

Perspective

A Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church
of Phoenixville, Pennsylvania

Volume XLIX No. 3 March 2024

Phone: 610-933-8816

Fax: 610-933-8060

www.fpc-phoenixville.org

email: secretaryfpc145@gmail.com



First Presbyterian Church
Phoenixville, Pennsylvania
1846 – 2023

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 secretaryfpc145@gmail.com.

Publisher: Maggie O'Malley Contributors: Church Family

Table of Contents

Message from Pastor Doug	2
Holy Week Schedule.....	4
Worship & Music.....	5
Clerk of Session Report	6
Sunday School.....	7
Parish Life	8
Church Growth.....	8
Stewardship	10
Scrip Cards	10
MAC News	11
Deacons Dialogue	16
Reflection	17
March Calendar.....	18

From the Pastor

Philippians 2 (NRSVUE)

¹²Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence but much more now in my absence, work on your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Kids' Questions: Hard Mode

You often watch me try to answer the kids' questions during the Children's Sermon, and I hope it is as enjoyable for you as it is for me. I love open-minded questions, and I love the challenge of taking something I might think I understand pretty well and explaining it in a way that hopefully a five year old can absorb, and that the child who asked the question can find meaningful. (Most of the questions are anonymous, and I don't want to single anyone out for the ones that have names attached)

Some of the questions are ones that I simply don't know how to answer in a way that a young child could find meaningful, though. Or the best explanation I can currently give would just take too long. I assume that this is because I haven't done enough work on my own understanding, but I've given some of the questions more than a year of thought and remain stuck. Those are the questions that I'm going to address in this Perspective, and future ones depending on how long each response takes.

These answers will be aimed more at adults than children, but they might be helpful for parents talking to kids who ask similar questions, or of course for adults who have wondered these things themselves. Also, as always, these are my answers, based on my best understanding. Other Presbyterians, other pastors, and other Christians might certainly answer differently.

Are we God's school project? Does God have more creations? (Did God get an A+?)

This is a silly question with a lot of deep implications. Of course we are not God's school project, because God is not in school, but in that question I hear the question of whether God created us as a joke, or as a kind of experiment, playfully and to see what happened. I think that God took creation much more seriously than that. We would not normally think of someone being willing to die for the sake of a school project - you can just take a bad grade and move on, in that metaphor. But whatever God was doing in creation, whatever God was thinking or intending, it seems that God was deadly serious about it (even as we see in scripture, God does have a sense of humor).

I can also hear the question implied - did God do a good job? This is a question that I see come up a lot, and have heard a lot, in discussions with agnostics and atheists. Why did God create a world where suffering was possible? Did God create a world with free will, or not?

These can be interesting philosophical questions, but I also think they avoid more direct questions. For example, is the main question why God created a universe where cancer is possible, or is the more important question why we allow cancer treatment to leave someone destitute? Do we need to know why God allows violence, or do we need to ask ourselves why we accept violence as the cost of doing business, literally and figuratively? I have found that we can work together with people who don't want medical care to cause bankruptcy, and people who want to work to prevent violence, even if we don't agree on the philosophical (metaphysical) questions of theodicy.

I'm happy to have the metaphysical discussion, because I'm a nerd for that kind of thing, but sometimes I think we're avoiding the more direct questions about our way of life and what we allow in our society.

If the Romans were in charge of Jerusalem, why didn't they make the Jews follow their religion?

This question makes a lot of sense. To answer, we have to remember that the Roman Empire was famously ambivalent about religion. That is, generally speaking, the Roman Empire did not care what you *believed*, as long as you *obeyed*. The Romans adopted their gods from the Greeks, for the most part just changing the names (Ares to Mars, Zeus to Jupiter, etc.). Greek was the common language of the Roman Empire, not Latin, which was more of an elite, bureaucratic language. The Romans even invested a huge amount of money refurbishing and expanding the Jerusalem Temple, until it was one of the architectural wonders of the Empire - until they destroyed it 10 years later because of a violent revolt against Roman rule in Judea. They had no problem building a huge Temple for obedient Jews who paid their taxes and endured slavery and exploitation, as long as people obeyed, and were quiet about the way Rome treated them.

I've read that Judaism was the largest religious minority in the Roman Empire, stretching from central Asia to north Africa and southern Europe. The Roman Empire actually had special laws protecting Jewish religious practices, as a way to keep the peace with this large minority. Jews had their own limited court system for religious cases (as we see in Jesus' crucifixion narrative in the Gospels, where he is tried by the priesthood and by Pontius Pilate for different crimes). One of the points of conflict between the early Church and Judaism as the two were becoming more different from one another was whether the early Church would still have those Imperial legal protections provided to Jews. Without them, it was easier to persecute early Christians, and Jewish authorities wanted to distance themselves from the Christ-followers so that their legal status wouldn't be threatened.

If God can see the future wouldn't God know that we sin?

I liked my metaphor that God ‘remembers’ the past and the future the way we remember the past. I also know that it’s impossible to speak with any certainty about what God experiences or knows, or can know. There are theologians who say that God can’t know the future perfectly because the future cannot be perfectly known, because of the properties of physics and the natural world. They look at something like Heisenberg’s uncertainty principle and say it means the present location of subatomic particles cannot be known with certainty, meaning the future cannot be known with certainty, and God can only know what can be known. At this point, obviously, I am well out of my lane. We can probably agree that God knows all that can be known, and maybe leave it at that for now.

I don’t think God is surprised when we sin, or with how we sin. I don’t think we do something wrong and God’s response is “Wow, I never saw that one coming!” I think God knows that we sin, and that is why God forgives. Living the right kind of life, a righteous life, does not mean never making a mistake. It means repenting and seeking forgiveness when we do make mistakes. When we fall short is when we do things we know are wrong and keep doing them, or when we do things we know are wrong and never try to make things right. I think it is far better to make a lot of mistakes while making a good-faith effort to change for the better and make restitution than it is to make a few mistakes that we hope no one notices. I also don’t think we should surprise ourselves when we make a mistake, or act surprised when someone else does. Of course we make mistakes, we do that all the time. It’s what we do next that I think is most important.

Alright, that’s the first three questions I wanted to address. I have two more questions that I’ll be addressing in April’s Perspective, but I’ll give you a preview: those questions will be *Why did God not give Adam and Eve a second chance in the garden?* and *There are a lot of other religions, and do they go to heaven or hell, and if so why?*

Sincerely,
Pastor Doug



Holy Week

Palm/Passion Sunday – March 24th

10:30 a.m. Worship Service with Communion

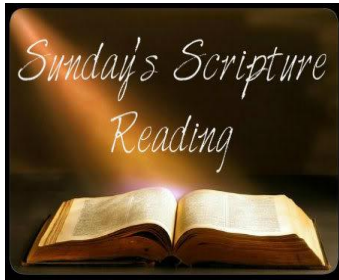
Maundy Thursday – March 28th

7:30 p.m. Prayer Service

Easter Sunday – March 31st

10:30 a.m. Worship Service

Easter Egg Hunt immediately following the service



Upcoming Scripture Readings

March 3rd: 1 Corinthians 1:18-25; John 2:13-22

March 10th: Numbers 21:4-9; John 3:14-21

March 17th: Jeremiah 31:31-34; John 12:20-33

March 24th: Mark 11:1-11; Mark 14:1-2, 10-11, 17-25;

Mark 14:32-50; 15:1-4, 16-24; 33-47

March 31st: Acts 10:34-43; Mark 16:1-8

Worship and Music Notes



What's new? We have a new group that has become part of our music ministry. We have started up our **Children's Choir** again. It has been several years since we had a children's choir as part of our music ministry. Word is that we have about 10 budding singers that are already practicing. Their debut is on Easter morning, March 31.

On March 24 normally we would be celebrating Palm Sunday. However this year we are calling it Palm/Passion Sunday. It will be a wonderful and meaningful service. The service will begin with the joy of the palms, complete with a procession with palms by our children. Then we will move on to remember the Last Supper with Communion. Finally we close the service remembering Good Friday.

There will be a brief prayer service on March 28, Maundy Thursday at 7:30 PM. On the last day of March, the 31st, we will celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. As part of the celebration our choir will sing, our bells will play, our Praise Team will add their part to the joy, and our children's choir will sing. To top it all off you will be given the opportunity to sing the Hallelujah Chorus at the end of the service. See you in church

Ken Brown, Ministry Chair

Lenten Devotional

Make your Advent extra meaningful by following the devotional prepared by the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. To read the devotional online or to download a copy, please visit PTS.edu/devotional. Copies will be available in the church office.



Prayer Chain & Prayer Requests

Please send any prayer needs to Sandy Schrack at fpcprayerchain2@gmail.com. Your request will be distributed to FPC's prayer angels. Their silent efforts will be put to work to lift you up. The same email address can be used for anyone wishing to join the prayer team.



From the Clerk of Session

- ❖ Average Sunday morning attendance:
 - In January we had an average of 70 worshipping in person and an average of 20 households viewing the 10:30am YouTube premiere with 5 *chatting*.
- ❖ The Life of the church
 - Death:
 - Muriel Rowlands (member) passed on December 19, 2023. Memorial service on 12/27 at Gatcha Funeral Home.
 - Helen Marie Harrop (member) passed on January 12, 2024. Memorial service on 1/20 at Devlin-Gatcha Funeral Home. Private burial at Morris Cemetery.
 - Vivian Sedlacek (member) passed on February 19, 2024. Memorial Service on 3/2 in the sanctuary. Internment at Valley Forge Chapel immediately following the service.
 - Roll changes
 - Move Alyson Pehlman from active to friend status per request
 - Move Ellen Carlino from active to friend status per request
 - Move Aaron and Kristin Skutch from active to friend status per June letter
 - Remove Bob and Chris Wittrock from the roll per 2/7 email. They will be moving out of the area.
 - Current membership is 162.
- ❖ Communion was celebrated on January 7th when approximately 60 people were served. Ash Wednesday communion served approximately 22. Next Communion will be on Sunday, March 3rd.
- ❖ Session Meeting Information:
 - Minutes of the January 23rd Session Meeting and the February 4th Congregational Meeting will be reviewed at the March 26th Stated Session Meeting and will be in the following Perspective.
 - Motions from the December 2023 meeting: **Recommended Communion dates for 2024, with Sessions' approval also gives Worship and Music authority to make changes without Session approval: February 14 (Ash Wednesday), March 3, March 24 (Passion Sunday), May 5, June 2, July 7, August 4, September 1, October 6 (World Communion Sunday), November 3, December 1 (Advent 1), December 24 (Christmas Eve), January 5, 2025.**
 - The following new leaders were ordained/installed for 3-year terms beginning in 2024:
Elders: Ken Brown, Jacqui Busch, Eileen Naughton, and Doug Walker
Deacons: Rebecca Barkley, Jen Johnson, Amy Mincavage, Gail Schnaedter

Jewell Baker, Clerk of Session



Sunday School

Regular Sunday School classes continue to meet each week during the worship service, from approximately 10:45 to 11:45. (On Sundays when Confirmation Classes are held, the confirmands remain in the sanctuary for the worship service.)

During the month of January, we focused on different ways to answer the question, “**What is God like?**” Through stories, discussions, prayer, visual arts, music, and creative drama, children expressed and shared their ideas about the attributes and actions of God. Check the bulletin board in the hallway behind the sanctuary. And while you’re there, record some of your own ideas in answer to the question, “What is God like?”

The Lenten season is now upon us and, in Sunday School, we will read about and discuss events leading up to the events of Holy Week and Easter Sunday. In addition, on March 10, Sunday School children will write letters for our **Offering of Letters** in support of the Farm Bill.

The next **Family Bingo Night** will take place on Friday evening, April 12. This has been a popular and fun event in the past and we hope you can join us! Mark your calendar and stay tuned for further details. Several other family events are in the works for the coming months. Once dates and details are confirmed, we will spread the word!

Confirmation Class – for young disciples from Grade 5 and up – continues to meet monthly. The two-hour sessions (which include lunch) occur after the Sunday worship service. Upcoming Confirmation Classes will be held on March 24 and April 28.



A key factor contributing to the success of our Sunday School program is our talented and energetic crew of Sunday School teachers. So, whenever you get a chance, **thank a teacher!**

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.

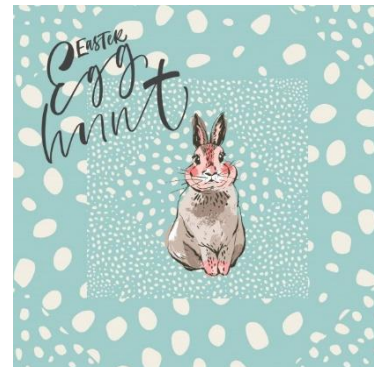
^{*} ... and this includes dads!

Jeff McLaughlin, Children & Youth Coordinator

Parish Life

Easter is upon us, and that means your Parish Life Crew will hold our annual Easter Egg Hunt! The hunt will commence after the worship service on Easter Sunday, March 31st. This is an event the kiddos are sure to enjoy!

Are you a certified food handler? Parish Life is looking for one, or members who would be willing to certify. Please reach out to any of us for details.



Parish Life will meet for pizza and planning in the parlor on Tuesday, March 19th at 5:30. New members warmly welcomed!

We look forward to sharing these special times with you!

Typically, the Parish Life Committee meets on the second Tuesday of each month. Meeting times and locations are announced in Sunday's bulletin, The BEAT e-newsletter, and in the Perspective each month.

Church Growth Update

Lent is a great time to do something new! If you want to expand your church involvement, consider the Church Growth Committee. Meetings are held via Zoom during the work week at a time that works for most committee members. If you want to join the Church Growth Committee, email Kristin at kristin.c.craven@gmail.com.

Learn & Discuss:

Anti-Racism Book Club:

The next meeting of the Anti-Racism Book Club is **Sunday, March 24th at 7:00 pm** via Zoom.

The Anti-Racism Book Club is still working reading and discussing *We Remain: Race, Racism and the Story of the American Indian* by Keith R Burich, Ph. D. Everyone is welcome, even if you have not read the book haven't had time to catch up. If you need a copy, contact Pastor Doug Hagler.

Speaker Series:

Ursinus College is running a speaker series that the Church Growth Committee thought would be perfect for our Anti-Racism Book Club. Join us for the talk and then conversation at a local restaurant (TBD by the group in attendance). Please email Kristin at kristin.c.craven@gmail.com if you are attending.

Politics, Violence, Memory: The New Social Science Of The Holocaust

Tuesday, March 12 | 7:00 pm | Pfahler Auditorium (601 E Main St, Collegeville)

In his research, Jeffrey Kopstein focuses on interethnic violence, voting patterns of minority groups, antisemitism, and anti-liberal tendencies in civil society, paying special attention to cases within European and Russian Jewish history.

These interests are central topics in his *Intimate Violence: Anti-Jewish Pogroms on the Eve of the Holocaust* (Cornell University Press, 2018) and his edited volume, *Politics, Memory, Violence: The New Social Science of the Holocaust* (Cornell University Press, 2023).

Jeffrey Kopstein is a professor of political science and director of the Center for Jewish Studies at the University of California, Irvine, and leads this Jewish Life lecture at Ursinus.

Gratitude Journal:

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Gratitude Journal, publicly or privately. If you would like a list of the prompts we provided throughout the year to continue journaling through gratitude, please contact Kristin Craven at kristin.c.craven@gmail.com.

In continuing in our gratitude, we will be providing monthly prompts in kindness. To start, we must take care of ourselves first. To help others, we have to follow airline protocol; you should put your mask on before helping with your children or others seated next to you. This month, we ask, *how do you show kindness to yourself?*

Prison Ministry:

Pen Pals:

We received a few responses from our holiday cards. You can view them here: <https://bit.ly/FPCPrisonMinistry>

After receiving them, we would like to start a pen-pal group. If you are interested in being a Pen Pal to a person incarcerated in Pennsylvania, have any questions, or would like more information on being a Pen Pal, don't hesitate to get in touch with Kristin Craven at kristin.c.craven@gmail.com.

Book Through Bars:

We still enjoy our monthly trips to BTB. Our next trip will be on *Saturday, March 16th*. If you would like to join us, sign up at the link below or call Maggie O'Mally at the church office (610-933-8816), and we will arrange the carpool <https://bit.ly/FPCBTB24>, 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. We are still collecting for the 2024 year. We are also collecting brown paper bags with handles (like you get from Whole Foods or Kimberton Whole Foods). For a full list of books you can donate, please see the bulletin board outside the church office.

Donate books:

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 directly 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, visit <https://www.booksthroughbars.org/> or reach out to Bob or Chris for more information.

Queer Circle:

The next meeting of *Queer Circle* will be on **Monday, March 25th at 7:00 pm** to discuss a book – *The Book of Queer Prophets: 24 Writers on Sexuality and Religion*. We hope this discussion will bring in folks interested in learning more about gender, sexual orientation, Christian faith, and related issues. Talk to Pastor Doug, Sarah, or Jacqui for more information.



Kristin Craven, Ministry Chair

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.

Stewardship Committee Notes

Scrip Gift Cards

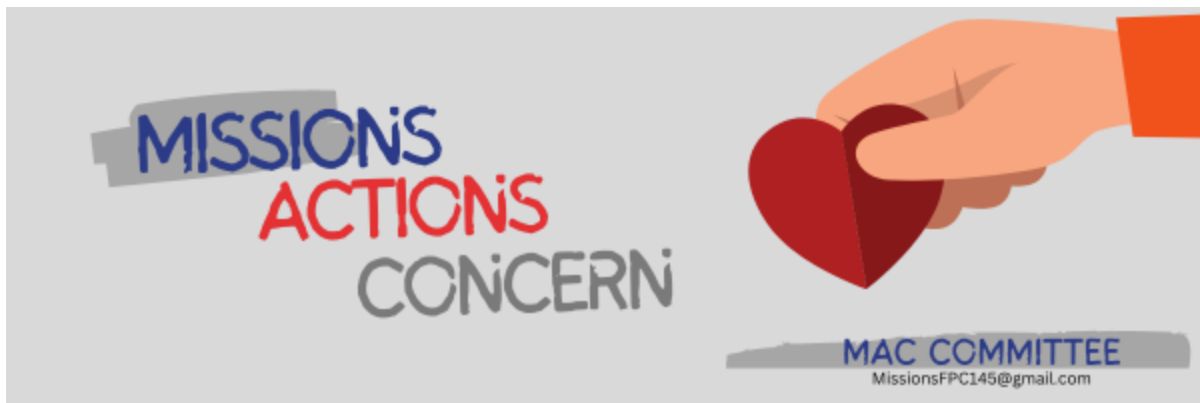
As we are trying to save on shipping fees, we are now placing orders earlier in the week. For the month of March, we will need your order by **Monday, March 11 and Monday, March 25**. If you would like to place an order, please call or text Lynne Williams at 610-955-4749 (cell), or send an email to (brettdrew@comcast.net). We will complete the order forms for you. Please make checks payable to **“First Presbyterian Church DR”**. As always, thank you for continuing to support this program as it financially benefits our church.

Capital Campaign Update

Last May, we kicked off a Capital Campaign with the purpose of funding repairs to the sanctuary and roof. These repairs were necessary for us to safely return to worship together in the sanctuary. We appreciate all who have already donated and pledged. To date, more than **40%** of our goal of \$160,000 has been donated. Every contribution helps secure the financial security and the future of First Presbyterian Church. If you have not yet pledged to this campaign, we ask that you prayerfully consider doing so in the coming weeks and months. **It is not too late.** This effort will continue through the month of May. You may find additional pledge cards and envelopes in the narthex and the church office. We thank you for your continued support and commitment to our church.

One Great Hour of Sharing

As Christians we are called to love one another by sharing what we have with those in need. One way to answer this call is through our gifts to “**One Great Hour of Sharing**”. This is the single, largest way that Presbyterians come together every year to help our neighbors in need around the world. A gift to this offering enables the church to share God’s love by providing relief to those affected by natural disasters, by providing food to the hungry, and by helping low-income communities overcome injustice and oppression. During the season of **Lent**, we invite you to give generously to “**One Great Hour of Sharing**”. Envelopes are available in your offering envelope boxes, in the narthex and church office, or you may send a check with **OGHS** noted in the memo line. Offerings will be received throughout **Lent**, with a special dedication on the **Sunday after Easter, April 7**. Together we can once again help change the lives of many. **Thank you for your life changing offering.**



Mission, Action, Concern (MAC) Committee News

Do you have a nonprofit that you support that could use extra hands? MAC is looking for volunteer and service opportunities we can offer to the congregation. If you have any opportunities that you think the congregation could assist with, email us at MissionsFPC145@gmail.com.

If you are looking to expand your involvement in church, consider MAC. Meetings are held via Zoom during the work week at a time that works for most committee members. If you want to join MAC, email Kristin at MissionsFPC145@gmail.com.

Local Missions:

MAC Survey

MAC is looking to expand service opportunities offered to the church and congregation. Please take this short survey to let MAC know what your priorities are in serving, your general availability, and type of service you would like to do. Please complete this survey by Sunday, March 31 - <https://bit.ly/MAC2024Survey>.

Souper Bowl: Open Door Ministry

Thank you to everyone who donated cans of soup or money for our Souper Bowl. In total, we received 75 food items and \$112, which have been given to Open Door Ministry. Open Door Ministry's mission is to be an open door, a nurturing, faith-based organization that welcomes those in need and offers community-based programs, including a food pantry, a thrift shop and volunteer opportunities. Open Door brings people together within our community and provides support, compassion and understanding.

To learn more about Open Door Ministry, visit <https://www.opendoorministry.info/>

Phoenixville Area Community Services (PACS)

This month, we are collecting food and money for PACS. The mission of Phoenixville Area Community Services is to aspire to be the lead resource for food insecurity in the community. Donations can be dropped in the many PACS boxes around the church (Narthex, Church Office, outside Fellowship Hall) and monetary donations can be dropped off at the church office or during service. To learn more about Phoenixville Area Community Services (PACS), visit <https://www.pacsphx.org/>



PACS HOT LIST:

(AS OF 2/19/2024)

PLEASE NO GLASS CONTAINERS OR OPENED/EXPIRED FOODS. THANK YOU!

Food

- ☐ Olive Oil
- ☐ Condiments (ex., ketchup, mayonnaise)
- ☐ Shelf-stable non-dairy milk (ex., almond, oat, soy)
- ☐ Sugar (2 lb. bag)
- ☐ Flour (2 lb. bag)
- ☐ Salad Dressing
- ☐ Canned pasta (ex., Chef Boyardee, Spaghetti-O's)
- ☐ Jelly (grape & strawberry)
- Spices (salt & pepper sets, garlic powder, Adobo, basil, onion powder, oregano, cumin, parsley, black pepper, paprika, chili powder, mustard powder & garlic salt)
- ☐ Pancake Syrup
- ☐ Bottled Water
- ☐ Grits
- ☐ Masa
- ☐ Granola Bars
- ☐ Baking mixes (ex., brownies, cake, muffins) and icing
- ☐ Spam
- ☐ Snacks (ex., potato chips, tortilla chips, goldfish, peanut crackers, cheese crackers, cookies, poptarts, mini muffins, trail mix, & popcorn)
- ☐ Canned fruit (ex., pears, peaches, & oranges)
- ☐ Canned tuna
- ☐ Canned Salmon
- ☐ Juice Boxes

Baby Items

- ☐ Diapers (size 4, 5, & 6)
- ☐ Baby wash
- ☐ Baby lotion

Cleaning products:

- ☐ Paper towels
- ☐ Tissues
- ☐ Hand soap
- ☐ Cleaning supplies
- ☐ Bleach (64 oz)
- ☐ Laundry detergent (less than 1.5 gallons)

Toiletries:

- ☐ Shampoo
- ☐ Deodorant (men & women's)
- ☐ Toothpaste
- Body wash (men & women's)

Pet items:

- ☐ Cat Litter



People to People

The next People to People Garage Sale will be on ***Saturday, March 23rd in Fellowship Hall from 8:00 am – 1:00 pm.***

There will be housewares, toys, clothing for everyone, linens, glassware, books, household items, knick-knacks, jewelry, and much more at very reasonable prices. Come and find a unique treasure, too!

Help is needed between Wednesday, March 20th, and Saturday, March 23rd, to make this event a success. Please contact Sandy Heidel (csheidel@verizon.net) if you can help.

St Mary's Franciscan Shelter

Thank you to those who made meals and sides for our week at St. Mary's Franciscan Shelter.

To learn more about St. Mary's Franciscan Shelter, visit <https://stmarysfs.org/>.

St. Mary's is hiring! St Mary's Franciscan Shelter for homeless families is seeking a live-in house manager to oversee the shelter's operation Monday – Friday from 9:30 PM – 9:00 AM. Holiday and additional hours might also be available.

The overnight house manager can sleep after closing/securing the shelter (11 PM – 6 AM). This shift is considered “on call” should there be an issue overnight. The House Manager is to be available by 6:30 to set up breakfast, oversee the needs of residents, perform light housekeeping, and answer phones until 9 AM.

Job responsibilities include: Closing shelter, setting up breakfast, overseeing the needs of residents, light housekeeping, and answering phones

Compensation includes room, food, laundry facilities, all utilities (including internet and cable) and a bi-weekly stipend of \$500.

If you want to serve families facing homelessness and are willing to engage in the shelter's life, please contact Elsa Haile at 610-933-3097 or through Indeed. A complete job description is available upon request at smfs@stmarysfs.org.

National Missions:

Bread for the World

Letter Writing: We are once again writing to our representatives to continue supporting the Farm Bill, including SNAP (food stamps), access to healthy fruits and vegetables, and global nutrition programs. Please start thinking about personal stories to add to your letter.

MAC will host a letter-writing campaign on *Sunday, March 10th*, in Fellowship Hall following service. If you would prefer to write your letters on your own, please return them to the church office by *Sunday, March 17th*, or bring them with you to service.

Save the Date! MAC will be furthering our participation with Bread for the World by hosting a community Listen In on *Saturday, June 1 from 1:00 pm – 3:30 pm on the Church Lawn and in Fellowship Hall*. At this event, we plan on bringing the community of Phoenixville together where leaders of local nonprofits and businesses will share stories of food insecurity and how it impacts our community, live music, engage the community in writing letters to our representatives, church tours, and of course, have snacks!

Global Missions:

You can see all updates from our Missionaries (and all organizations we support) at this link: <https://bit.ly/FPCMissionaries>.

Drake Williams

Here is an excerpt from an update we received from Drake Williams on 2.12.24. To read the full letter (including podcast), visit <https://bit.ly/FPCMissionaries> and select Drake Williams.

Dear Friends in Christ,

Thank you for your prayers in these past few months. There has been a change of plan for the February mission trip from the destination of Lviv, Ukraine to Bucharest, Romania.

Why the change? The city of Lviv has been struck several times by missiles and drone strikes by Russia. More threats have been made by Vladimir Putin that will likely increase as we approach the Russian election March 4. This was precisely the time that I was supposed to be in Lviv. After prayer and consultation with Christian leaders in Eastern Europe, I have been encouraged not to go at this point. It is disappointing as I would have liked to help Ukrainian Christians during their time of need.

Instead, I am pleased to share that I will be at the Baptist Institute in Bucharest, Romania from February 27 through March 8. I will have several opportunities to share with students, preach at local churches, and work on a commentary series for pastors in Romania.

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 voice matters in person, please contact a committee member so time can be scheduled at the next meeting.



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 watch a video led by the study author and have discussion following the Horizon Study Guide. Please join us as we continue *Sacred Encounters - The Power and Presence of Jesus Christ in Luke-Acts*. Please see Jewell Baker for more information.



Deacons' Dialogue

We're pleased to introduce you to the 2024 Board of Deacons - Rebecca Barkley, Kristin Craven, Jen Johnson, Gail Landázuri, Paulette Mark, Amy Mincavage, Lucinda Parrish, Mona Sabia, Gail Schnaedter, and Lynne Williams. While you may already connect regularly with your assigned deacon, please feel free to reach out to any of us if you need any assistance, and thank you to the many members of the congregation who regularly assist the deacon team in providing transportation, meals, and support to our church family – we couldn't do it without you!



May I be to others what they need: a body to work when others cannot; a heart to love those who are forgotten; a shoulder to console those whose soul is in need; a smile to brighten the lives of those who struggle; a voice to proclaim Your love. Let me be capable of transforming the human heart by the power of Your mercy and love. Send me, Lord, if you need me, to touch others as You would touch them, to hold them as You would, to love them as only You can. Let me serve others as You would serve them, that in doing so I may serve You.

Reflection: Youth & Hope

Excerpts from *The Voice of the Master*, by Kahlil Gibran

...and I said, "Where are we now, youth?"

And he replied, "We are in the field of bewilderment. Take heed." ...and he replied, "Be patient. Perplexity is the beginning of knowledge."

..."for he who has not looked on sorrow will never see joy"...

...and I saw freedom walking alone, knocking at doors, and asking for shelter, but no one heeded her pleas. I saw religion buried in books, and doubts stood in her place and I saw these things and many more, and I cried out in pain, "o daughter of Jesus, is this indeed the Earth? Is this man?"

In a soft and anguished voice she replied, "what you see is the soul's path, and it is poured with sharp stones and carpeted with thorns. This is only the shadow of man. This is night. But wait! Morning will soon be here! Then she waved a gentle hand upon my eyes, and when she withdrew it, behold! There was youth walking slowly by my side, and ahead of us, leading the way, marched hope.

Edited and submitted by Sharyn Funderwhite



St. Patrick's Day Word Search



DUBLIN

FOUR

GOLD

GREEN

IRELAND

IRISH

LEPRECHAUN

LUCKY

MARCH

ORANGE

POTATO

RAINBOW

SAINT

SEVENTEEN

SHAMROCK

SHILLELAGH

ST PATRICK

March 2024

First Presbyterian Church of Phoenixville

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 9:00a WIC	2 9:30a Zumba 9:30a 12:00p V. Sedlacek Visitation & Life Celebration
					MaxSold P2P Auction	MaxSold P2P Auction
3 <i>Communion Sunday</i> 8:30a Bible Study 10:30a Worship 10:45a Sunday School 12:00p Deacons' Mtg	4 9:00a People to People Clothing Ministry 6:30p Zumba	5 6:30p Zumba 7:00p Praise Team	6 11:30a Music Ministry 12:30p Jazz Rehearsal 2:00p Trumpets 7:30p Bell Choir	7 9:00a WIC 9:00a People to People Clothing Ministry 10:00a People to People Food Ministry 7:00p Choir	8	9 10:45a-12:45p MaxSold P2P Auction Pick-Up
MaxSold P2P Auction	MaxSold P2P Auction	MaxSold P2P Auction	MaxSold P2P Auction			
10 8:00a Bible Study 10:30a Worship 10:45a Sunday School 12:00p Worship & Music 12:00p Letter-Writing 12:00p Children's Choir 7:00p Pub Theology <i>Easter flowers orders due</i>	11 9:00a People to People Clothing Ministry 12:30p Staff Meeting 6:30p Zumba 7:00p Finance Meeting.	12 6:30p Zumba 7:00p Personnel Meeting 7:00p Praise Team	13 11:30a Music Ministry 12:30p Jazz Rehearsal 2:00p Trumpets 7:30p Bell Choir	14 9:00a People to People Clothing Ministry 10:00a People to People Food Ministry 2:00p MAC Meeting 7:00p Choir 7:00p Compassionate Friends	15 9:00a WIC 10:00a Grant Writing 11:00a Church Growth	16 9:30a Zumba 10:30a Books Through Bars
17 8:30a Bible Study 10:30a Worship 10:45a Sunday School 12:00p Men's Group 12:00p Women's Circle 12:00p Children's Choir	18 9:00a People to People Clothing Ministry 6:30p Zumba	19 6:30p Zumba 7:00p Praise Team 7:30p Property	20 11:30a Music Ministry 12:00p Garage Sale Set-Up 12:30p Jazz Rehearsal 2:00p Trumpets 7:30p Bell Choir	21 9:00a WIC 9:00a Garage Sale Set-Up 9:00a People to People Clothing Ministry 10:00a People to People Food Ministry 7:00p Choir	22 9:00a Garage Sale Set-Up	23 8:00a-1:00p Garage Sale
24 <i>PALM SUNDAY</i> <i>Communion Sunday</i> 8:30a Bible study 10:30a Worship 12:00p Confirmation Class 10:45a Sunday School 7:00p Antiracism Book Group	25 9:00a People to People Clothing Ministry 6:30p Zumba 7:00p Queer Circle	26 6:30p Zumba 7:00p Praise Team 7:00p Session Meeting	27 11:30a Music Ministry 12:30p Jazz Rehearsal 2:00p Trumpets 7:30p Bell Choir	28 <i>Maundy Thursday</i> 9:00a People to People Clothing Ministry 10:00a People to People Food Ministry 7:30p Maundy Thursday Prayer Service	29 <i>Good Friday</i>	30 <i>Holy Saturday</i>
31 <i>EASTER SUNDAY</i> 10:30a Worship Easter Egg Hunt following the service						