent Devotional
Page 7 -	The Way
Page 8 -	Birthdays, Anniversaries, Lectionary
Page 9 -	Calendar
Page 10 -	Join us on Christmas Eve

The Presbyterian deadline for
the January issue is
December 14

Notes from the Session Meeting November 13, 2018

1. If you haven't filled out your pledge card for the 2019 year the Session would appreciate you do it at your earliest convenience, either by filling out the card you received by mail or on-line. Thank you for all of your support in so many ways.
2. The Session will hold a special meeting on Tuesday, November 27, 2018 to finalize the budget for the 2019 year.
3. Session is developing a Planned giving Program. We watched a video from the Presbyterian Foundation, and reviewed our membership in the Planned Giving Navigator program.

Beverly Bright, Clerk of Session

The Presbyter is a monthly newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church, 300 School Street, Clarks Summit, PA 18411.

All visitors are welcome to worship with us.

Worship services are held on Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m. Child care is available. Communion is observed the first Sunday of every month.

If you do not attend a church in this area, we invite you to any and all of the events, programs, and worship services described in this newsletter. Please call the church office to arrange child care. Our sanctuary and Fellowship Hall are both handicapped accessible.

Church Office	(570) 586-6306
Fax	(570) 587-3784
Web Page	www.fpccs.org
Pastor	William G. Carter
Administrative Assistant	Nancy Owens
Coordinator of Children & Youth	Jana Schillinger
Treasurer	Wayne Griffiths
Editor	Amanda Roberts
Clerk of Session	Beverly Bright
Director of Music	Frank Jones
Director of Bells	Richard Cochrane
Director of Chapel Choir	Kay Ten Eyck
Organist	Kay Ten Eyck
Sexton	John Conklin

Board of Deacons

Care Team Ministry **Coordinators are:**

Independent & Assisted Living:	Donna Kepler 587-2729
Deacon Meals:	Donna Kepler 587-2729
Time of Loss:	Anne Rich 587-2802
Emergency Home Repairs And Maintenance:	Joe Waters 586-7233

Please let the Board of Deacons Care Team Coordinators or the church office know if anyone is in need of care.

We're here to care for FPC members and friends and we count on all of you to let us know when help is needed. This is our ministry and our Christian privilege to care for you.

FROM YOUR FINANCE COMMITTEE FOR THE MONTH ENDING OCTOBER 31, 2018

REVENUE

-	Budget	\$ 306,112
	Actual Received	- 271,123
	Difference	\$ (34,989)
		=====

EXPENSES

-	Budget	\$ 316,422
	Actual Expenses	- 300,728
	Difference	\$ 15,693
		=====

BUDGET VARIANCE \$ (19,295)

PLEDGE INCOME

	Budget	\$ 266,667
	Received	- 250,528
	Difference	\$ (16,139)
		=====

Per Capita 2018 is \$33 per member. As of the end of October, \$3,255 has been contributed.

From the Pastor

December 2018



As I have picked hymns for the Christmas season, I've had an unexpected discovery. Many of our favorite carols mention misery, gloom, distress, and sadness. Ever notice that?

- "... he was little, weak, and helpless; tears and smiles like us he knew; and he feels for all our sadness..." (*Once in Royal David's City*, v. 3)
- "And you, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low..." (*It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*, v. 4)
- "Then why should we on earth be sad, since our Redeemer made us glad?" (*On Christmas Night*, v. 2)
- "disperse the gloomy clouds at night" (*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*, v. 6)

Perhaps I was predisposed to notice this year. We lost my beloved mother-in-law at the end of September, and the first round of holidays can be pretty rough. There was an empty chair at the Thanksgiving table and our family was feeling the loss.

In our congregation, we have lost many beloved friends and relatives over the past year. I've counted sixteen funerals, over twice my annual average. These are people dear to us, folks who attended regularly, taught Bible studies, sang in our choirs, and gave of themselves generously. The loss is acute, and grief always lingers until it is done with us.

So I'm grateful for the honesty of Christmas carols. They celebrate the coming of the Christ, but they do not do so in a superficial way. They declare that God is truly with us, even when we experience difficulty. The Incarnation of God is complete in the Christ who lived a thoroughly human life.

Last year, someone gasped when we sang the fully restored version of "What Child Is This" in our new hymnal. In the middle of verse two, it reads, "Nails, spear, shall pierce him through; the cross be borne for me, for you." At the door she said, "I forgot about that part of the story." When the shadows are long in December, perhaps that's when it is best to remember.

This year, we offer a **"Blue Christmas Vespers" on Monday, December 17 at 7:00 p.m.** I hope you will consider attending, especially if you are living with a bit of gloom and sadness. There is, of course, no expiration date on grief, so please join us if you would find this helpful. There is strength in companionship. And above all, there is hope in the One who comes to save us.

It promises to be a rich and meaningful December at the Church on the Hill. Come and spend it with us.

With you in the journey,

Rev. Bill Carter

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN CIRCLE BIBLE STUDIES



In November we studied about discouragement that comes with “loss of heart,” but this month’s lesson will lead us to understand what happens when the heart is redirected! When kings and God’s people don’t follow God, will God remain faithful? Our December class will examine what Chronicles and Kings say that helped God’s people then and might help us now.

We will be looking at King Solomon and Jeroboam in particular. Our author looked to buy a house with a cracked foundation. Would you recommend buying it? What did she do and why? How might that relate to our spiritual foundation and can it be repaired?

This is also the time of year when we plan to have our special lunch or dinner together. The Priscilla and Dorcas Circles will meet on December 18 at church from 10:00-11:30 and then leave for our luncheon. The Eunice Circle will meet on December 18 for dinner at 6:00 p.m. (Location TBD.) Even if this is your first time to join us, please know you are very welcome. We will have a “jolly good time.”

If you have any questions or need a ride please call Barbara Pittman at 570-587-2050 or Bonnie Plantholt at 570-212-1566 for 10:00 a.m. and Kate Hopkins at 570-587-2390 or Barbara Mellander at 570-587-5236 for 6:00 p.m. **MERRY CHRISTMAS!**



I am truly blessed to belong to such a wonderful church family. Your prayers, cards, food, phone calls, and offers to help in anyway I might need were very instrumental in my healing from my recent surgery. You truly do exemplify Christ's love. Thank you is such a small thing to say for all that I have received. Know that I hold all of you in my prayers and will be forever grateful for each of you.

With much love and gratitude, Judy Cutler

Your Mission and Justice committee sends a big thank you to everyone that participated in the **Alternative Gift Market**. Your decisions to buy gifts that are "out of the box" makes a positive impact on so many people in need. Thanks once again for supporting our market.



We recently received the sad news that we lost our good friend Frank Winters at the age of 90. Frank and his wife Virginia (who passed away in 2014) moved to Beaufort, SC, a number of years ago. They were a vital part of our church family for many years, and served on our staff as sextons for much of that time. We will host a memorial service for Frank's family and friends on Saturday, December 15.

The family will receive visitors at 10 a.m. in the narthex. The memorial service will begin at 11 a.m. in the sanctuary, and will be followed by a luncheon in Fellowship Hall.

MISSION AND JUSTICE

During this Christmas and Advent Season, we celebrate leadership; past, present and future through support of the **Christmas Joy Offering**. We do so because church leaders greatly impact our lives of faith, walking with us down the path to be more like Jesus. We want those church leaders and their families who find themselves grappling with a critical financial need to have the resources they need which are provided through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions. We also support the offering to help our future leaders in the church and world, like those educated at our Presbyterian-related schools and colleges that equip communities of color. Supporting these students helps the whole church develop leaders who reflect the wideness of God's diversity.

For those supported through the Christmas Joy Offering, this help is truly a gift from above. May our gifts, and the leaders who receive them, point us always to the truth of the one whose birth we celebrate, Jesus Christ — the truly perfect gift. Please give generously.



Notes from the Alleluia and Chapel Choirs

submitted by Kay Ten Eyck

"What a tragedy it would be if we lived in a world where music was not taught to children."

– H. Norman Schwarzkopf, General, U.S. Army, retired

We had a marvelous time singing for the All Church Concert on November 11. Special thanks to Dr. Alan Baker for accompanying the Chapel Choir and Ed Wargo for playing a flute descant for the Chapel Choir. And a shout out to the Adult Choir for our combined anthem - it was a blast!

In December we will sing for worship Sunday, December 9 and at the 6:30 Christmas Eve service. A quick reminder for parents, there will not be rehearsal Wednesday, December 26. We are so fortunate to have such a loving and supportive church family with whom we can share our journey as we grow and learn as both musicians and Christians.

Did you know that you can find old bulletins, Presbyters, and photos on the website?

Just go to www.fpccs.org, then Links | Archives. Check it out!

It's time to write our annual reports.

All committee chairpersons, Board Moderators, and program leaders are encouraged to share the good news of your committee's activities for 2018 and goals for 2019.

Please forward your report (electronically if possible) to the church office by January 13, 2019.

Youth Fellowship

All youth grades 6-12 are invited to join us

on

Friday, December 7th at 6:30pm

for a **movie night**

and

Sunday, December 16th, 6:30-8:30pm

for our **Christmas party**

Bring a friend! New faces always welcome.

Join us on Sundays as we continue another series of Adventures in the Bible! We're learning about the Bible, preparing for worship, building friendships, and exploring different ways to express our faith through arts, crafts, and music.



Classes begin at 9:00, and we welcome children age 2 and older as well as a parent(s) or grandparent(s). If you have any questions, please contact Karis Naeher (klnaeher@outlook.com) or Tabbi Miller-Scandle (tabbi.miller-scandle@uofs.edu) for information. We look forward to seeing you during December!

Holiday Pajama Drive

Please return all PJ's to the church by December 9. They must be either wrapped or in a gift bag. It is very IMPORTANT that you attach the tag from the tree to the package as it identifies the child's Head Start Center.

Thank you,
The Christian Education and Growth Committee



Our Online Advent Devotional

We are preparing "Watch for the Light," our **Advent online devotional guide**. About twenty folks in our church family are writing daily reflections on the scripture texts of the season. Visit the site by going to <http://adventfpccs.blogspot.com>.

On that site, you can sign up for the devotional notes to be sent directly to your e-mail address. Look for the box on the upper right that says "Follow by email." Enter your email address, click the button, and confirm the subscription on your email. It's easy!

Christmas VBS: A Savior is Born

Thursday, December 27

and

Friday, December 28

1:00-3:30 p.m.

Age 4 to Grade 5

Come explore the Christmas story as we continue to celebrate the season.

Bible stories • Games • Crafts
Snack • Songs • and more!

Enrollment is limited. Contact Jana Schillinger at fpccs.vbs@gmail.com to register or for more information. **Registrations are due by 12/20.**

Christian Education



It's for life!

THE W.A.Y.The Wednesday Aadults and Youth Christian Education

"I am the WAY, the TRUTH, and the LIFE"

Supper 5:00 Classes 6:15

IMPORTANT DATES:**Sunday, December 2** - Advent program for all ages following worship, lunch provided. Celebrate the season!**Wednesday, December 26** - No WAY classes. Merry Christmas!**Wednesday, January 2** - No WAY classes. Happy New Year!**Classes for Children and Youth:**

Grace & Faith (4 years old - Grade 5) experience Bible stories through our new curriculum *Growing in Grace & Gratitude*. Promises, challenges, and blessings: this winter we'll explore them all. In December, we will learn about God's Promise of Peace, be Surprised by Grace, and experience God's Gift of Love.

We Believe (Grades 6 and up): This winter, students will finish exploring a unit called *Knowing God*, answering questions about who God is and who we are as Christians. In December, we will answer: Does God ever get angry? How strong is God's power? And, What does my view of God have to do with my life?

Wednesday Classes for Adults**November 28, December 5, 12, 19: Scriptures for the Season of Advent****Brent Eelman, Charlie Pinches, Bill Carter**

As we prepare for the coming of Christ among us, we will study and explore some of the Bible texts about the surprising arrival of God's kingdom. What is it like, when God "breaks into" our world?

Coming in January! Beatitudes study with Rev. Carter and friends, and **Changing World, Unchanging Church** with Dr. Brent Eelman and Dr. Tabbi Miller-Scandle.

Wednesday Evening Schedule

5:00-6:10 pm	Light supper *
5:30-6:10	Chapel/Alleluia Choir Rehearsal
6:15-7:10	Christian Education classes for All Ages
7:15-8:25	Adult Choir
8:30-9:15	Bell Choir

*Please make a reservation for supper by filling out a slip found in the church office, the kitchen, or in pews and returning it in the offering plate or in the basket near the phone in the kitchen. You may also call the church office to make a reservation.

Suggested donation \$3 per person.

Birthdays, Anniversaries, Bible Readings



- 7 Dylan Farrell
- 8 Ginny O'Brien
- 9 Betty Keen
- 14 Linda Young
- 18 Kevin Shane
- 19 Aaron Cole
- 20 Brian Schillinger
- 21 Fred Campbell
- 22 Jeanne Comly
- 28 Shirley McLaughlin
- 30 Liam Farrell



- 14 Bill and Sue Fulton
- 23 Bill and Jessie Davis

If your birthday or anniversary has not been listed, and you would like it to be, please call or send a note to the church office.

December 2

Communion Servers

Connie Weiss, Captain

John Weiss, Dave and Donna Porter,
Olympia Cianfichi, Ryan and Sue Flynn

Lectionary Readings

First Sunday of Advent

Jeremiah 33:14-16; Psalm 25:1-10;
1 Thessalonians 3:9-13; Luke 21:25-36

Second Sunday of Advent

Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79; Philippians 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6

Third Sunday of Advent

Zephaniah 3:14-20; Isaiah 12:2-6,
Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Micah 5:2-5a; Psalm 80:1-7; Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-55

First Sunday after Christmas Day

1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26; Psalm 148;
Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52

December Greeters

- 2 Steuart Bailey
- 9 Jeanne Comly
- 16 John Conklin
- 23 Janet Stansbury
- 30 Jean and Bill Siebecker

Ushers

Jim McLaughlin and Betty Keen

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
First Presbyterian Church December 2018						1 7am-AA
2 7am-AA 9am-Adventures in the Bible 10am-Worship: 11:15-Church Family Advent Celebration 3:00pm-OA	3 7am-AA 6pm-Girl Scouts 7pm-Mission and Justice	4 7am-AA 10am-PW Exec. Bd. 6pm-OA 7pm-Big Book	5 7am-AA 11am-Prayer & Share 5pm-THE WAY Supper 5:30-Chapel and Alleluia Choirs 6:15-Christian Ed 7:15-Adult Choir 8pm-AIAnon 8:30-Bell Choir	6 7am-AA 6pm-AIAnon 7pm-Building & Grounds 7pm-Christian Ed	7 7am-AA 6:30-Youth Fellowship	8 7am-AA
9 7am-AA 9 am-Adventures in the Bible 10am-Worship 11:15-Confirmation 11:15-Worship, Music, Arts 3:00pm-OA	10 7am-AA 6pm-Girl Scouts	11 7am-AA 10am-MBK Quilts 6pm-OA 7pm-Big Book	12 7am-AA 11am-Prayer & Share 5pm-THE WAY Supper 5:30-Chapel and Alleluia Choirs 6:15-Christian Ed 7:15-Adult Choir 8pm-AIAnon 8:30-Bell Choir	13 7am-AA 8:30am-Men's Breakfast 6pm-AIAnon	14 7am-AA Presbyter Deadline	15 7am-AA 11am-Memorial Service for Frank Winters
16 7am-AA 9am-Adventures in the Bible 10am-Worship 11:15-Confirmation 11:15-Fellowship Committee 3pm-OA 6:30-Youth Fellowship	17 7am-AA 6pm-Girl Scouts 7pm-Blue Christmas Vespers 	18 7am-AA 10am-PW morning Circle study/lunch 6pm-OA 6pm-Eunice Circle study/ supper 7pm-Big Book	19 7am-AA 11am-Prayer & Share 5pm-The Way Light Supper 5:30-Chapel and Alleluia Choirs 6:15-Christian Ed 7:15-Adult Choir 8pm-AIAnon 8:30-Bell Choir	20 7am-AA 6pm-AIAnon	21 7am-AA	22 7am-AA
23 7am-AA 9am-Adventures in the Bible 10am-Worship 3pm-OA	24 7am-AA Church office closes at noon Candlelighting services: 6:30, 9:00, 11:00 p.m. Christmas Eve	25 7am-AA Church Office is Closed. 	26 7am-AA 11am-Prayer & Share 8pm-AIAnon	27 7am-AA <div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; color: green; font-weight: bold;">Christmas VBS 1:00-3:30 p.m.</div> 6pm-AIAnon	28 7am-AA	29 7am-AA
30 7am-AA 9am-Adventures in the Bible 10am-Worship 3pm-OA	31 Church Office closes at noon. New Year's Eve					



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
 300 School Street
 Clarks Summit, PA 18411-1536

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 U.S. Postage
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P A I D
 Clarks Summit PA

DATED MATERIAL

Return Service Requested



Join us for worship on Christmas Eve



- ◆ At **6:30 p.m.** we welcome children and their families for a special service planned with them in mind. We sing our favorite carols and retell the Christmas story in a fresh and engaging way.
- ◆ Our **9:00 p.m.** service is a traditional Lessons and Carols service with our Adult Choir leading us in the singing of carols. Rev. Carter will preach, and we conclude by lighting candles to "Silent Night".
- ◆ The **11:00 p.m.** service is a joyful and informal jazz communion for Christmas. This year, we welcome back the Presbybop Christmas Eve Band. It will be a great way to welcome the birth of Christ.

New for this year: **Join us for a special Blue Christmas vespers service on Monday, December 17 at 7:00 p.m.** The Christmas season can be tough, especially if you have recently lost a loved one or are having a difficult time. We invite all who are living with loss and difficulty to gather for a prayer service in our sanctuary. Our hope is to find deep consolation in the Christmas story and to claim God's eternal Light in the midst of our shadows. **All are welcome.**