



# The Presbyter

February 2023

The First Presbyterian Church of Clarks Summit

## Refugee Case Example from Mission and Justice

To help bring to life our work with refugee families, we thought we would feature one family and the help we have provided.

An Afghan mother fled Kabul in August 2021 during the political upheaval that returned the Taliban to power. She then arrived in the United States and settled in Scranton with two of her children. Her husband and other children fled to other countries. She has been working at a site two miles away from her home, without a car, requiring her two children and herself to walk two miles at night and in inclement weather from work to their home. In addition, this woman has only temporary immigration status and in order to stay in the United States and eventually bring the rest of her family here, she needs to apply and obtain a permanent resident visa. This application procedure is daunting for someone who does not yet speak English.

The ways that our church have helped this woman thus far include the following: The deacons provided this woman and her children the needed funds to pay for both the \$626 security deposit to move into safer apartments with Afghan neighbors that can lend support including childcare, and \$500 for the moving costs to these apartments. The Mission and Justice Committee provided funds to help pay for the workbooks being used for the English as a Second Language services offered at the Scranton Library where this woman and her children meet to learn English. In addition, the Mission and Justice Committee provided funding for the translation services offered this woman as she navigates her application request for a more permanent VISA.

These funds from our committee budgets come from your generous offerings from week to week.

It takes a village with many thanks!



REFUGEE ASSISTANCE



## ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation of First Presbyterian Church of Clarks Summit has been called for Sunday, February 5 at 11:15 a.m. The meeting will take place in the sanctuary. A link to participate on Zoom will be on our weekly e-mail and website, and the packet of annual reports will be made available ahead of time.

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The Presbyterian deadline for  
the March 2023 issue is  
February 17

## Notes from the January Session Meeting January 15, 2023

1. Elected Alan Baker as the president of the corporation of First Presbyterian Church, Clarks Summit. Elected Beverly Bright as the clerk of session and secretary of the corporation of FPCCS. Elected Wayne Griffith as the church treasurer and treasurer of the corporation of FPCCS.
2. Red pads have been placed in the church pews. Session is asking everyone who attends church service to sign them and pass them on to their neighbor sitting next to them that day. It is important that we know who is worshipping with us each Sunday.
3. Please remember to pay your per capita dues. The amount for this year is \$42 per member.

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.

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

## FROM YOUR FINANCE COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2022

<b>REVENUE</b>	
Budget	\$394,200
Actual Received	<u>413,372</u>
Difference	\$ 19,172
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Budget	\$400,169
Actual Expenses	<u>421,257</u>
Difference	(\$ 21,088)
Result of operations	(\$ 7,884)
<b>PLEDGE</b>	
Budget	\$325,000
Actually received	<u>331,363</u>
	\$ 6,363

2023 Per Capita assessment is  
\$42 per member.

## Board of Deacons

Care Team Ministry Coordinators are:

Deacon Meals	Erika Adams 570-878-2410
Time of Loss	Anne Rich 570-587-2802
Emergency Home Repairs and Maintenance	Joe Waters 570-351-3620
Deacon Driver	TBD

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 the Pastor

February 2023

I am ready for a snow day. How about you? It's been a while since we've had one. The weather has been mild, to say the least. These days, it seems like Pennsylvania has mixed up its meteorology with Australia.

There's nothing I like better than to call in and say, "Wish I could make it to the office, but they haven't plowed my street." A fire will be built in the fireplace, a pot of soup will bubble on the stove, and I will lean back in my chair with a good book. I love to have a day like that – a day to be still, a day to ponder, a day to sit by the roaring fire and reflect.

If it's a serious snow day, sometime in the afternoon I will blow the dust off the DVD player and insert the disc of my all-time favorite snow day film. The 1994 movie, "Nobody's Fool," has been a continuing favorite. It was Jessica Tandy's final film and features Paul Newman as a cranky loner who rediscovers his son.

For those who haven't seen it, it's a slow-moving film. The ensemble cast gives a great depiction of small-town life. The town has plenty of well-seasoned characters who rely on one another. Living in subsistence circumstances in upstate New York, they gather at the local watering hole to bet on Judge Wapner's verdicts, contend with one another's estranged relationships, and live with a realistic assessment of one another's strengths and weaknesses. I love the truthfulness of the film.

The townspeople in the movie form a curious parish, and they remind me how important it is to get to know folks over a long time. There are nuances in their relationships and depths to their personalities. They fail and succeed in ways not immediately obvious. When true change occurs in their lives, it is a very subtle sign of the Spirit's activity. And we will miss it if we're in a hurry.

I recommended the movie to a fast-paced friend who later reported, "It was like watching paint dry." Perhaps. But what kind of wisdom comes quickly? True knowledge does not come from quick consumption. Honest insight runs counter to the impulse to use other people for our own purposes. We must lean forward if we are to perceive the truth of what's going on with the people around us. And perhaps we will see what divine forces are at work in our everyday lives.

So I'll take a snow day when it comes. For most of us, life is a marathon, not a sprint. Even if our suburban neighbors push to get down the road as quickly as they can, I'll choose the slow path – in order to notice more.

See you on Sunday,

*Rev. Bill*



## Notes from our Finance Chairperson

As we enter the new year, the Session and Finance Committee would like to thank you for your generosity and continuing support for the work of our church. Each year, our budget includes the payment of per capita apportionment, a fee that each church is charged for each member in the congregation. Our payment for this year is ~\$22,000, or \$42 per member. Last year, we only received \$2,614 toward our per capita payment, and the church had to pay the remainder (\$15,936). Please make sure that you are using the Per Capita envelope in your box of envelopes or paying this online separately from your standard donation. As an example, if you are a family of 4 and your children have been confirmed, the assessment for your family is \$168.

The Session is working hard to ensure that any members who are not active are removed from the rolls. This will reduce our per capita assessment that the church must pay. An active member is one who attends church and helps to support the church financially. If you know of anyone who would like to be removed from the church membership rolls, please contact Beverly Bright or JoAnn Hall.

You will notice that the red folders are back in the pews! This allows the Session to better assess how many active members we have and **should be filled out by both members and visitors each time we attend worship.**

Thank you for your help!  
Tabbi Miller-Scandle



## *Songs, Old and New*

Sunday, March 5, 2023 4:00 pm



The human voice is a wonderfully expressive instrument. Long before people played musical instruments, they used their voices to make music. This “afternoon of song” program features art songs, arias, spirituals, and show tunes. Featuring several locally-known musicians, including Jenn Cowgill, (left) and accompanied by Dr. Rick Hoffenberg (right), these talented singers will thrill you, and maybe even bring a tear or two in this rare treat.

The concert will be held in the sanctuary of the church and is open to the public free of charge, with a free-will offering taken to help defray the costs of the event. For more information, please call the church at 570-586-6306.



## Mission and Justice

It is with such great gratitude that we say “Thank You” to our congregation for your amazing generosity shown throughout the year, and in particular, throughout Advent with the Gift to a Stranger Event.



The above photo pictures the 4 laundry baskets brimming with 65 gifts for four immigrant families. Close to 40 individuals bought and wrapped these gifts, that were then hand delivered in these baskets to United Neighborhood whose staff planned on delivering them to the families a few days before Christmas.

Secondly, the Batwa pygmies in Uganda have benefitted with new mattresses, cups, plates, saucepans, soap, hoes, clothes, corn and one pig, thanks to your individual purchases, all amounting to \$800. Thirdly, four families contributed to the Appalachia Service Project through their chocolate purchases.

Additionally, many of us sent individual contributions to the Presbyterian Gift Catalogue and the Heifer Project. Finally, \$787 was raised for the Christmas Joy Offering, to benefit retired and active church workers and families along with support for the education of women and people of color.

It truly takes a village and we are most grateful!

## Our Next Hickory Street Community Lunch and Grocery Distribution...March 25th



*According to Feeding America, the nation's largest hunger relief organization, 1.3 million Pennsylvanians are presently facing hunger, and about 25% of those are children.*

We will continue our support of Hickory Street Presbyterian's free monthly community lunch on Saturday, March 25<sup>th</sup>. The menu for that day remains TBA but watch for updates in our print media and a display with sign-up sheets in the narthex, as we will again need about a dozen volunteers to prepare the entrée and another dozen to prepare desserts, as well as people to serve the meal that day. **But our biggest need will be to again have on hand 35 bags of groceries to distribute, and we already know what is needed there. Look for printed shopping lists in the narthex and/or bulletin and take them with you when you do your own grocery shopping to watch for good sale prices. Boxes will be placed in the narthex to collect the following for each bag:**

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1 box of Cereal                         | 1 can of Tuna                     |
| 1 box of Pasta                          | 1 4-pack of Jello or Pudding cups |
| 1 can or plastic jar of Spaghetti Sauce | 1 box Pop Tarts                   |
| 1 box of Mac n Cheese                   | 1 plastic jar of Peanut Butter    |
| 1-2 cans of Vegetables                  | 1 plastic jar of Jelly            |
| 1 can of Fruit                          | 1 bag of Candy                    |



### Program for Lent

Join us after worship on **Sunday, February 19th**, for a time of food, fellowship, and learning. Families with children as well as congregants of all ages are invited to come for a light lunch followed by an introduction to the Lenten season. It will be a great opportunity to share fellowship and faith with our friends and family, so be sure to mark your calendars!

Christian Education



It's for life!

Also, please note other **upcoming CE events**:

Sunday, March 12 — Exploring Faith Practices

Sunday, April 2 — Holy Week program

Sunday, May 28 — Pentecost celebration



The Nursery, located in room 208 on the sanctuary level of the building, is open Sunday mornings from 9:40—11:10 a.m. for children ages 3 and younger.

Our nursery caregiver, Heather Lyons, is present each Sunday morning to greet your young ones, read to them, and provide a welcoming environment during the worship service.



Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 22 with a worship service in the sanctuary at 7:00 p.m.

\* \* \* \* \*



### Lent: A Time for Reflection and Prayer

As we begin a new church season, we encourage you to take time individually and as a family to explore the meaning of Lent. Families can pick up a **Lent Bag** filled with devotions, activity and reflection suggestions, and more. We have versions available both for families with children and for those without. Please take only 1 bag per family. Bags will be available for pick up by Sunday, Feb. 19 or contact Jana to make arrangements for safe drop off at your home.

### Souper Bowl Sunday

Sunday, February 12 isn't just the Big Game... it's a big opportunity to help those in need!

Remember to bring your donation to church on Souper Bowl Sunday or check [fpccs.org](http://fpccs.org) for online donation information.

All proceeds will benefit the AEM Food Pantry.



Christian Education



It's for life!

## Wednesdays at First Presbyterian Church

6:00 p.m. **Bible study** with Rev. Carter and Friends

Our winter Adult Study is **"The Lord's Prayer"**. It continues through February 15.

**After Ash Wednesday (February 22)**, we begin a Lenten series on **"Exclusion and Embrace."** Each week, the class will discuss a brief video that explores our relationship to those who have frequently been excluded from our circle of faith. These include gays and lesbians, the Jews, those who practice other religions, and people of other nations. If the videos are already posted online, we will share the link in our weekly email.

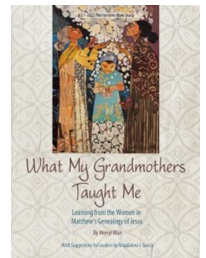
7:00 p.m. **Adult Choir** rehearses each week in the sanctuary

8:00 p.m. The **Bell Choir** will rehearse weekly in Fellowship Hall

### Other Opportunities for Learning

**The Men's Breakfast group** meets for donuts and Bible study on the first and third Thursdays of every month. They gather for conversation at 8:30 a.m. in the Session Room (206) and study from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. They normally discuss the scripture text for the following Sunday's sermon.

**Presbyterian Women** continue to meet monthly for a Bible study on the third Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. Rev. Carter leads the Horizons Bible study, entitled **"What My Grandmothers Taught Me: Learning from the Women in Matthew's Genealogy of Jesus."** In February, we will discuss Lesson 6.




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Save the Date!

March 26

Brunch anyone? Keep your ears open.

Something's cookin'.

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After about 35 years of activity, the **Book Group** is taking a hiatus. Between the pandemic, people moving or spending significant time away from this area, and others not feeling comfortable being out and about much, our group has shrunk to a very small number. Because of this, I have decided to take some time off from managing this group. I know there are many who enjoy reading and I am hopeful we can restart our meetings this spring or summer.

For those who are not familiar with the Book Group, we would read the same book then meet once a month to discuss it. I know I have read many books that I wouldn't have read without this group. If you have an interest in joining, feel free to contact me for more information.

Judy Cutler, [jdragonflyc@hotmail.com](mailto:jdragonflyc@hotmail.com) or 570-446-9310

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## Joys

## Sorrows

## Lectionary



The sympathy of the congregation is extended to Jim McLaughlin and his family on the passing of his beloved wife, Shirley, on December 26, 2022.

- 1 Jan Thyren
- 2 Jeff McLaughlin
- 4 JoAnn Hall
- 6 Chris Shane  
Steven Sloneker
- 7 Jonathan Schillinger
- 10 SaraAnn Hosier  
Tabbi Miller-Scandle
- 17 Holly Shane
- 19 Melba Fialko
- 21 Rev. Bill Carter
- 25 Erika Adams  
Victoria Jeschke  
Susan Kelly  
Thomas Heinze
- 26 Jeneane Adams  
Diane Smith
- 28 Diane Cole  
Gayle Hamilton

## Lectionary Readings

### February 5, 2023

Isaiah 58:1-9a (9b-12); Psalm 112:1-9 (10);  
1 Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16); Matthew 5:13-20

### February 12

Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Psalm 119:1-8;  
1 Corinthians 3:1-9; Matthew 5:21-37

### February 19

Exodus 24:12-18; Psalm 2 or Psalm 99;  
2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9

### February 26

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7; Psalm 32  
Romans 5:12-19; Matthew 4:1-11



## Lent is almost here . . .

**Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 22 this year.** Christians have observed this season of the church year since the fourth century. It's traditionally a time of reflection, penitence and spiritual renewal before Easter. **We will mark the beginning of Lent with an Ash Wednesday service at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary.**

During Lent, some Christians give up something that hinders their relationship with God. Others do something extra for their spiritual growth or make a special sacrifice. The key is to make Lent a memorable season of sincere spiritual growth — a time that can set the tone for the rest of the year. Consider what you might do to draw closer to Christ.



## *MARK YOUR CALENDAR*

*Worship every Sunday, 10 a.m., Sanctuary and on-line*

**Annual Meeting, Sunday, February 5, 2023  
At 11:15 a.m. in the Sanctuary and on-line**

### **Board and Committee Meetings**

**Session Meeting**— Tuesday, March 14, 7 p.m., Room 206

**Board of Deacons**— Tuesday, February 28, 7 p.m., Room 206

**Building and Grounds**— Thursday, February 2, 7 p.m., Room 209

**Christian Education**—Thursday, February 2, 7 p.m., Room 206

**Mission and Justice**—Tuesday, February 7, 7 p.m., Room 206

**Worship, Music and Arts** - Thursday, February 2, 5 p.m., Room 206

### **Service/Study/Fellowship Gatherings**

**Men's Breakfast and Bible Study** – Thursday, February 2 and 16, 8:30 a.m., Room 206

**Souper Bowl of Caring**—Sunday, February 12

**MBK Quilters**—Tuesday, February 14 and 28, 10 a.m., Fellowship Hall

**Senior Game Day**—Thursday, February 16, 2 p.m., Fellowship Hall

**Program for Lent**—Sunday, February 19, following worship, Fellowship Hall

**The Church Office is closed on Monday, February 20 in observance of Presidents' Day.**

**Women's Circle Bible Study**—Tuesday, February 21, 10 a.m., Fellowship Hall

**Ash Wednesday Worship**—Wednesday, February 22, 7 p.m., Sanctuary

**Adult Bible Study**—Each Wednesday, 6 p.m., Room 206

**Adult Choir Rehearsal**—Each Wednesday, 7 p.m., Choir Loft

**Bell Choir Rehearsal**—Each Wednesday, 8 p.m., Fellowship Hall

**Prayer and Share**—Each Wednesday, 10:30 a.m., Room 209

### **Support Groups**

Many of our support groups have resumed in-person meetings. The schedule is below.

- Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meets each morning at 7 AM in Room 206.
- AlAnon meets on Wednesdays at 8 p.m. and Thursdays at 7 p.m. in Fellowship Hall
- Overeaters Anonymous (OA) meets in room 210: Sundays at 3 p.m., Tuesdays at 6 p.m., Thursdays at 9:30 a.m., Saturdays at 9:45 a.m.

**Deadline for the next Presbyter** is Friday, February 17 with anticipated mailing date of March 1.



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

300 School Street  
Clarks Summit, PA 18411-1536

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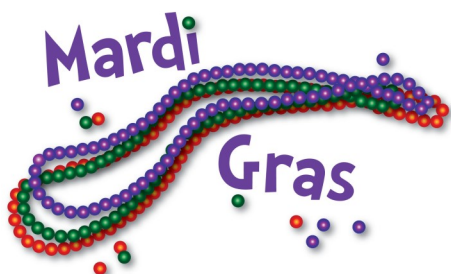
**Weary of winter? We have the cure!**

February can be a dreary month. Fortunately, we have musical friends to lead a **Mardi Gras Sunday** on **February 19 at 10:00 am.**

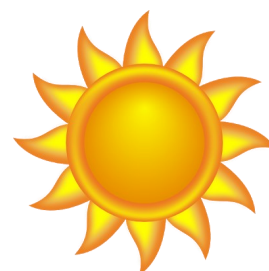
Music will be provided by the South Abington Stompers, an outstanding jazz band of dubious reputation.

We welcome Jeff “Sweet Baby” Leas on trumpet, Tom “Cha Cha” Hamilton on clarinet, Tony “Big Foot” Marino on bass, and Tyler “Don’t Wake the Baby” Dempsey on drums, They have graciously asked our pastor to sit in at the piano (if he doesn’t preach too long).

It’s a morning of swinging fun, planned to defrost icy hearts. Join us in person - or tune in online



**Save the Date!**



Attention all children,  
families, and volunteers!  
Mark your calendars...

**VBS 2023**

will be held

**July 17 - 21**

Join us for an amazing Bible adventure filled with  
laughter, learning, and fun times

with friends new and old!

Look for more information this spring.