



# The Presbyter

November 2023

The First Presbyterian Church of Clarks Summit

## Volunteer Corner November 2023

A look back at the information listed in the October Presbyter details a vibrant, active church: Bible Time, Hickory Street Community Meal, Wednesday evening adult education, adult and bell choir rehearsals, session and deacon meetings, State Hospital party, Trunk or Treat, potluck lunch, coffee hours.



What do all these activities have in common? They all involve volunteers – MANY volunteers. If there were no volunteers, there would be very few activities. Our Presbyter Editor is a volunteer, our librarian is a volunteer. Our Sunday offering counters are volunteers. Our treasurer is a volunteer as is our clerk of session. The list goes on and on.

First Presbyterian Church has an amazing staff. But the staff cannot do it all. It is the time and talent of the volunteers who fuel our church life.

I always think of November as a time of gratitude - a time to count our many blessings. Here at FPC our blessings (and yes, our volunteers) are countless.

“At the end of the day it’s not about what you’ve accomplished....it’s about who you’ve made better. It’s about what you’ve given back.” Denzel Washington

Thanks to all of you for giving back!

Nancy Post



**Daylight Saving Time Ends  
Sunday, November 5, 2023**

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**Notes from the Session Meeting**

October 10, 2023

1. The Finance Committee presented a preliminary budget for 2024 to Session. Discussion took place and it will be finalized at a future meeting.
2. Session was asked to consider attending a joint meeting of Lackawanna and Lehigh Presbyteries on Saturday, November 18 at Camp Johnsonburg, which is across the river from Delaware Water Gap.
3. Rev. Carter has agreed to be nominated as moderator for Lackawanna Presbytery. This is a second year of a three-year commitment which included serving as moderator of the presbytery's council for the third year.

Beverly Bright, Clerk of Session

**The Presbyterian deadline for  
the December 2023 issue is  
November 17.**

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>	Vacant

**FROM YOUR FINANCE COMMITTEE  
FOR THE MONTH ENDING  
September 30, 2023**

**REVENUE**

Budget	\$301,102
Actual Received	<u>286,698</u>
Difference	\$ (14,404)

**EXPENSES**

Budget	\$300,819
Actual Expenses	<u>305,399</u>
Difference	\$ (4,580)

Result of operations \$ (18,701)

**PLEDGE**

Budget	\$ 264,328
Actually received	<u>263,734</u>
Difference	\$ (594)

2023 Per Capita assessment is  
\$42 per member.

Contributions to date have been \$5,631.  
Our total bill due to Presbytery, Synod  
and GA is \$22,302.

**Board of Deacons**

Care Team Ministry Coordinators are:

Moderator	Barbara Norton 570-878-8026
Deacon Meals	Erika Adams 570-878-2410
Time of Loss	TBD
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

November 2023



When somebody asks, “What should I read to nourish my spiritual life?” here is my ready answer: start with the Psalms. Read three each day. This has been my devotional practice for many years. Like any spiritual habit, there have been stops, starts, and pauses. Yet I can’t think of a more important text for the formation of the soul.

My connection to these poetic texts began early. I grew up in a church where the invitation to “Enter into His Gates with Thanksgiving” was inscribed high above the central archway. The text was reinforced when I was required to memorize it in context. The words came from Psalm 100, a simple poem with profound simplicity and depth.

The Psalms have been a constant presence in my life. Growing up in the church, I encountered countless snippets of Psalm verses, and remember having to memorize a few shorter Psalms before I received my third grade Bible. As I discerned God’s call to ministry, I realized how much those many verses have conditioned me and given me a vocabulary for prayer.

In mid-life, I discovered a curious thing. Many Psalm verses are neglected or edited out of our little devotional guides or daily readings. For instance, you can purchase a pictorial calendar with soaring verses that match the mountains they portray – perhaps a shot of Mount McKinley with the words, “I look to the mountains; where does my help come from?” (Psalm 121:1)

Many of those Psalm excerpts exude a happy faith, a trusting, rejoicing, thankful faith— but we tend to overlook the Psalms that echo forsakenness, cry out in need, or verbalize lament. The Psalms invite utter honesty in every prayer in every circumstance. God is not only present on the mountain peak. The Holy One accompanies us in the valleys too.

When we read the “other” psalms, the ones not so victorious, we encounter honest words about our condition of austerity. Superficial religion fades. A lot of trappings are scraped away. When I’ve sojourned to empty deserts and simple monasteries, I’ve mulled over how much of my prayer seems superficial, too. Such honesty strips away the trappings of affluence, success, and worldly achievement. This has been good for my soul.

The honest Psalms, then, set the context for returning to the simpler affirmations. In the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm we pray, “You are with me,” and so, “I have everything I need.” We recite those words, even in our doubts, and we engage the very sovereignty of God. God *does* reign. If I trust that is true, then I can relax a bit and let God be God. And I’m never surprised to discover green pastures and still waters, even as I walk in the valley of shadows.

My morning recommendation? Take three Psalms and chew on them all day.

With you on the journey,

*Rev. Bill*

## Thank you for being peacemakers!

In gratitude to the congregation for your generous donations to the **Peace and Global Witness Special Offering**, which totaled \$1,216.88. This offering is used to help the Presbyterian Mission Agency advocate for peace and justice around the world. The 25% **congregational portion** of this fund will be donated to the **Gathering Place** in Clarks Summit to assist with both their Memory Cafe and their unified and special needs classes and programs.

Thank you for your support!



## Mission and Justice

Be on the lookout for our annual Advent program Give a Gift to a Stranger in the Narthex, running from Sunday, December 3rd through Sunday, December 17th. As in past years, you will have the opportunity to buy gifts for individual refugee family members, support the Pygmies in Uganda, support Appalachian Service Project, and new this year to support the education of Haitian students.

Look forward to seeing you in the Narthex in December!



WHAT SHALL WE GIVE HIM?

## Highway Cleanup on November 11th

We will continue to clean our strip of the Morgan Highway (between Winola and Country Club Roads) on Saturday, November 11th, meeting at 9:00 a.m. in the parking lot of Clarks Summit United Methodist Church (corner of Morgan Hwy. and Grove St.). PennDOT supplies us with garbage bags, gloves, and safety vests, and we put up warning signs to alert traffic from both directions. The work usually takes about an hour.



Please consider joining. For additional information, contact Alan Baker at [abaker2@verizon.net](mailto:abaker2@verizon.net).

## Calling all Church Keys!

If you have a church key and are not in a position to be using it on a regular basis for meetings and activities, please turn it in to the office. We are running short, and I'm sure there are a few getting dusty on a dresser or weighing down a handbag.

Thank you for your help.





### All-Church Recital Sunday, November 19, 2023 at 4:00 p.m.

Musicians in our church family and guests offer an afternoon of music for choirs, bells, vocalists, and instrumental soloists. It is our annual celebration of talent, given as a gift to the community and offered to lift the spirits of our audience. Your hearts will soar—and your feet will tap.

The concert will be held in the sanctuary. It is open to the public free of charge, with a free-will offering taken to support the Arts Series.

It isn't too late to make a contribution to the series. Donations may be made payable to:

First Presbyterian Church  
300 School Street  
Clarks Summit, PA 18411

Please write "Arts Series" in the memo block. Thank you for your support!

John Weiss and Richard Cochrane, Co-Chairs



### Choral Society of NEPA Celebrates 25 Years

The Choral Society of NEPA will again fill our sanctuary with music on Sunday afternoon, November 5th at 3:00 p.m. with songs of **LOVE & MARRIAGE**, including works of Johannes Brahms, Daniel Pinkham, Alice Parker, and Joseph Haydn.

The program celebrates the Society's 25th Anniversary and will be followed by a dessert reception with displays of history and highlights from the organization's first quarter-century. **This will mark Alan Baker's last trip to the podium with the Choral Society, so we hope you can come and be a part of their special day.**

**General admission will be \$15.00 for adults, \$12.00 for ages 65+, with ages 18-and-under admitted free of charge.**

### Clarks Summit State Hospital

A Huge THANK YOU goes out to everyone who recently helped with the October 3rd Luncheon with guests from Clarks Summit State Hospital. This was the first time we were able to invite them since October 2019, and it would not have been possible or such a success for our guests if not for the volunteers for set up, decorations, serving, cleanup and some donated food. Another Thanks goes out to all who donated items as part of the Worship Through Service weekend. They will be used for game prizes. Our next scheduled luncheon is in April.

Presbyterian Women/Janet Dobson

*thank you*

## Christian Education: Growing in Faith and Love

**Bible Time:** An opportunity for our **young children** (age 4 to approx. grade 4) to hear Bible stories told in a fun and engaging way, weekly **Bible Time** will happen during worship, for about 20 minutes. Children will be invited to attend after the anthem and will return for prayers and the end of the service.



November stories will include: escape from Egypt, parting the Red Sea, the 10 Commandments, and Old Testament prophecies of Jesus.



**We Worship Together series:** Have you ever wondered about our church traditions?

Answering questions about the way we worship, our new series for children will last about 30 minutes and will be held after worship; parents are invited to sign up (so we know to expect your child), and each family will receive a book to take home related to the topic discussed. Our next program is set

for **Sunday, November 19** to learn about the season of **Advent**. Looking ahead, our next class in the series will take place on **Sunday, January 14** on the topic of **Baptism**. Later topics will include the Lord's Prayer (a two-Sunday lesson), and Pentecost.

SIGN UP  
HERE:



### Celebrating Advent: O Come, Immanuel



The season of Advent is a time to reflect on our many blessings, remember God's promises, practice patience (hopefully slowing down our busy-ness), and prepare our hearts to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

We welcome our families to pick up an **Advent Bag** filled with an Advent calendar, devotions, activity suggestions, supplies for a craft, and more. All ages and everyone in the church is welcome and encouraged to participate, so bags will be available both for families with children and for those without. Advent bags will be available to **pick up at the church beginning the week before Advent (Nov. 26)**.

### Holiday Angel Tree

It's time for our annual Pajama Drive for children in local Head Start programs!

Look for tags and more information on the Christmas tree set up in the Narthex this month.



### LIFT: Living In Faith Together

Join us after worship on **Sunday, December 3** for a meal and intergenerational program. Families with children as well as congregants of all ages are invited. Enjoy a meal, Bible reading and discussion, and activity as we welcome and celebrate the season of **Advent**. It's a great opportunity to share fellowship and faith with our friends and family.

Also, please save the date for our next **LIFT** program:

Sunday, February 18 — Lent (held after worship)



## Wednesday Evening Opportunities

**Adult Education** meets on Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. For the next 3 weeks, Michael Thompson will lead us in “Praying the Psalms” in room 206.

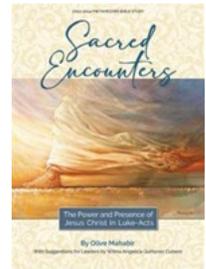
**Adult Choir** rehearses Wednesday nights at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

**Bell Choir** rehearses Wednesday nights at 8:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.

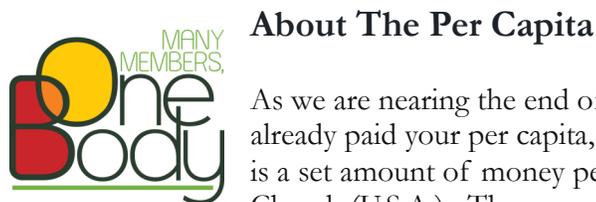
## Additional Adult Education Opportunities

**Women’s Bible Study Lesson 3:** November 21, 2023, 10 a.m., Fellowship Hall  
Sacred Encounters: A Bleeding Woman Encounters Christ

Overview: Through the testimony of the bleeding woman, the sacred encounter in this lesson engages the relationship between poverty, disability, menstruation, and chronic diseases. In Luke’s story, the presence and power of Jesus prevails over the sense of impurity and shame imposed by society. Jesus recognizes that the woman’s faith is the foundation of her self-advocacy and, by believing that Jesus will heal her, she overcomes her illness.



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



## About The Per Capita

As we are nearing the end of the year, we just want to remind you that, if you haven’t already paid your per capita, there is still time to pay that commitment for 2023. Per capita is a set amount of money per member that congregations pay to the larger Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The per capita for this year is \$42 for every person on our church rolls.

We appreciate our members taking the responsibility for this personal commitment so that the moneys do not have to come out of our annual budget.

Thank you!



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.

**Joys**

**Sorrows**

**Thank-yous**



- 4 Sally Marquardt
- 5 Burton Reese
- 6 Charlie Pinches  
Jacklyn DelPrete
- 7 Crosby Sekol  
Tori Yankow
- 8 Mary C. Parry
- 12 Christine Jeske
- 13 Meg Hatch
- 14 Robin Pinches
- 22 Leelah Farrell
- 24 Cherie Shepherd  
Steven Cowgill
- 25 Chris Sekol
- 29 Jennifer Cowgill  
Myrna Diven



**Daylight Saving Time Ends  
Sunday, November 5, 2023**

**Lectionary  
Readings**



- 29 Tim and Debbie Shane

**November 5, 23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**  
Micah 3:5-12; Psalm 43; 1 Thessalonians 2:9-13;  
Matthew 23:1-12

**November 12, 24<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**  
Amos 5:18-24; Psalm 70; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18;  
Matthew 25:1-13

**November 19<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**  
Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18; Psalm 90:1-8 (9-11);  
1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; Matthew 25:14-30

**November 26, Christ the King/Reign of Christ**  
Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24; Psalm 95:1-7a;  
Ephesians 1:15-23; Matthew 25:31-46



**Welcome New Members!**

On October 8, 2023 Judith Colon and Thomas Mariono Campione officially joined our church family. Be sure to introduce yourself and offer them a warm welcome.

## *MARK YOUR CALENDAR*

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

**Note: Daylight Saving Time Ends on Sunday, November 5, 2023**

### **Board and Committee Meetings**

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

**Deacons**—Tuesday, November 28, 7 p.m., Room 206

**Building and Grounds**— TBD

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

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

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

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

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

**Choral Society of NEPA Concert**—Sunday, November 5, 3:00 p.m., Sanctuary

**Adopt a Highway**—Saturday, November 11, 9 a.m., Methodist church parking lot (corner Morgan & Grove)

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

**We Worship Together**—Sunday, November 19 after Worship

**Arts Concert: All Church Recital**—Sunday, November 19, 4:00 p.m., Sanctuary

**Presbyterian Women Bible study**—Tuesday, November 21, 10:00 a.m., Fellowship Hall

**LIFT Living In Faith Together**—Sunday, December 3 after Worship

**Adult Education**—Each Wednesday, 6:00 p.m., Room 206

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

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

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

### **Support Groups**

We welcome members of the following support groups to our building on a regular basis, as scheduled:

- Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meets each morning at 7 AM in Room 206.
- AlAnon meets on Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. in room 206 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.

**The Church Office** will be closed Thursday and Friday, November 23 and 24 for the Thanksgiving Holiday.

**Deadline for the December Presbyterian** is Friday, November 17  
with anticipated mailing date of November 29.



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

300 School Street  
Clarks Summit, PA 18411-1536

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
Permit No. 30  
**P A I D**  
Clarks Summit PA

**DATED MATERIAL**

**Return Service Requested**



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**Poinsettia order form**  
**Order Your Poinsettias Now.**

Price is \$9.50 per plant.

**Deadline is November 20**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Flowers: \_\_\_\_\_ @\$9.50 each

Total Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

I will pick up my flowers \_\_\_\_\_

Please give to a shut-in \_\_\_\_\_

Dedication: In honor/In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

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