

Perspective

A Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church
of Phoenixville, Pennsylvania

Volume XLIV No. 3 April 2018

Phone: 610-933-8816

Fax: 610-933-8060

www.fpc-phoenixville.org

email: secretaryfpc@comcast.net



First Presbyterian Church
Phoenixville, Pennsylvania
1846 – 2018

The *Perspective* is published 10 times a year by the First Presbyterian Church of Phoenixville. Please direct information or comments to the Church Office at 610-933-8816 or to secretaryfpc@comcast.net.
Publisher: Sue Smith Contributors: Church family Proofreader: Jeanne Blackburn

Table of Contents

Message from Pastor Doug.....	2
Congregational vote.....	4
Parish Life.....	4
Deacons Dialogue.....	5
Mission, Action Committee.....	7
Communications, Maggie O'Malley.....	8
Worship & Music Committee.....	9
First Friday VBS.....	9
Nominating Committee.....	10
April calendar.....	11
May calendar.....	12

From the Pastor

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Now I would remind you, brothers and sisters, of the good news that I proclaimed to you, which you in turn received, in which also you stand, through which also you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message that I proclaimed to you—unless you have come to believe in vain. For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them—though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. Whether then it was I or they, so we proclaim and so you have come to believe.

Since you will be reading this around the time of Easter or a bit later, I thought I'd look at an Easter Lectionary reading that I won't be using for Easter this year. This one, from 1 Corinthians, is about Jesus' post-resurrection appearances. First, I want to point out that Paul omits Mary Magdalene and the other women being the first to see the risen Jesus. This isn't necessarily surprising, given the culture and time period, but is worth noting.

According to what is written above, Paul (Cephas) was the first to see the risen Jesus, and then the twelve all together, and then more than 500 others, then to James, then to all of the apostles. Last of all, to Paul. I don't take this to mean last of all in a literal sense, in that Jesus never appeared to anyone else around the time of Paul, nor after Paul, but Paul is placing himself last among those he has mentioned. Paul was in an interesting situation - before him, as far as we know, to be an Apostle was to be someone who knew Jesus in life, and who saw Jesus after his resurrection as well. Paul is the first major Apostle that we know of who claimed the title despite never having met the living Jesus, and having a vision of Jesus on the road to Damascus years after his resurrection. This clearly caused problems in the early Christian community - what about those joining the Way of Jesus (an earliest name for Christianity) who never knew Jesus in life? Who never saw him resurrected? What about, in particular, Gentiles who wish to join the Way, which up to this time was a movement within the Jewish community?

And so Paul must often spend time explaining himself, as he does in the above reading - why it is that he should still count as an Apostle; in particular an Apostle to the Gentiles.

Interestingly, Paul places his own vision of Jesus in the same category as the visions shared by Jesus' followers immediately after his crucifixion. Stories of these visions and experiences of the risen Christ are interesting because it is hard to nail down exactly how Jesus is present with them. On the one hand, he can touch and be touched; on the other hand, he is still bearing a mortal wound in his side, yet walking around. He is able to appear and disappear from a particular place, and in one case enters a room without opening the locked door. He is sometimes hard to recognize for who he is, as on the road to Emmaus, or when he gives some of his disciples fishing advice. He is clearly not who he was before he was crucified. He is present, but in a different way.

2. continued.....

This is important to me, because it means we are connected to the original Apostles in a surprising way. Though we, like Paul, have not seen Jesus in the flesh, face to face so to speak, and were not his disciples with the chance to follow him around and hear his teaching and see his actions, we are yet capable of experiencing the presence of Jesus just as people did after his resurrection. He can be present with us, but in a different way, no less than how he was present with Paul years after he was crucified and sees to ascend into heaven.

There is a crucial difference (pun intended) between us having to trust in the unrepeatable experiences of people two thousand years ago on the one hand, and us being able to look to our own experiences here and now, and put our trust in what is better known to us. We don't have the names of the 500 brothers and sisters that Paul mentions. Is Paul rounding up? Overestimating or underestimating? Whom did he hear about these appearances from? We can never go back and verify for ourselves any of these resurrection experiences. We have people telling us about them, and we trust their testimony, or we don't. There seem to be differences in the resurrection experiences, as described by each of the Gospels, and we make of that what we will.

But what if we are actually called to experience the risen Jesus for ourselves? What if he is present to us, but in a different way? What if we have to do our own work of discernment, in our own lives, and go seeking the risen Jesus in the world around us?

In the most recent Sermon Talk, the Gospel of Mark came up. The Gospel of Mark has the most stark and abrupt ending: in the oldest text, Jesus is crucified. When the women (Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome) come to the tomb to dress his body, an angel there tells them that he is not in the tomb, he has already gone ahead of them into Galilee. They flee in fear, and that's essentially the end. I like this ending, because to me it asks the question of the reader at the end: the risen Jesus has gone ahead of you, out into the world. What will you do? The core question becomes, then, not what do I think of the testimony I find in the Bible, but rather, what is the testimony of my own life? Jesus can be present to us no less than he was present to Paul, as those who like Paul never met Jesus in the flesh. Do we fall back on the testimony of others long ago, or do we go out into the world, seeking to follow where Jesus has gone?

Pastor Doug



Interested in Joining the Church?

You might have noticed a service where we welcome new members, or when some of our youth finish Confirmation, or you might just be wondering how to join the congregation.

Usually the people who join are the ones who talk to the Pastor or another member about joining, but we realized that we don't really explain how to do it. Adults usually join the church during a worship service through baptism or re-affirming their faith if already baptized. Confirmation is for any young people in middle school or older, and is flexible - we have had a year-long class, and an intensive class that was just two long sessions. Once they've completed Confirmation, the youth join during a worship service just as adults would by affirming their faith. If they aren't yet baptized, they are baptized as well. If you would like to know more, talk to Pastor Doug or one of the Elders.



A Congregational Meeting has been called for Sunday, April 15th in the sanctuary immediately following worship. The purpose of the meeting is to vote on the session's unanimous recommendation that First Presbyterian Church of Phoenixville request that the Presbytery of Donegal install

Rev. Halger as our pastor for an unlimited term.

(If the congregation votes in the affirmative, the installation will be scheduled in the near future. If the vote is in the negative, Rev. Hagler's term as our pastor installed for a designated term will conclude in June, with up to one year of continued pastoral service while Rev. Hagler searches for a new call.)

The meeting will be co-moderated by Rev. Emily Chudy and Rev. Tim Black, co-pastors of Central Presbyterian Church, Downingtown. The previously announced moderator, Rev. Jane DeFord, is now serving Trinity Presbyterian Church, in Berwyn as their transitional pastor, and is unavailable.

Parish Life



Don't get left out in the cold! Save the dates for these fun FPC Events



May 20th – Pentecost Chili Fest Following Worship



August 11th – FPC Reading Phillies Night



We look forward to sharing these special times with you!

The Parish Life Committee meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 7PM in the Parlor...Please join us!



Prayer Chain & Prayer Requests

You can fill out a card in the worship service, drop a note or email us at fpcprayerchain@me.com and we will be lifting you up in prayer.

You can also call Jeanne Blackburn at 267-532-8464 or the church office at [\(610\) 933-8816](tel:6109338816). Anyone interested in being a Prayer Warrior should email or call Jeanne.



Deacons' Dialogue

Greetings to all from the Board of Deacons. We hope you had a contemplative Lenten experience and a blessed Easter!

At our March meeting we were all assigned our group of church members with whom we are to keep in touch and communicate any special information, like the March 11th lunch and forum and the April 15th congregational meeting at which time we will vote on Session's recommendation to call Pastor Doug as our regular full time pastor. We have decided to use email as well as written communication to stay in touch as each is appropriate to the situation, so by now you should have received an email from your deacon representative if your address is listed in the church directory. Please contact either Judy Ball (jball93@msn.com) or Chuck Heidel (csheidel@verizon.net), co-moderators of the Board of Deacons, with your address if you have not received an email from a deacon and wish to.

And now, as we have been doing, here are three more church members who have joined between last spring and March 4th of this year.

And she came to church in a new car, and with the money to buy it. What?! you might ask. Well, here is the story of how Jen Johnson came to and joined our church family almost one year ago.

After a serious accident in which her car was totaled, Jen went back to the car dealer to buy a new car. The finance company with whom she was dealing gave better rates to folks who work or worship or reside in Chester County. Jen is an elementary PE teacher in North Penn School District, Montgomery County, which is also the county in which she lives. Being raised Presbyterian, with parents and brothers very active in their Presbyterian church in Abington, she said she went to First Presbyterian Church here in Phoenixville. She produced a picture of the church and she was good to go! That said, she decided that this was a call from a Higher Source to actually start attending that church that won her a better car financing rate, and now she worships in a congregation she has found warm and welcoming and a lot of credit goes to Pastor Doug, with whom she met expressing her desire to join. Another contributing factor was the funeral service for Ann Miller's Mom at which Pastor Doug officiated. His support for Ann through the whole process was also uplifting to Jen and only helped her to make her decision. Jen sees herself becoming more involved as time goes on. She has a lot of nieces and nephews with whom she is involved, and that takes up a lot of her time when she isn't in school and involved with those children. She said that when she sees an opportunity she will seize it. A warm welcome to Jen!

5. *continued....*

You have seen her sing with the Praise Team. Sometimes she sings with the choir. And often she is in the congregation with her children. She is Anita Lopez who joined the church in Spring of 2017. Anita moved from New York to Spring City so she and her ex-husband can co-parent their children, a situation which works very well for all of them.

When Anita was seeking a church to call home, her God-Mother did some research on line and found FPCP's website and referred Anita to it. From there Anita called Pastor Doug, then met with him and decided that our beliefs and how we live them was what she wanted. After visiting on a few Sundays, Anita made her decision to join us.

Joana, Anita's 15 year old daughter who is a ninth grader in Owen J. Roberts High School, just joined our church the beginning of March. She attends "The Bunch" that meets one Sunday morning a month and loves art, music and drama and looks forward to using her talents within the church and outside the church.

Anita's other children are active in our Sunday School Program: Makaylah, 8 years old, Gabriel, 7 years old, and Savannah 1 year old, who was just baptized recently. Anita plans to increase her participation with the Praise Team and Choir as her busy schedule of work and parenting four children allows. Welcome to our family, Anita and children!

Who's My Deacon?

Following the Retreat for Elders and Deacons, each Deacon was assigned a care group. This provides a way for Deacons to get information to every member and/ or people who attend regularly but are not members. Hopefully, it also provides a contact for you in case you have any needs or requests that the Board of Deacons can help. Using the 2017 Church Directory, assignments were made according to the following:

Page 1 Bacon to Breden - Judy Ball & Kathryn Grocki

Page 2 Brown to Dabback - Pam Bodam

Page 3 Daly to Glincokey - Robin Fetter

Page 4 Goodman to Hunt - Chuck Heidel

Page 5 Hyson to Majcher - Barbie Kepler

Page 6 Mandrusiak to Morabito - Amy Mincavage

Page 7 Morris to Rice - Eileen Naughton

Page 8 Richter to Shier - Sue Shier

Page 9 Sinapius to Warwick - Barb White

Page 10 White to Zielinski - Ellen Williams

The Deacons recently used the care group lists to ensure that Members were aware of the dates for the Luncheon and Forum on March 11 and the vote on April 15. For those of you who have an email address we sent a message electronically. Others were sent a note via US Postal service. If you are a member and did not receive a message, please let us know. Any oversight was truly accidental.

Yours in Christ,
The Board of Deacons,
Judy Ball and Chuck Heidel, co-moderators



Mission, Action, Concern Committee (MAC)

“By grace you have been saved through faith.” —Eph. 2:8

Opportunities

We are planning a **distribution of seasonal clothing** on Saturday April 21, 2018 (9:00 AM-3:00 PM), with setup on Friday April 20. Volunteers are most welcome! Work times will be announced closer to the event.

In Appreciation

The recent **free clothing distribution** on February 23, 2018, welcomed 114 individuals to choose fresh weather-appropriate clothing. Fliers were distributed to social service agencies, mental health facilities, senior citizens locations and free meal locations. Participants gathered items and offered their thanks for the opportunity. Sweatshirts, jeans, shoes and winter and spring-weight jackets were all popular choices.

Workers for the event included 8 FPC members and 6 volunteers from other churches/organizations. Many thanks to all for their energy to make this event possible! All remaining clothing was delivered to the Community Services Center of the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Evansburg, where it will be displayed for folks with needs in the greater Norristown area. —Contributed by Peg Groening

Notes from Near and Far

Drs. Leslie and Cynthia Morgan, PC (USA) mission co-workers in Bangladesh wrote to thank FPC for our contribution, which helped them meet costs of international travel, apartment rent, living allowance, health insurance and other components of their basic missionary support.

In 2017, the Morgans continued to work closely with the Church of Bangladesh, a partner church of the PC (USA), in their outreach to the sick and needy. They helped Christian Mission Hospital in Rajshahi improve and expand its services, especially for people from the rural areas, who have difficulty accessing good medical care. The work of the Morgans also took them into homes in the rural areas around Rajshahi, where they trained and accompanied ministers and lay leaders visiting the sick in their congregations and among their Muslim and Hindu neighbors. They also helped train nursing students at Christian Mission Hospital's Nursing Institute to become competent and compassionate servants of Christ in the care of the sick.

Please visit the **MAC Bulletin Board** for more news of missionaries FPC supports.

Words and Notes from Worship and Music



No fooling! Easter is on Sunday, April 1. I hope you will all come out to celebrate Christ's resurrection. You can then enjoy the Easter egg hunt after the service.

Coming up in May is Pentecost. It's not too early to find that perfect splash of red to wear as we remember the descending of the Holy Spirit. After the service will be our traditional Chili Fest.

The other Sunday someone mentioned to me that we would not have a Communion service at a regular Sunday service for two months. It was also pointed out that the Communion services for those two months were at evening services. Further it was mentioned that many of our members prefer not to drive at night, especially in the winter and thus they miss the evening Communion services. I was very glad to hear this and as a result I will ensure that, moving forward, we will have a Communion service at a regular Sunday morning service every month.

Your Worship and Music committee is a good committee and we are always open to suggestions, comments and yes, complaints. The committee will do their best to address what we hear. The committee usually meets on the second Sunday of the month after church. You are welcome to sit in on a meeting and even more welcome to join the committee. Joining is easy, just show up for a meeting or express your interest to one of the committee members.

See you in church.



First Friday Bible School

This coming spring, summer and fall, the Christian Education/Church Growth Committee is considering hosting **First Friday Bible School**. Childcare on First Fridays is in huge demand at places like the YMCA, and we thought it would be great if we could offer something with more of a focus on teaching and formation, but which also allows parents to drop off their kids and have a fun date night downtown. We are in a superb location for this, of course, but what we really need are volunteers. Each First Friday we would have at least three volunteers who would work with a small group of kids (maybe three or four per adult) for about two and a half hours. It would be very similar to Vacation Bible School as we've hosted in the past, only one night a month. You would be welcome to volunteer for just one or two of the Fridays from May to October, and we will also be seeking volunteers from neighbor churches who like this idea but, like us, can't sustain a traditional VBS on their own. If this sounds interesting and you'd consider volunteering, please contact Pastor Doug, who will be putting a list together.

News from the Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee requests names from the congregation for consideration for the next class of Session members (Elders) and the next class of members of the Board of Deacons.

When selecting names to be submitted to the Committee, please consider the qualifications and duties of the elders of the church as described in the Book of Order.

Elders should be persons of faith, dedication, and good judgment. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel, both within the church and in the world. Elders, together with the ministers exercise leadership, government and discipline, and have responsibilities for the life of a particular church.

The office of Deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of sympathy, witness, and service after the example of Jesus Christ. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, warm sympathies, and sound judgment should be chosen for this office. It is the duty of deacons, first of all, to minister to those who are in need, to the sick, to the friendless, and to any who may be in distress.

Nomination forms can be found in your Sunday bulletin, the narthex or the church office.

Please submit names to be considered for nomination to Becky Sinapius or to the church office by May 6th.

Here are the members that are currently serving as an Elder or a Deacon.

Elders on Session

<u>Class of 2019</u>	<u>Class of 2020</u>	<u>Class of 2021</u>
Hermann Ball	Ken Brown	Jewell Baker
Jean Osterhoudt	Mike Eitl	Kevin Carrabine
Doug Walker	Amy Myers	Paul Parrish
Becky Sinapius	Lynne Williams	Bob Russell

Board of Deacons

<u>Class of 2019</u>	<u>Class of 2020</u>	<u>Class of 2021</u>
Robin Fetter	Judy Ball	Chuck Heidel
Kathryn Grocki	Pam Bodam	Barbie Kepler
Amelia Mincavage		Sue Shier
Barb White	Eileen Naughton	Ellen Williams

April 2018

First Presbyterian Church of Phoenixville

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
EASTER 1 Offering: K. Brown No Sunday School 10:30a Worship <i>Communion</i> 12:00n Easter Egg Hunt 12:00n Deacons meeting?	2 6:00p Women's Outreach Board meet 6:30p Zumba class	3 1:00p Organist rehearsal 3:30p Brass choir 6:30p Zumba class 6:30p Praise Team 7:00p MAC	4 6:00p Women's Book Club 6:45p Merry Ringers Quartet 7:30p Merry Ringers	5 9:00a People to People 9:00a WIC 10:00a Food ministry 7:00p Choir rehearsal	6 9:00a WIC 1:00p Organist Rehearsal	7
8 Offering: A. Myers 9:00a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 12:00n Worship & Music	9 6:30p Zumba class	10 1:00p Organist rehearsal 3:30p Brass choir 6:30p Praise Team 6:30p Zumba class 7:00p Personnel 7:00p Parish Life	11 11:30a Staff meeting 1:00p Clubhouse Cards 6:00p Women's Book Club 6:45p Merry Ringers Quartet 7:30p Merry Ringers	12 9:00a People to People 10:00a Food ministry 7:00p Choir rehearsal 7:30p Compassionate Friends meeting	13 1:00p Organist Rehearsal	14 9:30a Zumba class
15 Offering: M. Eitl 9:00a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 12:00n Congregational Vote	16 6:30p Zumba class 7:00p Finance and Stewardship	17 1:00p Organist rehearsal 3:30p Brass choir 6:30p Zumba class 6:30p Praise Team 7:15p Church Growth	18 6:00p Women's Book Club 6:45p Merry Ringers Quartet 7:30p Merry Ringers	19 9:00a WIC 9:00a People to People 10:00a Food ministry 7:00p Choir rehearsal	20 7:00a Food ministry 9:00a WIC 9:00a Set up for free clothing give away 1:00p Organist Rehearsal	21 6:30a Food ministry 10:00am-1:00pm Free clothing give away
22 Offering: L. Williams 9:00a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 12:00n Women's Circle	23 6:00p Mom's House Board meeting 6:30p Zumba class	24 1:00p Organist rehearsal 3:30p Brass choir 6:30p Zumba class 6:30p Praise Team 7:30p Session Meeting	25 10:00a AARP Board meeting 1:00p Clubhouse Cards 6:00p Women's Book Club 6:45p Merry Ringers Quartet 7:30p Merry Ringers	26 9:00a People to People 10:00a Food ministry \ 7:00p Choir rehearsal Sue Smith vacation	27 1:00p Organist Rehearsal Sue Smith vacation	28
29 Offering: J. Baker 9:00a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 12:00n Talk back with Pastor Doug 7:00p Pub Theology	30 6:30p Zumba class Sue Smith vacation					

May 2018

First Presbyterian Church of Phoenixville

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 1:00p Organist rehearsal 3:30a Brass choir 6:30p Zumba class 6:30p Praise Team 7:00p MAC <i>Sue Smith vacation</i>	2 6:00p Women's Book Club 6:45p Merry Ringers Quartet 7:30p Merry Ringers	3 9:00a People to People 9:00a WIC 10:00a Food ministry 7:00p Choir rehearsal	4 9:00a WIC 1:00p Organist Rehearsal First Friday	5
6 Offering: P. Parrish 9:00a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 12:00n Deacons	7 6:00p Women's Outreach Board meet 6:30p Zumba class	8 1:00p Organist rehearsal 3:30a Brass choir 6:30p Zumba class 6:30p Praise Team 7:00p Personnel 7:00p Parish Life	9 1:00p Clubhouse Cards 6:00p Women's Book Club 6:45p Merry Ringers Quartet 7:30p Merry Ringers	10 9:00a People to People 10:00a Food ministry 7:00p Choir rehearsal 7:30p Compassionate Friends	11 1:00p Organist Rehearsal	12 9:30a Zumba class
13 <i>Mother's Day</i> Offering: B. Russell 9:00a Sunday School 10:30a Worship Communion 12:00n Worship & Music	14 6:30p Zumba class	15 1:00p Organist rehearsal 3:30a Brass choir 6:30p Zumba class 6:30p Praise Team 7:15p Church Growth <i>Perspective articles due.</i>	16 6:00p Women's Book Club 6:45p Merry Ringers Quartet 7:30p Merry Ringers	17 9:00a WIC 9:00a People to People 10:00a Food ministry 7:00p Choir rehearsal	18 7:00a Food ministry 9:00a WIC 1:00p Organist Rehearsal	19 6:30a Food ministry
20 Pentecost Offering: K. Carrabine 9:00a Last Sunday School 10:30a Worship 12:00n Women's Circle 12:00n Chilifest	21 6:30p Zumba class 7:00p Finance & Stewardship	22 1:00p Organist rehearsal 3:30a Brass choir 6:30p Zumba class 6:30p Praise Team 7:30p Session	23 1:00p Clubhouse Cards 6:00p Women's Book Club 6:45p Merry Ringers Quartet 7:30p Merry Ringers	24 9:00a People to People 10:00a Food ministry	25 1:00p Organist Rehearsal	26
27 Offering: J. Osterhoudt 10:30a Worship 12:00n Talk back with Pastor Doug 7:00p Pub Theology	28 6:30p Zumba class Church office closed. <i>Memorial Day</i>	29 1:00p Organist rehearsal 3:30a Brass choir 6:30p Zumba class 6:30p Praise Team	30 6:00p Women's Book Club 6:45p Merry Ringers Quartet 7:30p Merry Ringers	31 9:00a People to People 10:00a Food ministry		