



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

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Poinsettia order form

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Deadline is Sunday, November 24



Name (as it should appear in print) _____

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 _____



The Presbyter

November 2024

The First Presbyterian Church of Clarks Summit

The Arts

at First Presbyterian Church

On Sunday, November 24 at 4 p.m. musicians in our church family offer an afternoon of music for choirs, bells, vocalists, and instrumental

soloists. It's always a stirring celebration of talent, given as a gift to the community.

The concert will feature the FPC Adult Choir under the direction of church music director Frank Jones, the FPC Bell Choir directed by Dick Cochrane, a chamber trio featuring Catherine Huhn, flute; Connie Weiss, oboe; and John Weiss, cello; and other performers.

The concert 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.

At this concert we would also like to take donations for the Neighborhood Food Pantry located at the Gathering Place in Clarks Summit. They are particularly in need of cereal, crackers, jelly or tuna. Also, donations of rice and soup would also be greatly appreciated. Please join us in our Thanksgiving Food Drive.



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**Daylight Saving Time Ends
Sunday, November 3, 2023**

**Notes from the Session Meeting
October 8, 2024**

1. Session is working on the church budget for 2025 with our chair, Jeff McLaughlin.
2. Building & Grounds set the fall clean-up date for October 26th at 9:00 a.m. All are invited to assist.
3. B & G committee is working on a cost estimate for the Kitchen Emergency Door, the Kitchen Ceiling, and a Snow Plowing contract for the 2024-2025 year.
4. As part of Pastor Appreciation Month Session thanked Rev. Carter for his dedication to all of us at First Presbyterian, CS. Chris Norton, People in Ministry Chair, gave him a Gift Card for his enjoyment.

Beverly Bright
Clerk of Session

Board of Deacons

Care Team Ministry Coordinators are:

Moderator	Grace Farrell
Deacon Meals	Diana Pope-Albright Erika Adams
Ushers	John Conklin
Deacon Driver	Jack Pittman

Church phone number is 570-586-6306.

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.

The Presbyterian deadline for the December 2024 issue is November 15.

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
September 30, 2024**

REVENUE

Budget	\$309,148
Actual Received	<u>277,245</u>
Difference	(\$ 31,902)

EXPENSES

Budget	\$308,834
Actual Expenses	<u>308,134</u>
Difference	\$ 700

Result of operations (\$30,888)

PLEDGE

Budget	\$ 278,998
Actually received	<u>255,516</u>
	(\$ 23,482)

2024 Per Capita assessment is \$42 per member.
To date, \$5,834 has been received.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

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

Board and Committee Meetings

Session Meeting— Tuesday, November 12, 7 p.m., Room 206

Board of Deacons—Tuesday, November 26, 7 p.m., Room 206

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

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

Mission and Justice—Tuesday, November 5, 7 p.m., Room 206

Worship, Music and Arts - Thursday, November 7, 5 p.m., Room 206

Service/Study/Fellowship Gatherings

Men's Breakfast and Bible Study – Thursday, November 7 and 21, 8:30 a.m., Room 206

MBK Quilters—Tuesday, November 12, 10 a.m., Fellowship Hall

Presbyterian Women's Bible Study—Tuesday, November 19, 10:00 a.m., Fellowship Hall

Grief Support Group—Thursday, November 21, 6:00 p.m., Gathering Place

The Arts — Sunday, November 24, 4:00 p.m., Sanctuary

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

Adult Education—Each Wednesday, 5:45 p.m., Room 206

Adult Choir—Each Wednesday, 7:00 p.m., in the Sanctuary

Bell Choir—Most Wednesdays, 8:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall

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 Room 111.
- Overeaters Anonymous (OA) meets in room 210 Sundays - 3 p.m.; Tuesdays - 6 p.m.; Saturdays - 9:45 a.m.

November Presbyter Deadline: Friday, November 15, 2024. Anticipated mailing date November 27.



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

Prayers



- 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 Steven Cowgill
- 25 Chris Sekol
- 28 Tom Campione
- 29 Jennifer Cowgill
- Myrna Diven



- 29 Tim & Debbie Shane



We express our sympathy to the family of Elaine "Diz" Altmiller, our longest-tenured member, who passed away October 19, 2024. Her memorial service was held October 23 in the sanctuary.

We also express our sympathy to the family of Jeneane Adams, who passed away October 17, 2024. Her memorial service took place in the sanctuary on Friday, October 25.

Thank you from the Deacons

Many, many thanks to all who pitched in to help with the Deacons' Worship Through Service projects. Our church friends were most grateful for your very hard work tending to their lawn and gardening needs. And our friends in assisted living and nursing homes received the beautiful wreaths and your caring visits with much happiness and appreciation.



Thank you for continuing the important work of serving and caring for our neighbors.

November Prayer List for soon to be united Lackawanna and Lehigh Presbyteries

- First Presbyterian Church Clarks Summit
- First Presbyterian Church Hawley
- First Presbyterian Church Mahanoy City
- Rushville Presbyterian Church
- Valley United Presbyterian Church



For more information on our Presbyteries, or for these individual churches, go to polackawanna.org or lehighpresbytery.org

From the Pastor

November 2024

Dear Friends –

I'm excited to announce we will welcome a special guest on Sunday, November 10. It will be our honor to host the Rev. CeCe Armstrong, co-moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA). CeCe (short for Cecilia) serves as the associate pastor of St. James Presbyterian Church, Charleston, South Carolina.

The Rev. Cecelia D. Armstrong is the youngest of five children born and raised in Detroit. She was confirmed at Calvary Presbyterian Church in Detroit and has held membership at New Life Presbyterian Church in College Park, Georgia, and Belle-Terrace Presbyterian Church in Augusta, Georgia.



She received her Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics at Spelman College in Atlanta and her Master of Arts in Education for Curriculum and Instruction with emphasis on Secondary Mathematics at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg.

She taught high school mathematics for over a decade, but then felt the call of God to train as a pastor. Cecelia went on to receive her Master of Divinity at Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary at the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) in Atlanta. She was ordained as a deacon and elder at Belle-Terrace and a minister of the Word and Sacrament.

Since that time, Cecelia has served in a number of church leadership positions across Georgia, Florida and South Carolina. In addition, she has participated in various committees and commissions on ministry, served as co-moderator of the National Association of Presbyterian Clergywomen. She has been a contributing writer for Presbyterians Today magazine, as well as the Presbyterian Outlook and more.

Most of all, I count her as one of my dearest friends – which is exactly why I want to introduce her to you. CeCe loves to say, "I've never met a stranger." I'm sure you will say the same after you meet her. She is a lively speaker and a most gracious servant of Christ.

Don't miss this opportunity to meet one of the next generation of national church leaders. Come and hear her on Sunday, November 10 at our 10:00 a.m. service.

With you in the journey,
Rev. Bill



November Volunteer Corner

November 23 has been designated as Family Volunteer Day. According to the Points of Light, just 1 in 4 adults encourage their kids to volunteer! That seems hard to believe...especially when we see what's happening in our church.

While some community non-profits have minimum age requirements for volunteering, First Presbyterian Church does not! You see families volunteering on Sunday mornings, greeting worshippers and collecting the offering. Families gather to prepare bag lunches on selected Sundays after worship. And behind the scenes: Did you know that many families take the responsibility to prepare our Communion trays each month? What a great way for children to learn about Communion (and probably some counting skills, too!)

Looking for some other ideas to involve your family? How about helping out with our new mobile food pantry or hosting a coffee hour? Advent is coming and soon we will be decorating the sanctuary...bring your children along to help!

Why volunteer as a family? Well, obviously it helps you spend quality time together. It also teaches children about your values as a family and teaches children valuable life skills and traits. And you can create some family memories and support our church at the same time.

Looking for more ideas to get involved? I'd be happy to offer some suggestions.

Happy volunteering!

Nancy Post

Mission and Justice Thank You

In gratitude for all of those who supported this year's **Peace and Global Witness Special Offering**. Our total collection reached \$1,668.

To remind you, 75% of this offering will be used by the Presbyterian Mission Agency and mid councils in the promotion of peace and justice and supporting ministries of peace. The final 25% is designated for local congregations to support peacemaking efforts in our area. Our choice this year has been to support the **Peace and Justice Center of Northeastern PA** in Wilkes-Barre, with the monies going to scholarships for their Peace Camp. The Peace and Justice Center is an interfaith organization created to nurture dialogue among diverse groups, to educate groups and individuals in peaceful ways of resolving conflict, and to be a partner in the ongoing struggle for human rights and a just world. So, again thank you for contributing to our church's peacemaking through September and October's Season of Peace!



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:

- * listening for God
- * God calls Jeremiah
- * Justice
- * God hears Daniel's prayers.

We Worship Together series: A 30-minute program held after worship for children through grade 6. We Worship Together examines questions we have about church practices and traditions. Each family will receive a book to take home related to the topic discussed. Have you ever wondered why the worship service follows a certain order? Our first program this year will be a 2-Sunday discussion of **worship**: what it is, why we do it, and more. Join us on **Sunday, November 3** and **Sunday, November 10**. The next class in the series will be held on **January 12** to learn about **baptism**.

We Believe: faith foundations for our pre-confirmation age youth. A mix of Bible 101, faith questions, and church basics to help prepare children in grade 6 and up for their confirmation journey, We Believe will be a combination of discussions, activities, and self-study. Meeting date TBD. Parents may contact Jana Schillinger with questions.



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. Please return Pajamas by December 10.



LIFT: Living In Faith Together

Join us after worship on **Sunday, December 8** 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** programs:

Sunday, February 2 and **Sunday, March 9**



Celebrating Advent: Immanuel, God With Us



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. 24).**

From the Generosity Team

In 2024, individual taxpayers who are age 70 ½ or older may make qualified charitable distributions ("QCDs") of up to \$105,000 directly from an IRA to a qualified charity. QCDs count toward the individual's current year required minimum distribution if the donor is age 73 or older. The taxpayer forgoes the charity deduction on Schedule A, but they realize no taxable income from the IRA distribution. The exclusion from taxable income potentially saves tax on Social Security benefits, may reduce future Medicare premiums, and reduces taxable income in the taxpayer's marginal tax bracket.

The money is a direct transfer to a charity that never passes through the hands of the IRA holder. The IRA custodian can send either an electronic transfer of funds or a check directly to the charity. An IRA owner who wishes to make a QCD for 2024 should contact their IRA custodian as soon as possible to complete the transaction before the end of the year. Information about a transfer to the Endowment, Memorial, or General Operating Funds of First Presbyterian Church is available from the church office. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to a member of the Generosity Team.



Thank You Notes

A generous gift to the Endowment Fund has been received in memory of Mary Acker given by Heather and Warren Acker. Session very much appreciates your contribution.

Thank you to all the volunteers and Rev. Carter who served communion to home-bound members and members at the CS Senior Living and the Pines. Those volunteers included Judy Cutler, Myrna Diven, JoAnn Hall, and Connie Weiss.

From Beverly Bright



Presbyterian Women's Association

Many thanks for the volunteers who helped with our recent state hospital luncheon, from the dishwashers, servers, clean-up and some donated food, especially the pumpkin pies.

Entertainment was provided by Frank Garnecki.

Thanks to the generosity of our congregation they left with approximately 200 pairs of socks.

Fellowship was enjoyed by all.

In Gratitude, Janet Dobson



Our Gwo-Jan Starfish

At about this time last year I wrote to you for the first time to share our decision to embark upon a long-term commitment to 13 children in the Haitian village of Gwo-Jan, promising the funds to cover their annual school tuitions. Our hope was then, and it remains, that rather than fall victim to recruitment by the local gangs, this schooling will lead them to better lives and perhaps to even follow in our friend Yaya's footsteps and one day join him in the difficult work of building a safer and better-functioning community. Linking them to a story, we have taken to calling them "our Gwo-Jan Starfish."

Thanks to your many generous contributions last fall and later during our Advent "Gifts for Strangers" program, we were able to secure the funds to pay their tuitions for the current year and Yaya recently sent word that all 13 children started school on time at the beginning of October. This even though all 13 families have been forced to move out of Gwo-Jan for their safety and that most of the children had to find different schools. It is clear that education matters to these children and their families.

Please take a moment to read their names and offer a prayer for them: Saisha, age 8; Annie, age 8; Redashkaina, age 5; Bechaëlle, age 7; Marvens, age 12; Naïra, age 5; Soraya, age 5; Rosalanda, age 8; Ovensly, age 12; Bifendel, age 14; Jonas, age 20; Anne Rose, age 13; and Gavenchy, age 13.

The difficult situation resulted in higher tuition fees than last year, but we had the surplus to cover. However it is time to begin again to rebuild their tuition fund to be ready for fall 2025. If you would like to be a part of our shepherding of these 13 children, watch at this year's Advent "Gifts for Strangers" event for the opportunity to make a gift of education to them. If you would like to help sooner or later, you can at any time direct a donation to account #2037 and specify its use for "Haiti Tuitions." The average annual tuition per child is about \$215.00

Give A Gift to a Stranger

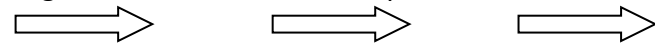
For the fourth year, during Advent, Mission and Justice invites you to make a gift to a stranger. Look for us from **Sunday Dec. 1 through to Sunday Dec. 22**, in the Narthex, for our tables with displays and information about the recipients of our gifts. For each gift, a paper star will be hung on the tree and elsewhere in the Narthex to create a visual of our giving. You will have the opportunity to buy gifts for individual refugee family members (look for the paper angels and paper pine trees on the tree), support Appalachian Service Project by buying their chocolates, support the Pygmy Ministry, and continue to help fund the education of Haitian students. Looking forward to seeing you in the Narthex in December!

"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



Wednesday Evening Opportunities

Adult Education meets on Wednesdays at 5:45 p.m., Room 206. Throughout this fall we will study *Discipleship: The Way of Jesus* by John P. Burgess. Read the article on Spiritual Formation on page 7 for more information.



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 – 2024-25 Horizon Bible Study
Let Justice Roll Down: God's Call to Care for Neighbors and All Creation
 by Patricia K. Tull



Lesson 3: Food Justice

November 19, 2024

The Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament portray the earth as yielding food in abundance. Agricultural scientists say today that the world can provide enough food for all people, and the tragedy of starvation is needless. But greed, slavery, serfdom, industrial farming practices, and inequitable food distribution have led instead to a more impoverished world. In short, as Hosea put it, “The land mourns . . . even the fish of the sea are perishing” (Hos 4:3). Fortunately, many people in the U.S. and around the world are exploring and teaching what it means to practice our fundamental vocation to produce food with justice and peace.

Join us for Bible Study in Fellowship Hall on **Tuesday November 19 at 10:00 a.m.**

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.

Lectionary Readings

November 3: 24th Sunday after Pentecost

Deuteronomy 6:1-9; Psalm 119:1-8;

Hebrews 9:11-14; Mark 12: 28-34

November 10: 25th Sunday after Pentecost

1 Kings 17:8-16; Psalm 146; Hebrews 9:24-28;

Mark 12:38-44

November 17: 26th Sunday after Pentecost

Daniel 12:1-3; Psalm 16;

Hebrews 10:11-14 (15-18) 19-25; Mark 13:1-8

November 24: Christ the King/Reign of Christ

2 Samuel 23:1-7; Psalm 132:1-12 (13-18) or

Daniel 7:9-10,13-14; Psalm 93; Revelation 1:4b-8;

John 18:33-37

Spiritual Formation From the Beginning - Part 3

By Michael Thompson, elder for Christian Education

There are two more movements in the Creation story, we may add to the themes of Breathe and Rest from last month. Once again, they are daily activities we easily take for granted, but are foundational to our ability to find joy in life: Work and Relate.

Work

Much has been made of the fact that God has a day of rest after six days of work. What often goes unnoticed is that God provides for us a model of work in the first place, as a sacred act. While work later becomes toilsome after the fall, the essential act still remains as something purposeful with the ability to bless others and our own soul. This is not just a function of people in “ministry,” but all God's people are called to be “a royal priesthood,” true ministers in daily life. *Like God, we should reflect on our work as meaningful and creative, seeking ways to serve the common good.*

Relate

Finally, one of the most important things we learn about ourselves is that, “It is not good that the man should be alone.” God brings a diverse set of animals to Adam, but it is not until he sees Eve that he proclaims, “This is at last bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh!” Whether in the form of marriage or other relationships, we need to find common connections with people who will support us and challenge us to grow together. *The most essential way we image God is in the way we relate and dance through life with others.*

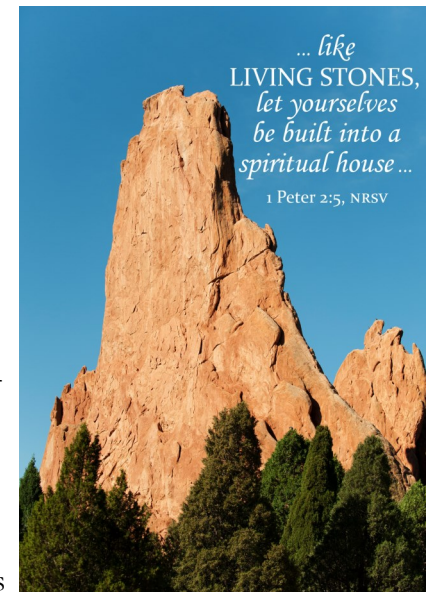
It is so tempting to go through life wanting extraordinary events to bring meaning into our lives. However, the truth is that joy is found in our common experience. Even when the extraordinary does happen, it necessarily becomes grounded and better appreciated as it settles into the context of our daily life.

Through November, the Wednesday night Bible study will finish our series on Creation Psalms. For Advent, we will begin a new series using Handel's Messiah, that we plan to pick up again in Lent. Come celebrate the season with this well-loved music, as we explore the meaning behind it:

December 4: Comfort, Comfort My People

December 11: Who May Abide the Day of His Coming

December 18: For Unto Us a Child Is Born



Present tense

After “turkey day” came and went last year, a pastor challenged church members to ask one another not “How *was* your Thanksgiving?” but “How *is* your Thanksgiving?” After all, giving thanks should be an ongoing act.

That doesn't always need to be profoundly deep, either. A.J. Jacobs, author of *Thanks a Thousand*, once asked a philosophy-professor friend what he was grateful for. The shockingly simple reply? “Sometimes I'm just grateful I have arms.” That odd but spot-on answer shows the importance, Jacobs says, of being “thankful for things so omnipresent that they can escape our notice.”

So ... how *is* your Thanksgiving?

From newsletterneswletter November 2019

