

Perspective

A Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church
of Phoenixville, Pennsylvania

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From the Pastor

Mark 2:23-28

One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grainfields, and as his disciples walked along, they began to pick some heads of grain. The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?" He answered, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need? In the days of Abiathar the high priest, he entered the house of God and ate the consecrated bread, which is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions." Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for people, not people for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

Sabbatical Report

This was not intended to be what I think of as a 'working sabbatical' where someone takes time off, but the time off is really just time to work on other things apart from what they do during a usual weekday: write a book, take classes, etc. The purpose was to have some adventures and connect with my family, especially given how rarely I am able to do so with a spread-out family and limited travel budget. I am happy to say that it was a success, though we had to remain adaptable, in all the ways I'd hoped.

The sabbatical began with a lot of work and cleaning around the house, as well as the start of a task I'd been putting off - clearing out the storage space we've kept for the last 9 years. With some moving and consolidating that I've been able to do over the last year, finally going through everything would help a friend of ours as well as us. In the midst of this work, and some relaxation as well, I had time to travel to York for my friend's 51st birthday party, which was a wonderful break. I also had a lot of time to write, and tried sitting outside at our new outdoor table in the morning until the mosquitoes drove me back inside.

Poppy and I then traveled to Akron, OH and then to Cleveland to stay with my sister Liz and brother-in-law Dave. Normally I see them, at best, every three or four years, and this was part of the core purpose of the sabbatical - to reconnect with family. The time was wonderful. We got to see two zoos, an aquarium, and the Cleveland Art Museum (which is huge, beautiful, and free). My sister got a picture with Poppy in the armor room at the Art Museum, and she then posted it paired with a picture of her in the same room with a much-younger Poppy.



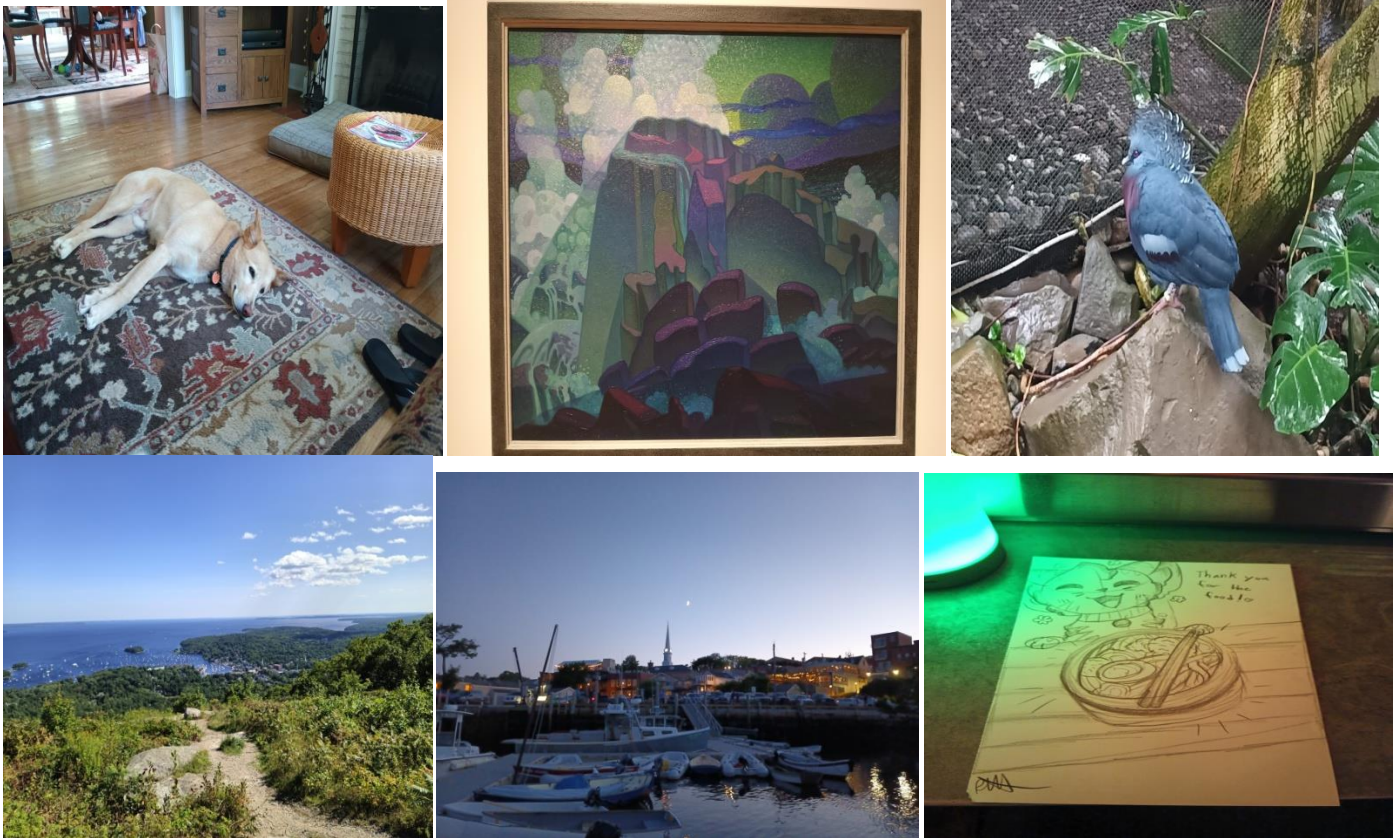
When we returned home, Pam tested positive for COVID, so we went into at-home COVID quarantine mode for that week. Not much got done because quarantining in half of a 1000 square foot townhouse is a bit of a challenge. Fortunately we have two bathrooms and a couch that is relatively comfortable to sleep on. We succeeded, because we all tested negative by Friday, just in time for Poppy's birthday celebration on Saturday. She chose to go with a few friends to the Philadelphia Zoo, and that's what we did, braving the heat in the mid-90s and getting treats on the way home after a long day.

Not long after we got back, Pam joined us and we drove to Mystic, CT and then on to Maine. In Mystic Pam finally got to visit the Seaport and we learned a lot about the history of whaling (much to Poppy's chagrin). In Maine we stayed with my uncle. Poppy and I had a three-hour sailing lesson, and we explored the area around Camden, including going to the top of Mount Baddie and strolling around Camden harbor. We were also able to be there for a memorial dinner for my aunt Marie who died earlier this summer. My mother was also in Maine at the time, as we were able to pull together enough money from my siblings, uncle and me to pay for something from her long-term bucket list - a week at Pemaquid Point.

2. continued...

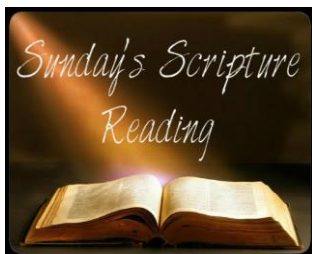
This meant she could also see us, share a couple of meals, and be there for the memorial dinner as well. On the way back we stopped in Mystic again, this time to meet some beluga whales, see a sea lion performance, and otherwise enjoy Mystic Aquarium (much to Poppy's enjoyment).

We came home a full day before school would start for Poppy so that she could have a day off and do all she felt like she needed to be ready for 6th grade, and for the remainder of August I finished cleaning out the storage space and made two appointments for blood tests I'd been putting off for longer than I care to admit (I hate having blood drawn). My fasting glucose is down, and my A1c was basically flat since last time, so my doctor is happy but I am going to continue working on it.



Respectfully submitted,

Pastor Doug



Upcoming Scripture Readings

October 1st: Exodus 17:1-17; Matthew 21:23-32

October 8th: TBA

October 15th: TBA, Blessing of the Animals service

October 22nd: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10; Matthew 22:15-22

October 29th: Deuteronomy 34:1-12, 49,



Remembering Loved Ones

On November 5th, All Saints' Sunday, we will note in the bulletin the names of the saints (believers) from our congregation who have died during the past year. We will also note other relatives and loved ones who have died in the past year but were not members of this church. If you would like the names of those loved ones listed, please send a message to Sue Smith at secretaryfpc145@gmail.com or call the church office at 610-933-8816.



The Session of First Presbyterian Church invites you to a celebration of **Sue Smith!**

Sue is retiring after 17 years as our Church Office Manager, and we will send her off with a reception following worship on Sunday, October 22. Please join us in Fellowship Hall for cake and other goodies but more importantly to show Sue some love.

Raise Right Gift Cards



We ask that you consider shopping with **gift cards** to your favorite stores while at the same time you benefit the church financially.

A percentage of each gift card is donated to our church.

In October we will be placing orders on **Wednesday, October 11** and **Wednesday, October 25**.

If you would like to place an order, please call or text Lynne Williams at 610-955-4749 (cell), or send an email to (brettdrew@comcast.net).

We will complete the order forms for you. Please pick up a **list of retailers**, located in the narthex and the office.

Orders and checks must be received by the day before the orders are placed (**October 10 and October 25**). Please make checks payable to "First Presbyterian Church DR". As always, thank you for continuing to support this program!

The Stewardship Committee



Prayer Chain & Prayer Requests

Amy Myers, our Prayer Chain Coordinator, will be happy to forward your prayer requests to the members of the prayer chain. You can email Amy at fpcprayerchain1@gmail.com and members will be lifting you up in prayer. You may also call Sue Smith at [\(610\) 933-8816](tel:6109338816) and she will forward your requests on to Amy.

From the Clerk of Session

- ❖ Average Sunday morning attendance:
 - In August we had an average of 51 worshipping in person and an average of 17 households viewing the 10:30am YouTube premiere with 3 *chatting*.
 - It's so nice to be worshipping in the sanctuary again and we hope to see more attending in person. Masks are no longer required, but are available. If you are not comfortable indoors, please join us on YouTube and join in the chat, if you are able.
- ❖ The Life of the church
 - Death: Robert Ferguson, former Elder, entered the church triumphant on August 23, 2023. Service information is pending.
 - Current membership is 173.
- ❖ Communion was celebrated on September 3rd when approximately 45 people were served. World Communion will be celebrated on October 1st.
- ❖ Session Meeting Information:
 - Minutes of the July 25, 2023 Session Meeting will be reviewed at the September 26, 2023 Stated Session Meeting and will be in the following Perspective.



Jewell Baker, Clerk of Session



Presbyterian Women Circle

All women are invited to attend Circle meeting on the third Sunday each month. We meet in the parlor following worship to view a video led by the study author, then have discussion following the Horizon Study Guide. Please pack your lunch and join us on October 15th as we continue *Sacred Encounters - The Power and Presence of Jesus Christ in Luke-Acts*.

Please see Jewell Baker for more information.

Parish Life

1 -The church kitchen passed inspection! YAY!!

2 - Parish Life will host a reception honoring Sue Smith in Fellowship Hall following worship on Sunday, October 22. Hope you will join us.



3 - Parish Life meets the second Tuesday of the month to plan activities for our congregation. The October meeting is at 6:00pm on the 10th at Liberty Union in Kimberton.

Please consider joining our fun committee, all are welcome.

Deacon
Ministry 
Deacons' Dialogue

By the time you receive this Perspective, the summer solstice will be past and we will have entered the beautiful season of fall. Nights get cooler, leaves turn colors, school starts, football is back (varying opinions on that!) and potential for illness may increase.

Most of us have had at least 1, possibly 4 COVID vaccines, but there are now more. Flu, pneumonia and COVID are well known but recently a vaccine has been approved for RSV – short for respiratory syncytial virus. These vaccines have been proven effective against disease as well as being cost effective. Most insurance plans (certainly Medicare and Medicaid) will cover the cost. Please discuss with your doctor if you should get all vaccines and at what intervals.

It has been a blessing to be back in church & now Sunday school started 9/17. We look forward to seeing a healthy *YOU* back in church. We can all take care of ourselves and each other as fall and winter arrives.

Worship and Music Notes

October is going to be a very good month for Sundays. We start off with October 1 as World Communion Sunday. No, you don't need to have your hearing checked, we will be speaking in different languages and using some parts of the service from different countries. Come be part of the world communing together.

Sunday October 8 Pastor Doug will be on vacation, sort of. Our plan is to have Pastor record his sermon and then play it at the sermon time of the service.

Sunday October 15 is set to be the Blessing of the Animals. This will be an outside service.

Come worship and bring your animals if you want. In case of bad weather, the service will be in the sanctuary, without live animals.

The last two Sundays in October will be, at this writing, regular services. Come and worship. See you in church.



Finance Committee – Financial Results

The Finance Committee again thanks members and friends for your continued support of the church.

Year to Date Income

- Pledged giving is under budget by \$ 13,500 A shortfall of 10%
- Unpledged giving is under budget by \$ 4,050 A shortfall of 28%
- Dividends and interest from our investments and the Givebutter parking app income have performed better than expected
- For the year, church income is on budget

Year to Date Expenses

- Church committees have done good work in keeping expenses to the budget. Expenses year to date are under budget by \$ 2,350

Year to date Profit and Loss

- Through August, our net loss, actual income to expense is \$ 56,200. That is slightly better than the budget.

As reported previously, our budgeted net loss for the year is \$ 80,877

Sunday School

Our regular Sunday School year began on September 17. We had an amazing turnout for the first day! The children had the opportunity to get reacquainted and preview some of the things we'll be working on in Sunday School this year.

Once again, we have three age-level groups, as follows:

Group 1: Age 3 through Grade 1

Group 2: Grades 2 through 4

Group 3: Grades 5 and up



An intergenerational **Fall Hayride** will take place at Colonial Gardens on **Sunday, October 8** from 2:45 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. The cost is \$8.00 per person and you can still sign up at: <https://tinyurl.com/mwp6k9mr>. Payment should be made to Jill Kleppinger (see details in the RSVP sign-up) or to Jeff McLaughlin. Colonial Gardens is located at 745 Schuylkill Road in Phoenixville. On the day of the hayride, you will also have the option to include the corn maze for an additional \$3.00 per person. If you have questions or for more information about the hayride, contact Jill Kleppinger at jillklepp@gmail.com.

A **Family Bingo Night** is scheduled for Friday, October 13. You should have received an email notice and sign up link. Details will also be posted in the Sunday bulletin and in the BEAT.

Confirmation Class, for young disciples from Grade 6 and up, has begun monthly meetings, the first having been held on September 24. Classes will meet after worship for two-hour sessions that will include lunch. On those days when Confirmation Class is held, members of the class will attend and participate in the worship service rather than Sunday School.



On September 5, a small group of children and parents visited the West Chester office of Chrissy Houlahan, representative of the 6th Congressional district.

Representative Houlahan met with us, received our Offering of Letters, and spoke about her efforts in Congress on behalf of poor and hungry individuals and families.

On Sunday, October 29, representatives from Spanish Health Ministry will visit First Presbyterian Church to participate in various ways in our morning activities. In addition to providing a Minute for Mission and children's message, they will facilitate some activities in Sunday School. Other plans are being finalized by the MAC Committee.

If you have any questions about Sunday School – or wish to volunteer * to help out with the program – contact Jeff McLaughlin at fpcchildrenandyouth@gmail.com.

* ... and this includes dads!

Personnel Committee

The Personnel committee is interested in receiving feedback from the congregation about our staff's performance. Please feel free to email Jean Osterhoudt (jeanoster@comcast.net) or any committee member with your thoughts. If you would like to speak to the committee in person, please let us know and we will schedule a time at our next meeting.





Mission, Action, Concern Committee (MAC)

For this is what the Lord has commanded us: "I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth." (Acts 13:47)

News:

We hear from a lot of organizations who do incredible things – we also support a lot of organizations with our finances (donations from MAC and the congregation), with our talents (congregation members serving in various capacities), and our time (packaging, making lunches, etc). However, the MAC Committee has not been passing on these opportunities.

To further our impact on our local community, we will periodically send out a MAC email detailing what is coming up and list all the events and campaigns local organizations are hosting. We hope you find this helpful and will participate in some individually, as a family, or as a group.

If you know of an event or would like us to include something, email us at MissionFPC145@gmail.com.

Missions: Local Focus

People to People

Thank you to those who supported our Garage Sale! We will have final numbers in the next Perspective.

Spanish Health Ministry

In partnership with Christian Education, we are hosting a very special worship service on ***Sunday, October 29th*** for Sunday School and the Congregation. We will have some representatives from Spanish Health Ministry present the Children's Message and Sunday School and end with a social in Fellowship Hall after service.

The Mission of the Spanish Health Ministry is to respond to the medical needs of Spanish-speaking high-risk pregnant women and families of disabled or medically fragile babies and children who live in the Southern Chester County area to develop a relationship with them to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Learn more about Spanish Health Ministry here: <https://spanishhealthministry.org/>

Phoenixville Free Clinic

The Clinic has a new name – Phoenixville Free Clinic! Through a letter received in September, MAC learned of the name change. An excerpt from the letter is as follows. The full letter is displayed on the MAC bulletin board outside Fellowship Hall.

“While The Clinic name has served us well for the past two decades, we believe that a change will allow us to better reflect our mission, location, and the individuals we serve while staying true to our roots and legacy.



After careful consideration, we have chosen the name **Phoenixville Free Clinic**. The new name and logo represent the community we are privileged to serve and embody our commitment to providing compassionate care to those who need it most. They symbolize not only our comprehensive and compassionate healthcare services but also our resolute determination to make quality medical care accessible to all.”

Letters received:

Letters can be found on the MAC bulletin board outside of Fellowship Hall.

- August 8: Orion thank you letter for our August 2 donation of \$1,000

Missions: National Focus

Bread for the World



Back in June, the congregation wrote letters to their representatives, Representative Chrissy Houlahan, Representative Madeline Dean, Senator John Fetterman, and Senator Bob Casey about the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP), and the Farm Bill that if not passed would affect a lot of people in the United States and worldwide.

On September 5, we met with Chrissy Houlahan to deliver letters written by the Congregation. Morgan Craven, Kristin Craven, Jeffrey Kleppinger, Audrey Kleppinger, Jill Kleppinger, and Jeff McLaughlin attended to discuss the Farm Bill, SNAP benefits, and issues related to food security in the United States and Puerto Rico. A special thank you to Jeff McLaughlin for setting up this meeting!

Church Growth Committee

Prison Ministry:

Book Through Bars:

We still enjoy our monthly trips to BTB. Our next trip will be on **Saturday, September 16th**. If you would like to join us, sign up at the link below or call Sue Smith in the church office (610-933-8816), and we will arrange the carpool <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050F4AADA722A1FB6-books2>, Please indicate if you are willing to share with driving. Volunteers will meet in the church parking lot at 10:30 am and return by 2:30 pm.

Thank you for continuing to donate calendars. Please start collecting for the 2024 year; we will deliver them with your well-wishes. We were the first organization to donate calendars and they were received with excitement and gratitude.



Please look at the books we need right now at BTB, and be sure to look at the type of books they DO NOT need. <https://www.booksthroughbars.org/donate-books>

Alternatively, you can purchase books from the Wishlist using [this link to Bookshop.org](https://www.bookshop.org) and have them shipped to Books Through Bars 4722 Baltimore Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19143. And by ordering from Bookshop.org, you will be supporting small booksellers.

For more information about Books Through Bars, you can always reach out to Bob or Chris for more information.

Queer Circle:

Queer Circle will be meeting on the fourth Monday of each month at 7:00 pm to discuss a book - *Outlove: A Queer Christian Survival Story*. We hope this discussion will bring in folks interested in learning more about gender, sexual orientation, Christian faith, and related issues.

Our next gathering for discussion will be **Monday, October 23rd at 7:00 pm**, and we will be meeting over Zoom to accommodate a wide variety of people. Talk to Pastor Doug, Sarah, or Jacqui for more information.

Gratitude Journal:

You are invited to join Church Growth in a journey of gratitude. We will be reflecting on weekly prompts throughout the year and building up a regular practice of gratitude in our lives. In October, the theme is "Gratitude for Discovery". Watch for reminders and examples in the BEAT and on our Facebook page. Here are the prompts for each week ahead of time:

- Oct 1 - Having a new experience / trying something new (food, sailing, etc)
- Oct 8 - Discovering a new place (in your neighborhood or travel)
- Oct 15 - Learning about a new culture
- Oct 22 - Meeting a new person
- Oct 29 - Discovering something about yourself

Minute for Gratitude. If you would like to share your reflection (1-2 minutes) after a specific prompt or something you are grateful for, please let us know, and we can let you share!



Men's Group Book Discussion

Join the Men's Group on the 3rd Sunday of each month after church for lunch and discussion. Feel free to join the group any 3rd Sunday whether you are reading the books or not.



Wanted: Used Ink Cartridges

We are continuing to collect used cartridges to recycle at Staples. The church receives a \$2 credit for each cartridge. You may drop off your cartridges in the church office or through the mail slot on the office door. This program helps you recycle your cartridges, while at the same time assisting the church.



CHURCHES RESPOND. HOMELESSNESS ENDS. HOPE BEGINS.

Dear First Presbyterian Church of Phoenixville,

Thanks so much for the invitation to share with you about Bridge of Hope Chester County! It has been such a delight to partner with you in Neighboring a local family and I would love to have another group form soon. These videos describe Neighboring wonderfully...

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y3l7P-XODuE&list=PLjq3ruYLYNLEVMMF_N8M0NdyjsJnyQ6Es&index=3&t=1s

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkA98a4r7M8&t=3s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6EqJDt4HSZU&t=5s>

This is what being a volunteer with us means...

Training: Part 1 is a 4 hour self-guided, self-paced on-line training. Part 2 is 2 hours in-person. Criminal Background Checks and Child Abuse Clearances are needed to be obtained. This whole onboarding time takes about 1 month.

Meeting the family: Bridge of Hope staff will facilitate a gathering with the group and family, typically 2 hours at a local park or someone's home.

12-18 months of working together as a group to walk alongside a family coming out of housing instability:

Some of you may have housing connections to share, some of you may have a garage full of nice furniture waiting for a new home, some of you may have trucks to help move that furniture. Some of you may have free time to talk on the phone with a single mom after a hard day at work, or send a note encouraging her as she prepares for a job interview. The time you put in is your choice and since we will be a group of 6-10 people hopefully the work can be shared. A Bridge of Hope case manager is part of the team to help facilitate relationships and guide the goal setting and bring you into supporting goals being met by the family.

3 month review: One hour zoom meeting at the 3 month mark with you to debrief how things are going.

4 Neighborhood Gatherings throughout the year. These are Bridge of Hope hosted events for your group to come together to have fun (Christmas party, ice cream social) and learn (dinner and guest speaker). We try to space these out across the county so one group isn't driving very far for each gathering.

Graduation: At the end of the family's journey with Bridge of Hope we have a celebration together. This looks like whatever the family wants to do (a lunch out together, gathering at someone's home for cake, etc).

Wrap up meeting: Brief meeting with volunteer group about how things went

Contact Rachel Thomas Steadman, Program Director, to express interest in volunteering at

rachelts@bridgeofhopeinc.org or 610-280-0280 x1103.



Attention Redner's Shoppers

Redner's has a rebate program which will pay the church 1% of the value of all register receipts processed at their locations.

You may place them in the box in the narthex or the church office. Please make sure that you are a member of the Redner's Rewards program. You must have your rewards card scanned when you make your purchase for the church to be able to benefit from the purchase. To become a rewards member just stop by the customer service desk to pick up your application and a rewards card.

October 2023

First Presbyterian Church of Phoenixville

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Offering: C Gulden 1 8:30a Bible Study <i>World Communion</i> 10:30a Worship 10:45a Sunday School	2 9:00a Clothing ministry 2:00p MAC 6:30p Zumba class <i>Shelter Meals →</i>	3 6:30p Zumba class <i>Shelter Meals →</i>	4 7:30p Handbell rehearsal <i>Shelter Meals →</i>	5 9:00a WIC 9:00a People to People Clothing ministry 10:00a People to People Food ministry 7:00p Choir <i>John Allen vacation</i> <i>Shelter Meals →</i>	6 9:00a WIC 5:00p Parking Lot Collection <i>John Allen vacation</i> <i>Shelter Meals →</i>	7 9:30a Zumba <i>John Allen vacation</i>
Offering: K Goodman 8 8:30a Bible Study 10:30a Worship 10:45a Sunday School 12:00n Worship & Music <i>Rev. Hagler vacation</i> <i>John Allen vacation</i>	9 9:00a Clothing ministry 12:30p Staff meeting 6:30p Zumba class 7:00p Finance <i>John Allen vacation</i>	10 6:00p Parish Life @ Liberty Union 6:30p Zumba class 7:00p Personnel <i>John Allen vacation</i>	11 10:00a AARP Board Meeting 7:30p Handbell rehearsal	12 9:00a Public Health Mgt 9:00a People to People Clothing ministry 10:00a People to People Food ministry 7:00p Choir 7:00p Compassionate Friends	13 6:00p Family Bingo Night	14
Offering: J Kleppinger 15 8:30a Bible Study 10:30a Blessing of the Animals – Outside Worship 10:45a Sunday School 12:00n Men’s Group 12:00n Women’s Circle 7:00p Pub Theology	16 9:00a Clothing ministry 6:30p Zumba class	17 6:30p Zumba class 7:30p Property	18 12:30p Church Growth 7:30p Handbell rehearsal	19 9:00a WIC 9:00a People to People Clothing ministry 10:00a People to People Food ministry 7:00p Choir	20 9:00a WIC	21 9:30a Zumba 10:30a Books thru Bars
Offering: J Baker 22 8:30a Bible Study 10:30a Worship 10:45a Sunday School 11:45a Retirement Reception for Sue Smith 12:00n Confirmation Class 7:00p Antiracism Book Study via Zoom	23 9:00a Clothing ministry 6:30p Zumba class 7:00p Queer Circle Book Study	24 6:30p Zumba class 7:00p Session	25 7:30p Handbell rehearsal <i>John Allen vacation</i>	26 9:00a People to People Clothing ministry 10:00a People to People Food ministry 7:00p Choir <i>John Allen vacation</i>	27 <i>John Allen vacation</i>	28 <i>John Allen vacation</i>
Offering: A Smith 29 8:30a Bible Study 10:30a Worship 10:45a Sunday School 12:00n Spanish Health Ministry Reception <i>John Allen vacation</i>	30 9:00a Clothing ministry 6:30p Zumba class <i>John Allen vacation</i>	31 6:30p Zumba class				