



The Presbyter

January 2024

The First Presbyterian Church of Clarks Summit

Arts at First Presbyterian has two events in January to kick off the new year:

Northeastern PA Chamber Music Society (NEPACMS)

Classical music to melt the winter.
Sunday, January 14, 2024 4:00 p.m.



NEPACMS is thrilled to present its most ambitious program yet, pairing the sublime Brahms Second Sextet, a masterpiece exuding elegance and rich lyricism, with Tchaikovsky's Souvenir de Florence, a bright and vigorous composition for string sextet, reminiscent of his renowned ballets. Over several years, Tchaikovsky painstakingly sketched, worked on, and reworked Souvenir de Florence, and expressed that composing for a string sextet is "terribly difficult...it seems that rather than writing for six voices, I am, in essence, composing for the orchestra, and only then arranging it for six string instruments." Indeed, these magnificent string sextets will fill the venue with resonances like an orchestra!



The concert will feature John Vaida (left) and Ambroise Aubrun on violin, Amy Iwazumi (right) and Kristina Giles on viola, and Erin Ellis and Lisa Caravan on cello.



The concert is open to the public free of charge, with a free-will offering taken to help defray the costs of the event. Our Arts Series is supported by a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a Lackawanna County Community Arts and Culture Grant, and by individual contributions.

Clarks Summit Festival of Ice activities

Winter weekend of art, music, and magic
January 26-28, 2024.

Our Ice Festival activities will include:

Ice Sculpture on display just outside the entrance to the sanctuary

Photography and Art Show in the Session Room most of the weekend

Saturday, January 27 10:30-11:30 a.m. **Drum Circle** led by Cheryl Mozdian in the sanctuary

Saturday, January 27 11 am - 1 p.m. **Chili Cafe** in Fellowship Hall (see page 7 for more info)

Saturday, January 27 1-2 p.m. - **Magic Show** by Damian the Magician in the sanctuary

Hope you can join us! For more information call the church at 570-586-6306.



Art Show



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The Presbyterian deadline for
the February 2024 issue is
January 19.

Notes from the Session Meeting December 12, 2023

1. Session passed the 2024 budget at this meeting and the chairmen will begin to prepare their year end reports to the congregation very soon. The annual meeting will be held on Sunday, February 4, 2024.
2. Session congratulated Rev. Carter on his installation as Moderator of Lackawanna Presbytery and thanked him for his service to the wider church. Chris Norton gave Session the report from the November Presbytery meeting.
3. Session would like to thank members and friends of the congregation for their support this last year. Your out-pouring of monetary donations as well as volunteer hours has helped make 2023 a very wonderful year for us.
4. Blessings to all of you. Celebrate the season with hope, happiness and peace.

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
Organist	Kay Ten Eyck
Sexton	Michael Lambert

FROM YOUR FINANCE COMMITTEE FOR THE MONTH ENDING November 30, 2023

REVENUE	
Budget	\$368,013
Actual Received	<u>347,731</u>
Difference	(\$20,282)
EXPENSES	
Budget	\$367,668
Actual Expenses	<u>366,412</u>
Difference	\$ 1,256
Result of operations	(\$18,681)
PLEDGE	
Budget	\$323,067
Actually received	<u>318,196</u>
	(\$ 4,871)

Board of Deacons

Care Team Ministry Coordinators are:

Moderator	Barbara Norton 570-878-8026
Deacon Meals	Erika Adams 570-878-2410
Ushers	John Conklin
Deacon Driver	Barbara Norton 570-878-8026

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

January 2024



Happy New Year! On behalf of our Session, I thank you for an outstanding 2023.

It was a strong year for our church, and I'm grateful for all the leadership and commitment that empowers our church's ministry. Now that the New Year has arrived, here's a quick list of what's coming:

Adult Education on Wednesday evenings has resumed. For four weeks (January 3, 10, 17, and 24), our study group will discuss some early episodes of "**The Chosen**," a video series that is making waves. For those who don't know about the series, "The Chosen" offers a fresh take on the ministry of Jesus. The Lord is portrayed with wisdom, power, and a sense of humor. It is a provocative series – let's talk about it in Room 206 at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesdays.

On January 31 and February 6, we will welcome **Dr. Michael Azar**, associate professor of religious studies at the University of Scranton. A specialist on Israel, Dr. Azar will offer an historical introduction to the current troubles in the Holy Land. What is the background on the war that began last fall? What are the issues and the underlying causes?

Journey to Scotland – Our church is planning a **Presbyterian Heritage trip** to Scotland during September 5-14. An informational meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 16 at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome to gather in the Session Room (206) or to sign on by ZOOM from home. A ZOOM link will be sent soon to all who have signed up online for information through our weekly email.

If you haven't expressed your interest in the trip and would like to do so, send me an e-mail (pastor@fpccs.org) by Sunday, January 14. The conversation will be recorded and available later on YouTube upon request. The brochures are available at the church and reservations are open – but don't linger! There's a lot of interest in the trip and we must cap registrations at 24 people.

Per Capita Sunday – The Session has set **Sunday, January 14** as an emphasis on our Per Capita contributions to the Presbyterian Church (USA). Each Presbyterian congregation is asked to share in the administrative costs of "running" our denomination. These funds provide staffing, training, and communication for all the presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly offices throughout the nation.

It is our Session's hope that each of our church members will contribute \$42.00 in this special appeal as a contribution through our congregation that benefits the wider church. It is our custom to pay the full per capita amount to the denomination each year. We have made remarkable strides in gathering the funds to meet our obligation, and we invite you to help us. Remember, it's \$42.00 per member (and not per household). This is the Presbyterian Way: we work together, not on our own.

With that in mind, I look forward to working together with you in this New Year. May God bless you and your families as we begin 2024 together.

Rev. Bill

Mission and Justice

Thank you so much for your wonderful support of this year's Give A Gift to a Stranger during Advent. Because of you, we were able to bring Christmas joy to 11 refugee families. Our gifts to these families included pajamas and soccer balls, lego sets, or toys for the boys; pajamas and art kits, dolls, or make up kits for the girls, and gift certificates for the adults. In addition, you generously contributed to the account that we hope to continue to grow all year in order to fund the tuition of 13 Haitian students to attend school grades K-7th next year in the village of Gwo-Jan. Finally, Appalachian Service Project participants appreciate your support in purchasing their homemade chocolate, which benefits their trip this summer in refurbishing homes in Appalachia.



"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in." Matthew 25:35

One final thanks of the year to you and your generosity for helping our committee support so many worthy causes throughout the year. The following are the organizations and causes to which we made disbursements this past month, with a concentration on local safety and hunger needs, local environmental concerns, our national church's human rights advocacy work, and international aid.

Community Intervention Center (Code Blue Supplies)
 Friends of Lackawanna (Protect our local environment)
 Weinberg NE Regional Food Bank
 United Nations Relief Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees
 Presbyterian Office of Public Witness



Have Old Computers? Donate to the Abington Heights Computer Club!



At Abington Heights Computer Club, we work as a team to repair and refurbish used computers and accessories. From there, we give them to organizations and individual families in need. The Computer Club has sent computers to the Women's Resource Center, the Boys and Girls Club, numerous Clarks Summit families, and even a grade school in Kenya! If you have a computer or laptop from 2008 and up that you no longer need, consider donating it to the AH Computer Club. Accessories such as monitors, cables, keyboards, and mice, are a welcome addition. If you are interested, email ethanflynn@gmail.com or send a text message to **Ethan Flynn at 570-780-1935** to arrange for a donation. We come to you! This is a wonderful opportunity to help local Clark Summit residents while getting rid of your older technology. Thank you for your time!

- Ethan Flynn, current president of the Abington Heights Computer Club.

My Brother's Keeper

Our quilting group has had a busy fall. We have sent 35 sleeping bags to the Keystone Mission for their ministry with the homeless. This was possible due to your generous donations of blankets, comforters, sheets, towels, washcloths, mattress pads, small toiletries, socks, and ties (Yes, ties! – we use them as carrying straps – and we are running short of them. If you have some you no longer wear, please send them our way.)

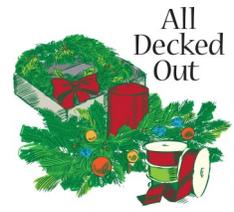


QUILTING GROUP

We meet the 2nd and 4th Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. each month in Fellowship Hall and welcome all interested in tying a few knots to make sleeping bags. Hope you will join us!

Sanctuary Holiday Decorations

Our church, especially the sanctuary, looks so beautiful all decorated for Christmas! A special thank you to all the volunteers who helped decorate: Bev Bright, Bill Carter, Diane Cosner, Judy Cutler, Jeanne DeVirgilis, Bill, Grace, and Dylan Farrell, Andy and Donna Kepler, Karis Naehar, Mary Ellen Lawlor, Charlie Pinches, Jack Pittman, Jim Thyren, Jillian and Colin Shane, Connie Weiss, Karen White, and Briar Woodley.



If we have missed anyone, please let Jan know, so we can include you in the next round of THANKS!!!

We are now looking for volunteers to help UN-decorate the church after Christmas! We will meet on Saturday, January 13, 2024, at 10 a.m.. Volunteers of all ages are welcome! Please come!

From, Robin Pinches and Jan Thyren and the Music, Worship and the Arts Committee.

Thanks for your help!!!

January Volunteer Corner

According to the Presbyter, Nancy Owens' title is "Administrative Assistant". Sounds pretty all-encompassing! She keeps many balls in the air, but thankfully she does have some help – very much appreciated help.



Let's start with those friendly members who answer the phone and greet visitors as they enter the church: Bonnie Plantholt, Stan Gilbert, JoAnn Hall, Al Traettino and Diane Cosner.

Do you enjoy reading the Presbyter each month? There are many steps to get it into your hands. First and foremost in the process is the work of our Editor, Amanda Roberts. When Amanda's work is done, Bonnie Plantholt proofreads, Marie Cochrane runs the copies and folds them and Deb and Al Traettino put the newsletter together. Then it is passed on to a team who affixes the labels and stickers prior to mailing: Jack Pittman, Janet Stansbury, Edie Suydam, Shakun Shah, Karen White, Janet Dobson, Kay Copley, Mary Ellen Lawlor, Stan Gilbert and Diane Cosner. We lovingly remember Barbara Pittman, who was a regular on the team for many years. And finally, John Conklin, Don Gross, and Pastor Bill, who have helped carry the trays to the post office!

And wouldn't we be lost without our worship bulletins on Sunday mornings? Thanks goes to Al Traettino who puts them together for all of us to read each week.

These folks are a great crew of helpers. But there's room for more! Don't we all appreciate when a kind, friendly person answers the phone rather than being greeted by an answering machine? Nancy is hoping that someone will step forward to be that friendly voice answering the phone on Friday mornings.

Not able to help out on a weekly basis? No problem! There is always a need for subs to step in on an on-call basis when a current volunteer is unavailable or to help out on one of Nancy's vacation days. If you feel that you'd like to learn more about helping out in the office, call Nancy at 570-586-6306. She will be thrilled to talk with you.

Thank you to our kind, friendly office volunteers!

Nancy Post

Holiday Angel Tree

Gratitude is extended to everyone who provided pajamas to 63 children for four head start locations. Special Thanks to my elves who helped with tree set-up, tag making and sorting and packing for delivery.



Blessings to all, Janet Dobson/Christian Education

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.



In January we will hear stories about Jesus' baptism, calling the disciples, and the beginning of his ministry.



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 will be 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 will be held on **Sunday, January 14** to learn about the sacrament of **Baptism**. After that, join us on **Sunday, March 3 & Sunday, March 10** on the topic of **the Lord's Prayer**. The series will conclude with a lesson on **Sunday, May 12** to hear about **Pentecost**, but will return in the fall.

SIGN UP
HERE:

Can you help?

This fall, the CE committee began a new program for our young children called **Bible Time**. Each week during worship, they are invited to hear and discuss a Bible story told just for them.

We are looking for several volunteers to help as leaders and assistants. All materials and information are provided and no long-term commitment is required. Even if you've never taught before, if you can read a story, you can help share God's word and Christ's love with our children.

Interested? Need more information? Contact Patti McGonagle or Jana Schillinger.

Souper Bowl Sunday

Sunday, February 11 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 for online donation information.

All proceeds will benefit the AEM Food Pantry.



LIFT: Living In Faith Together

Join us after worship on **Sunday, February 18** 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 begin the season of **Lent**. 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, March 24 — Palm Sunday/Holy Week (held after worship)



SUBMIT YOUR REPORTS

All Committee chairpersons are asked to submit a report of committee activities for 2023, and give plans of upcoming activities for 2024. Please submit it to the church office (office@fpccs.org) by January 11.

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. These keys are very expensive so if more are not returned it will be an expense in 2024.



Thank you for your help.

Mark your calendar!

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation of First Presbyterian Church of Clarks Summit will be held following worship on Sunday, February 4, 2024.

Watch for further details.



The Chili Cafe will take place on Saturday, January 27th -11 a.m.-2 p.m. We are looking for donations of crock-pots of chili and we also need a crew of volunteers to help pull this event together. Please see or call/text Karen White at 570-575-7005



Wednesday Evening Opportunities

Adult Education meets on Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. The first four weeks of 2024 we will discuss some early episodes of **"The Chosen,"** a video series that offers a fresh take on the ministry of Jesus.

Beginning January 31, Dr. Michael Azar, associate professor of religious studies at the University of Scranton, will offer an historical introduction to the current troubles in the Holy Land. Room 206.

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

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

Additional Adult Education Opportunities

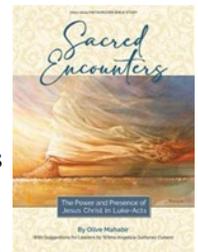
Presbyterian Women Bible Study January 16, 2024

Women's Bible Study Lesson 5 – Sacred Encounters: A Person with Leprosy Encounters Jesus

Overview: In this lesson's sacred encounter, a Samaritan helps us recognize holistic healing as well as systems that poison relationships and harm our sense of community. We are challenged to have faith in the miracle of Jesus healing a person with leprosy and healing our fixed ideas that limit life, discriminate, and isolate those who we consider to be "different."

The group, including Rev. Carter, gathers on the third Tuesday of each month at 10 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. All women are welcome!

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. All men in the church family are always welcome.



Joys

Sorrows

Lectionary



- 1 – Jessie Davis
- 5 – Rylee Yankow
- 9 – Katie Carter
- 11 – Peggy Lyons
- 16 – Dana Miller
- 17 – Margaret Reese
John Weiss
- 21 – Connie Weiss
- 26 – Char Lyon
- 28 – Briar Woodley
- 29 – Greg Yankow



On November 26, 2023 we celebrated the baptism of Arthur Russell Scheuer. Arthur is the son of Brad and Katie Scheuer, grandson of Diane and Jack Scheuer, and nephew of Kristian Scheuer. Blessings and best wishes!

Lectionary Readings

January 2024

January 7: Baptism of the Lord

Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 29; Acts 19:1-7; Mark 1:4-11

January 14: 2nd Sunday after Epiphany

1 Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20); Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51

January 21: 3rd Sunday after Epiphany

Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62:5-12; 1 Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20

January 28: 4th Sunday after Epiphany

Deuteronomy 18:15-20; Psalm 111; 1 Corinthians 8:1-13; Mark 1:21-28



The Sympathy of the congregation is extended to:

- * Hoyt Keiser and family upon the passing of his wife, Judy, on November 26, 2023.
- * the family of Kate Hopkins. Kate passed on December 20, 2023. Kate's sons are Douglas, Larry, and Jeffrey.

Flower Sign Up

Start the new year by honoring loved ones, celebrations, and family events with a special floral arrangement to mark the occasion.

The 2024 Flower Calendar is now hanging on the bulletin board next to Rev. Carter's office.



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.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

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

Board and Committee Meetings

Session Meeting—Tuesday, January 14, following worship, Room 206

Deacons—Tuesday, January 23, 7 p.m., Room 206

Building and Grounds— Thursday, January 4, 7 p.m., Room 209

Christian Education—Thursday, January 4, 7 p.m., Room 206

Mission and Justice—Tuesday, January 2, 7 p.m., Room 206

Worship, Music and Arts - Thursday, January 11, 5 p.m., Room 206

Service/Study/Fellowship Gatherings

Men's Breakfast and Bible Study – Thursday, January 4, and 18, 8:30 a.m., Room 206

MBK Quilters—Tuesday, January 9 and 23, 10 a.m., Fellowship Hall

UN-decorate the church after Christmas - Saturday, January 13, 2024, at 10 a.m..

“We Worship Together” program for children— Sunday, January 14, following worship

Presbyterian Women Bible study—Tuesday, January 16, 10:00 a.m.

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

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

Activities and Concerts

Northeastern PA Chamber Music Society (NEPACMS) - Sunday, January 14, 2024 4:00 p.m.

Clarks Summit Festival of Ice activities— January 26-28, 2024

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.

Presbyter Deadline: Friday, January 19, 2024. Anticipated mailing date January 31, 2024.

Church Office is closed Monday, January 15 in observance of the Birthday of Martin Luther King Jr.


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


Inspirational Lyrics for “Through It All” by Andre Crouch

I've had many tears and sorrows, I've had questions for tomorrow.
 There've been times I didn't know right from wrong.
 But in every situation God gave blessed consolation
 That my trials come to only make me strong.

I've been to a lot of places and I've seen a lot of faces.
 There've been times I felt so all alone.
 But in those lonely hours, those precious lonely hours,
 Jesus let me know that I was still His own.

Through it all, through it all, I've learned to trust in Jesus and I've learned to trust in God.
 Through it all, through it all, I've learned to depend upon His Word.

I thank God for my mountains and I thank Him for my valleys.
 I thank Him for every storm He's brought me through.
 For if I'd never had a problem how would I know that God could solve them?
 And how would I know what faith in God could do?

Through it all, through it all, I've learned to trust in Jesus and I've learned to trust in God.
 Through it all, through it all, I've learned to depend upon His Word.
