



The Presbyter

May 2021

The First Presbyterian Church of Clarks Summit

JOIN US FOR A 'RE-GATHERING'

COVID crazy?

We are too! And the winter has lasted way too long! With warm weather right around the corner (we hope), we are planning a picnic so that church folks can gather outside, have a long-overdue visit and just enjoy each other's company.

The date is May 16th following church. If you are attending in person, we will leave directly after church and head to Lackawanna State Park (so feel free to dress casually). If you are still attending virtually, plan on meeting us there between 11:30 and noon. Either way, **bring a bag lunch and a folding chair** so we can gather around and enjoy lunch, then take a walk on the trail or just hang out and visit.

We are all getting tired of hearing this but 'don't forget your mask!'

Hope to see you then!

The Fellowship Committee



We worship every Sunday in two ways!

Have your vaccines? Make a reservation with our office (**570-586-6306**) and join us in person at 10:00 AM.

Tune in online for our weekly service, which is broadcast live on **our video page on YouTube** and archived for later viewing on the same site.

There is also a link on **the church's Facebook page**.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Saturday, May 1

Church Clean-up Day 9 AM-noon

Friday, May 14

Arts Series program 7 PM
Susquehanna Valley Brass

Sunday, May 16

"Re-Gathering" PICNIC at about 11:30 AM
Lackawanna State Park. Bring your own bag lunch and chair.

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Session News:

In April 2020, First Presbyterian Church applied for the Paycheck Protection Program that had become available due to Covid. In May, we were granted a Small Business Loan to cover payroll and benefits for an 8-week period of time.

On April 10, 2021 correspondence was received from PNC Bank stating that the loan had been FORGIVEN!

Beverly Bright
Clerk of Session



The Presbyterian deadline for the June issue is May 14

The Presbyterian 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:

Deacon Meals	Anne Rich 570-587-2802
Time of Loss	Anne Rich 570-587-2802
Emergency Home Repairs and Maintenance	Joe Waters 570-351-3620
Deacon Driver	Jeanne DeVirgilis 570-587-0214

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 February 28, 2021

REVENUE

Budget	\$ 62,700
Actual Received	<u>- 55,621</u>
Difference	<u>(\$ 7,079)</u>
	=====

EXPENSES

Budget	\$ 64,410
Actual Expenses	<u>- 57,385</u>
Difference	<u>\$ 7,025</u>
	=====

Result of operations \$ (\$54)

PLEDGE

Budget	\$ 54,167
Actually received -	<u>51,054</u>
	<u>(\$ 3,113)</u>

Per Capita received was \$3,135 (3/28).
2021 Per Capita per member is \$35.

From the Pastor

May 2021

“When we return, we will be newcomers.” This was the quote overheard by a colleague. I believe it is exactly right.

I’ve seen the look on some faces. She comes into the church sanctuary after a long absence, looks around with some familiarity. But it’s not quite the same. The walls are the same, the pews every bit as uncomfortable as she remembers. But many of the other faces are different. She recognizes some but can’t pull up the names. Of course the hymnals are gone, somebody is singing to her, and the blue taped box seats are odd.



Change is jarring. No doubt about it. Especially if we did not choose it. As we begin to emerge after fifteen months of separation, we can expect a season of awkwardness and discomfort. Many things in church have remained constant: the Gospel is preached every week, there are opportunities to study the Bible and talk about faith, and our generous congregation supports our mission as an expression of the Holy Spirit’s work.

Yet there are much that has been disrupted. Fellowship has been diminished to a conversation on the phone or a brief masked encounter in the grocery store. Stays in hospitals or relocations to assisted care facilities have been unaccompanied. Service opportunities have become solitary or gone away completely. Funerals and weddings that would have packed the church are now small group gatherings often held later, muted and unsatisfying. And it is particularly difficult for a highly engaged church that runs on volunteer leadership to connect as it once did.

The situation is beginning to change, although it is slow. Last week, I was able to make my first hospital visit in eight months. The nursing homes and rehab centers still don’t want me. It was weird to walk the empty corridors of Mercy, all the doors pulled shut, nurses gazing suspiciously at me. However my spirits are lifted as an increasing number of those both baptized and vaccinated have trickled back into the church building. It is good to see them. We anticipate seeing more!

“When we return, we will be newcomers.” The same but different. We return to a sanctuary where no pew is invisibly assigned to a family, where everybody sits where they can. We tune in more deeply to services that we have watched from a distance. Masked, we meet one another from six feet away, imagining the hidden smiles and recognizing the humanity in one another’s eyes. We gather in gratitude that we have been spared of the pandemic’s worst, lamenting those we have lost to death and other life changes, and confident that Christ is with us. He is leading us forward. We will get through this. If you are reading this, you have already gotten through a great deal.

Anxiety is what provokes us to pretend the pandemic is over. Anxiety will also keep us in the house after the coast is clear. Let’s recognize that. And let’s take this awkward season as an opportunity for God’s Spirit to create a new shape to our ministry. The recovery will take a while. We will not return to everything that we had. It will be different. Yet this is a tremendous opportunity to keep what is important, to strengthen what connects us to one another and to Christ, and to welcome fresh ways to be the living church.

It will be new. We will be newcomers. Don’t be afraid.

Rev. Bill Carter

A Tribute to Pastor Bill—via our new official endowment!

December 1, 1990 was an important day in the life of our church. On that day, Reverend William G. Carter accepted the call and has served and began to lead our congregation for the past 30 years. His leadership has been outstanding, including his efforts during the on-going pandemic.



As a tribute to Pastor Bill, a low-key campaign is being conducted to honor him for his service to us. Please join those who have already made contribution in his honor to the new First Presbyterian Church of Clarks Summit Endowment Fund. Church leaders will interpret this fund in the upcoming months. You can learn more about the national Presbyterian Foundation at www.presbyterianfoundation.org.

To be part of this recognition for his service, send a donation to the church office marked to the Endowment Fund, a Tribute to Pastor Bill.

Have you had your shots?

If you have received the appropriate vaccines and wish to return to the sanctuary for worship, we cordially invite you to contact our office and make a reservation. We also welcome children who have returned to school.

Because the corona virus continues to be contagious, we ask all who attend to wear masks, keep appropriate distances, and refrain from singing. We look forward to the day when ALL of us can be back together. That day is coming. In the meantime, we will respect one another and do what is safe for all.

We continue to worship every Sunday in two ways!

Have your vaccines? [Make a reservation with our office](#) (570-586-6306) and join us in person at 10:00 am.

Tune in online for our weekly service, which is broadcast live on [our video page on YouTube](#) and archived for later viewing on the same site.

Calling all My Brothers' Keeper quilters:

We will resume our quilt making on May 11, at our usual time of 10:00 AM, subject to the same recommendations as used for Church service:

COVID shots completed

Masks

Social distancing

Locally Leah Rudolph coordinates the production of plastic ground mats for sleeping bags from "plarn" (plastic yarn) made from plastic grocery bags and crocheted into the mats. She is willing to attend a meeting and demonstrate. Also, you can view the process on her Facebook page: Mat Makers NEPA: Keeping Plastic out of Landfills with Ground Cover Mats. Please save your grocery bags and bring them to the Church for this project.

Thank you for all your support - we have received numerous donations which allow us to once again make sleeping bags for the homeless.

A Letter of Gratitude



Dear members of First Presbyterian Church,

A year ago, we couldn't have imagined a global pandemic that would disrupt all of life and increase hunger, homelessness, and unemployment. Staff at the Presbyterian Hunger Program have been working hard to respond to COVID-19 and its impacts on hunger as well as adjusting to remote work, learning technologies, and new processes to help us stay relevant, effective, and faithful in this work.

We are so grateful for your support in this ongoing difficult time. Because of the increase of hunger-related impacts of COVID-19, your generosity is crucial to our ability to respond.

Because of you, churches and organizations are able to distribute more food to people who are hungry and also to do education and advocacy to help ensure future food security for vulnerable communities. Because of you, global partners living in places of war, violence, poverty, famine, drought or flooding have better access to safety, health, and basic needs.

We believe that God is with us, that Christ surrounds us, and that the Spirit guides us, particularly as we navigate the most challenging times. We then feel called to ourselves be present with communities who are suffering. We try by our actions, partnerships, and ministry to be God's love in places of pain. Your contribution to PHP also demonstrates presence, solidarity, and hope—to us who work at the national church and to communities themselves who are struggling. Thank you.

In gratitude,

Rebecca Barnes
Coordinator, Presbyterian Hunger
Program

www.pcusa.org/hunger



Photo thanks to PHP grant partner Amrita Bhoomi, India

FEMA Funeral Related Reimbursement

FEMA will be accepting applications to reimburse up to \$9000 for Covid-19 related funeral expenses beginning April 12. The original article (from the Boston Globe) and the FEMA link are below.

<https://www.boston.com/news/coronavirus/2021/04/08/fema-coronavirus-funeral-expenses>

www.fema.gov/disasters/coronavirus/economic/funeral-assistance



Earth Day Reflections from the Highway Cleanup Crew

One of the many “green” projects our church undertakes each year is our commitment to pick up the roadside litter on the Morgan Highway between Winola and Country Club Roads. On a recent Saturday morning (April 10th) about a dozen of us celebrated Earth Day (April 22nd) a few days early. After some hellos and catching-up, we donned our Penn-Dot supplied orange safety vests and gloves, grabbed some Penn-Dot supplied trash bags, and headed off in small groups down each side of the road in both directions. The good conversations continued, and about an hour later all were back, sharing the obligatory stories about the strangest of our finds; this time the winner was Chris Norton’s discovery of a \$20 bill that went into the collection plate the next day. Signs at either end of our pick-up area alerted motorists to our presence, and a number took the time to roll down their windows and say “thank-you.” We also enjoyed some bird songs, saw lots of daffodils, and left a dozen bags of litter for Penn-Dot to pick up on the following Monday.

If you have ever wondered what kinds of litter we collect, we mostly find cans, bottles, and plastic shopping bags, as well as some golf and tennis balls and the occasional hubcap. We see lots of cigarette butts, too, but we don’t try to pick them up. They are the most common form of litter across the globe, with something like 4.5 trillion tossed down each year, in part because amazingly, almost a quarter of Americans still don’t think of them as litter. Even sadder, most contain plastic and while they will break down into smaller and less visible fragments, they remain in the soil far longer than organic refuse.

You can still do a little something this month for Mother Earth by taking some time to watch **Kiss the Ground**, a full-length documentary currently streaming on Netflix. Narrated by Woody Harrelson, it sheds light on a “new, old approach” to farming called “regenerative agriculture” that has the potential to balance our climate, replenish our vast water supplies, and feed the world.

If you would like to join an upcoming highway cleanup, we complete them on the second Saturdays of April, June, September, and November, so June 12th is your next opportunity to lend a hand. We meet at 9:00 AM in the parking lot of Clarks Summit Methodist Church (corner of Grove Street and the Morgan Highway). For more information, contact Alan Baker at abaker2@verizon.net.

SOCKS! SOCKS! SOCKS!

A HUGE THANKS to everyone who donated socks for the Clarks Summit State Hospital since we were unable to host our guests from there for our annual Spring luncheon.

159 pairs of socks were delivered!!!!

Hopefully we will be able to welcome them to lunch in the fall.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN



Mission and Justice Committee

Thank you! Thank you! The outpouring of your support to our **One Great Hour of Sharing** offering has been phenomenal! As of Friday April 23rd, the offering has surpassed \$9,400, way over our \$5,000 original goal! In honor of Fred Lyon and on behalf of those most at risk persons and communities around the world who will benefit from this offering, the Mission & Justice Committee thanks all of you for your tremendous generosity!

In preparation for **Pentecost Sunday on May 23rd**, you have an opportunity to make a donation to the **Pentecost Offering**. A gift to this offering helps the church encourage, develop, and support its young people, and also address the needs of at-risk children. 60% of the **Pentecost offering** is used to support children-at-risk, youth, and young adults through ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. The remaining 40% is retained by individual congregations wanting to make an impact in the lives of young people within their own community. The Mission & Justice Committee has decided for this year to allocate the 40% to a very worthy nonprofit agency in our community, the **Children's Advocacy Center of Northeastern PA** in Scranton, that since 1998, has helped more than 12,000 children and adolescents by effectively assessing and treating child abuse and neglect. Often experiencing shame and guilt, these children undeniably need the time, love and special treatment they receive at CAC to repair their broken childhood...*and* keep it from having a lasting effect on their adulthood.

Ways to contribute: Send or deliver in person to the church your contributions with a check noting Pentecost on the memo line (either in the pink Pentecost Offering envelope in your box of offering envelopes or in a plain envelope) or contribute on line (can find on our church's website the Give Here green button which takes you to our online site for giving: be sure to designate Pentecost).

One Great Hour of Sharing—Prayers Answered!

Our goal this year of \$5,000 for One Great Hour of Sharing was nearly doubled – a whopping \$9,000 was gathered. AMEN! Many people will benefit from the generosity of our church family.

Let us continue, in peace, to go forth into the world, thanking God for the strength to Live the Word!

“FPCCS
Healers in a world of hurt.
Blessings upon you!”

Grace and Peace, with love,
Char and all in the “Lyon’s Den”,
especially Fred, who loved working on OGHS.



Class of 2021

Calling all graduates!

If you are graduating this year (or know someone who is) we want to know. Whether it's a high school, college, or post-college graduation, we want to recognize your accomplishments...but we need to be sure you're on our list!

Please contact Myrna Diven at 570-586-8821 with information. Thank you.

PAUL R. DOBSON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Open to all graduating high school members of the church who plan to further their education.

Please download the application from the churches website (fpccs.org) and mail by May 8th to:

Janet Dobson, 105 Center Lane, North Abington Twp, PA 18414.

The winner will be announced when we have graduate recognition.

Vacation Bible School * Vacation Bible School *** Vacation Bible School**

VBS 2021 will be held July 19-23

Save the Date!



Calling all volunteers!

If you'd like to help welcome everyone to God's table by teaching, leading, or preparing, let us know!

Please contact Jana Schillinger or send an email to fpccs.vbs@gmail.com

Stay tuned for more details!

Camp Lackawanna



is open for summer registrations, and our church provides scholarships for all kids who want to go. Mykela Bricka, our new camp director, took part in our February 14 worship service and shared with us about the new developments at our church camp.

The camp is also actively seeking staff for the summer. They are looking for a Cook as well as Counselors. Applications are available at www.camplackawanna.org.

*Next Arts at First Presbyterian Event***Susquehanna Valley Brass****Live - Friday, May 14 7:00 pm****YouTube Broadcast - May 16 4:00 pm**

The Susquehanna Valley Brass (SVB) will perform an in-person concert at the church on Friday, May 14 at 7:00 pm. The SVB is a dynamic new group comprised of five of NEPA's premiere brass musicians. Locally members of the SVB can be heard performing with the NEPA Philharmonic, Scranton Brass Orchestra, Voodoo Brass Band, and the East Coast Sound Brass Quintet. Members of the group have previously held touring positions performing all across the country with the Monumental Brass Quintet (DC), Bay Street Brass (IN), and the Rodney Marsalis Philadelphia Big Brass (PA). Several members of the ensemble are committed to the future of the arts and are active educators holding positions at Tunkhannock High School, Bloomsburg University, and Marywood University.

The ensemble entertains audiences with a selection of music from the Baroque, Renaissance, Jazz, and Early American musical traditions. A historical and engaging perspective is always present during Susquehanna Valley Brass performances. This program in particular will survey early Americana including styles found in popular songs, music of the American Armed Services, and Jazz. Members of the Susquehanna Valley Brass are: Kenneth Luckey and Sean Mason on trumpets, Rena Hummel on French horn, Chuck Smith on trombone, and ensemble leader Michael Parker on tuba (pictured)



Those who have been vaccinated (and kids!) are welcome to attend this free concert in person with a reservation made by going to our church website at www.fpccs.org or the church's Facebook page. For others, the concert will be recorded and broadcast on our YouTube channel on Sunday, May 16 at 4 pm. Information on the link will be made available at www.fpccs.org and on the church's Facebook page.

The event is offered as a gift to the community. The Arts at First Presbyterian series is supported by a grant from the Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts Program, by a Lackawanna County Community Arts and Culture Grant, and by private contributions. We thank our donors for their support. There is no admission charge for this event. A free-will offering will be taken. For more information, call the church office at 570-586-6306.

Robert London Scholarship Fund

The Christian Education and Growth Committee is pleased to award scholarships to any child, teen or young adult who wishes to go to a church camp, church leadership conference, church national event, or other Christian Education event. The amount given to each student is considered on an individual basis. Applications can be picked up in the church office.

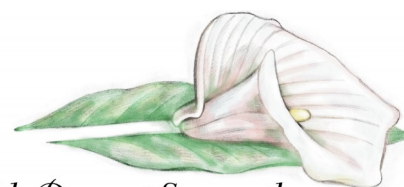
Joys

Sorrows

Thank You Notes



2	Gary Wadsworth
11	Wally Longcor
21	Jeanne DeVirgilis David Nacher
22	Jana Schillinger
23	Jillian Shane
24	Sue Flynn
28	Kate O'Brien

*With Deepest Sympathy*

Sympathy of the congregation is extended to families and friends of these former church members who recently passed away:

- * Tudor Williams, husband of Patti.
- * Barbara Lodwick.



May 24 – Nina and Brian Schillinger

Lectionary Readings

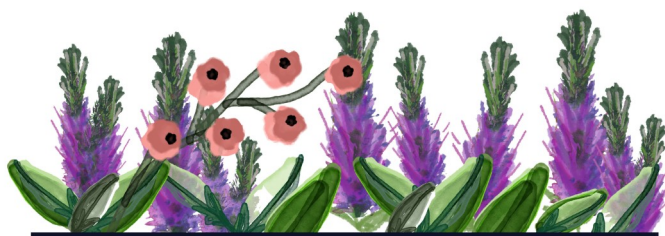
May 2	Acts 8:26-40; Psalm 22:25-31; 1 John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8
May 9	Acts 10:44-48; Psalm 98; 1 John 5:1-6; John 15:9-17
May 16	Acts 1:15-17, 21-26; Psalm 1; 1 John 5:9-13; John 17:6-19
May 23	Acts 2:1-21; Ezekiel 37:1-14; Psalm 104:23-34, 35b; Romans 8:22-27; John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15
May 30	Isaiah 6:1-8; Psalm 29; Romans 8:12-17; John 3:1-17

Pastor's Sabbatical

This summer, from June 1 until August 31, Rev. Bill Carter will be on sabbatical to rest and renew. Originally the sabbatical was scheduled for summer 2020, but Covid-19 changed everybody's situation. For those who remember his plans outlined in the January 2020 (!) newsletter, he will be researching and writing a book on the interplay of jazz and the spiritual life. During this summer, he will take a break from preaching and all pastoral duties.

We have lined up some wonderful preachers and caregivers in his absence, and will share the complete schedule in next month's newsletter.

In the meantime, please keep Rev. Bill and his family in prayer as they finalize their sabbatical plans. His last Sunday in the pulpit before the sabbatical will be May 30. He will return for Jazz Communion on September 5.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

We worship every Sunday in two ways!

Have your vaccines? [Make a reservation with our office \(570-586-6306\)](#) and join us in person at 10:00 am.

Tune in online for our weekly service, which is broadcast live on [our video page on YouTube](#) and archived for later viewing on the same site.

There is also a link on [the church's Facebook page](#).

Many of our committees and groups are still meeting virtually. Masks and social distancing protocols are in place whenever anyone is in the church building.

For Your Calendar

Spring Clean-Up—May 1, 9:00 AM until noon

Next Stated Session Meeting – May 4 at 7:00 PM, **virtual and in-person**

Christian Education Committee – May 6, 7:00 PM, **virtual**

My Brother's Keeper Quilters—May 11, 10:00 AM

Mission and Justice Committee – May 11, 7:00 PM, **virtual**

Susquehanna Valley Brass Concert—May 14, 7:00 PM

“Re-Gathering Picnic” - May 16 after church at Lackawanna State Park

Worship, Music, Arts Committee – May 20, 6:00 PM, **virtual and in-person**

Board of Deacons – May 25 at 7:00 PM, **virtual and in-person**

Study/Social Gatherings

Men's Breakfast and Bible Study, Women's Circle Bible Study, and FPC Book Group are **not meeting** at this time.

Support Groups

Many of our support groups are resuming in-person meetings. The schedule is below.

- * Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meets each morning at 7 AM in Fellowship Hall.
- * Al-Anon meets on Wednesdays at 7 PM by Zoom and Thursdays at 7 PM in Fellowship Hall.
- * Overeaters Anonymous (OA) meets in room 210 on Tuesdays at 7 PM, Thursdays at 9:30 AM, Saturdays at 9:45 AM, and Sundays at 3 PM.

For purposes of social distancing, Support Groups are currently meeting in Fellowship Hall.

Next Presbyterian Deadline is May 14 - planning to mail on May 26.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

300 School Street
Clarks Summit, PA 18411-1536

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U.S. Postage
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Clarks Summit PA

DATED MATERIAL

Return Service Requested



It's Time for a SPRING CLEAN-UP!

Mark Saturday, May 1 on your calendar, 9:00 a.m. to Noon, for an outside clean-up day. On the schedule will be removing all evidence of this past winter from the sidewalks, parking lots, and flower patches in preparation for a warm and wonderful Summer!