

Perspective

A Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church
of Phoenixville, Pennsylvania

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Phone: 610-933-8816

www.fpc-phoenixville.org
email: secretaryfpc145@gmail.com



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Phoenixville, Pennsylvania
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FROM THE PASTOR

Acts 2

²² “Fellow Judeans, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know—²³ this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law.²⁴ But God raised him up, having released him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power.

As you will all get to see at our annual congregational meeting, we will be changing how we present the church budget this year, and going forward. Session has been in consultation with Rev. Dr. Rose Niles, a consultant from the Presbyterian Foundation, about ways we can more effectively talk about our mission and live that mission out. One of the decisions we’ve made is to transition to what’s called a narrative budget. We’re all familiar with looking at the church budget once a year, basically an income and expenses spreadsheet, and going through line by line, or possibly focusing on a single category like Property or Personnel.

This method gives us an accurate view of income and expenses, which is important, but it makes it difficult to use the budget to tell the story of our congregation, which might be more important. It’s rare that people will contribute to make our income line reach our expenses line. People tend to give because they know our mission, and they see how we are working to achieve that mission, and they believe in the same mission. The better we are able to articulate that mission, the more easily people who share it will find us. The more we understand our mission, the easier it will be to make decisions on how to use what we are given - our time, talent, and treasure, so to speak.

Sometimes, when a church talks about its mission, it talks about the past. It might be the distant past, the stories of the Bible, or it might be a more recent past - I’ve served two congregations so far that, when asked, told their story up to about 1998 and had little to say after that. In one case, it was the last year some felt enthusiastic about the congregation. (I hope I helped to change that in both cases) The past tells us where we have come from, of course, and where we have been, and it can help us understand where we might go. But the most powerful messages we have to offer are about what is happening now, and the future we are working toward.

I chose this text, because this is what Peter is doing when he speaks before the crowd in Jerusalem. He tells them not of prophecy fulfilled, but of what has just happened, only a few weeks ago at this point in the story. He tells the crowd what God has just done, and many of them are moved to join the burgeoning kin-dom of God.

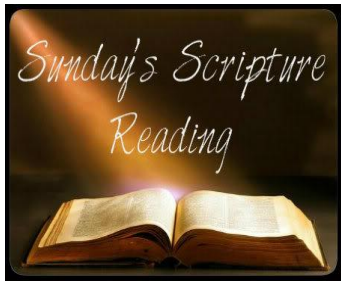
Our story is worth telling, but we could get better at telling it. It’s something Rev. Dr. Niles noticed - there is so much going on at FPC, but we often don’t talk about it. We don’t tell our story, at least not as often as we should, even though we are living quite a story. And so this year, and in coming years, we are working to make our budget another way to tell our story -

continued...

the story of what we have been given, and how we have used it to achieve our vision for the church.

In the coming months we will be talking more about our vision for the church, and how we will live out that vision in the next few years. We have overcome many challenges in the last few years, and we are still facing a few significant ones. The best way through is to have a clear vision of who we are called to be and a clear mission - how we hope to live out that calling. In the meantime, take some time and think - if a crowd of curious people (or one person on an elevator, or someone in line at the grocery store) asked you why you are enthusiastic about our congregation, what would you say? What do you see God doing in our lives? What story would you tell? We will all have different answers to that question, but we should all have an answer to that question. At some point, someone will ask. What will you say?

Sincerely,
Pastor Doug



UPCOMING SCRIPTURE READINGS

- Sept. 1st:** Song of Songs 2:8-13; James 1:17-27
- Sept. 8th:** Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23; James 2:1-17
- Sept. 15th:** Proverbs 1:20-33, James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a
- Sept. 22nd:** Special Selections for Blessing of the Animals
- Sept. 29th:** Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22; Mark 9:38-50

PASTOR'S SCHEDULE

Away
Tuesday, October 1 through Friday, October 4

FROM THE CLERK OF SESSION

- ❖ Average Sunday morning attendance:
 - In July we had an average of 49 worshipping in person and an average of 14 households viewing the 10:30am YouTube premiere with 4 *chatting*.
- ❖ The Life of the church
 - No changes
 - Current membership is 170.
- ❖ Communion was celebrated:
 - Communion was celebrated Sunday, August 4th when approximately 45 people were served.
 - Next communion will be Sunday, September 1st.
- ❖ Session Meeting Information
 - Information from the July 23rd Stated Session Meeting will appear in the next issue as it will be approved on September 24th.

Jewell Baker, Clerk of Session

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE NOTES

Scrip Gift Cards

We ask that you consider shopping with **gift cards**, at your favorite stores and restaurants, while at the same time you benefit our church financially. A percentage of each gift card purchased is donated to our church. In **September** we will be placing orders on **Mondays, September 9 & 23**. 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! *The Stewardship Committee*

Inviting New Committee Members

The Stewardship Committee is recruiting new members! "Stewardship" is the responsibility that Christians have in maintaining and using wisely the gifts that God has bestowed. FPC's Stewardship Committee is responsible for planning and organizing the annual pledge campaign and other programs important for our church's mission. If you are interested in learning more about what we do, please contact Cassy at cassy.gulden@gmail.com. A planning meeting is set for Monday, **September 9** at 7pm at the church. Please join us!

SUNDAY SCHOOL



On Sunday, August 25, several of our Sunday Schoolers served as liturgists. Thanks to all those who provided readings and prayers during the worship service! It's such a blessing to see these children participating this way in the life of the church. And they seem so comfortable doing it, which is evidence of the supportive environment that our congregation maintains at First Presbyterian Church. So, thanks to all who have welcomed and encouraged our youngest disciples!

Our Sunday School classes for the 2024-2025 school year will begin on Sunday, September 15. The following week, September 22, will be the *Blessing of the Animals* worship service and we plan to include some involvement by children (e.g., music and readings). So, in addition to kicking things off on September 15, we'll be preparing children for their participation in the *Blessing of the Animals*.

For 2024-2025, a major theme in Sunday School will be related to Matthew 25, which describes – among other things – Jesus' teaching regarding our calling to feed the hungry, welcome strangers, and generally assist and advocate for those who are disenfranchised, lonely, and forgotten within society. First Presbyterian Church of Phoenixville is a *PCUSA Matthew 25 Church*, meaning that we have committed ourselves to following the principles of empathy and compassion summarized in Matthew 25:34-40. Children will become familiar with these verses and others in Sunday School. Prior to our first Sunday School class, consider reading Matthew 25: 34-40 with your child and discussing what it means for us as Christians.



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We are always looking for new teachers for our Sunday School program. Prior teaching experience is not necessary! Each week, we provide detailed lesson outlines and teachers always work in pairs, so there's lots of support. And with a good-sized group of volunteers, it is possible to schedule each teacher for just once (maybe twice) a month. This means that you can volunteer to teach without missing out on too many worship services. If your schedule necessitates a more limited commitment, we can work with that, too! To express your interest or to discuss further, contact Jeff McLaughlin at fpcchildrenandyouth@gmail.com. And as we've said before, **this includes dads - and dad figures!**

A number of intergenerational activities are planned for the fall. These include drama activities, pumpkin decorating (during the Oktoberfest Luncheon on October 27th), and Bingo Night. Stay tuned for details on these and other opportunities!

If you have any questions about Sunday School, contact Jeff McLaughlin at fpcchildrenandyouth@gmail.com.

Jeff McLaughlin, Children & Youth Coordinator

PARISH LIFE

You are cordially invited to the return of our...

September Salad Spectacular!

Sunday, September 29th following worship in Fellowship Hall.
We'll supply beverage, rolls, and dessert and you supply the salads. Keep an eye out for a Sign-Up Genius email.

October 27th will be **Oktoberfest**, so save that date too.



WORSHIP AND MUSIC NOTES

It's September already and things are starting to move at church. September 5, Thursday, will be the first choir rehearsal. Come join if you would like to. Sunday September 8 will be the ever-popular Pick-Up choir. See you at the sanctuary piano at 9:45am.

Sunday, September 22 will be, weather permitting, an outside service for the Blessing of the Animals. If we need to move inside it will be the same service, but without the animals.

Keep your eyes open for more information about the Praise Team and Handbells.

World Communion Sunday is October 6. More to follow on that celebration.

See you in church!

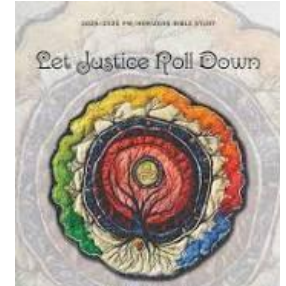
PRAYER CHAIN & PRAYER REQUESTS

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.



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S CIRCLE

On September 15th will begin the 2024-2025 study *Let Justice Roll Down: God's Call to Care for Neighbors and All Creation*. All women are invited to attend Circle meeting on the third Sunday each month, so bring your lunch and join us in the parlor following worship. Extra study guides have been ordered, please see Jewell Baker if you would like one.



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. Matters could be voiced at an upcoming meeting. The next one is set for Tuesday, September 10th at 7:00 PM.



THE DEACONS' DIALOGUE

The Book of Order of the PC USA defines the role of Deacon as “one of compassion, witness, and service, sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures, or anyone in distress.”

At FPC, we're organized as a Board of Deacons to serve and care for our members and the greater community, focusing on caring for members in need, whatever that need may be. We're here for you, especially in times of hardship, so please always feel free to reach out to your Deacon (or any Deacon!), whether for a visit, a meal, special assistance, or a prayer. If you would like to be a Deacon helper by providing a meal or occasional ride, please get in touch with your Deacon (or any Deacon!) or email DeaconsFPC145@gmail.com.

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BOARD OF DEACONS

Class of 2024

Kristin Craven
Gail Landazuri
Mona Sabia
OPEN

Class of 2025

Paulette Mark
Lucinda Parrish
Lynne Williams
OPEN

Class of 2026

Rebecca Barkley
Jen Johnson
Amy Mincavage
Gail Schnaedter

CHURCH GROWTH COMMITTEE

Meetings are held on the second Friday of the month, with the Grant Writing subcommittee meeting at 10:00 a.m. and the Church Growth committee meeting at 11:00 a.m. They are via Zoom and in the Church Office. For questions about the Church Growth Committee, contact Kristin at kristin.c.craven@gmail.com.

Anti-Racism Book Club:

The next meeting of the Anti-Racism Book Club is *Sunday, September 22nd at 7:00 pm* via Zoom.

Grant Writing:

After the fantastic news that we have been awarded two grants (see August Perspective for more information), the Grants team is diligently working to secure more funds for the church.

Gratitude Journal:

In continuing our gratitude journaling, we will be providing monthly prompts in kindness. For September, we ask, *how do you notice others showing kindness?*

Prison Ministry:

Book Through Bars:

The next visit to Books Through Bars will be on Saturday, August 17th. If you are interested in attending, contact Terri Camilari or email communityfpc145@gmail.com.

To learn more about Books Through Bars, visit <https://www.booksthroughbars.org/>. If you have any questions about FPC's involvement, please get in touch with Terri Camilari or email communityfpc145@gmail.com.

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](#) 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.

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Queer Circle:

The next meeting of *Queer Circle will be on Sunday, September 15 at 7:00 pm*. For more information, talk to Pastor Doug, Sarah, or Jacqui for more information.

Confession of Belhar:

The Church Growth Committee plans to add a banner in Fellowship Hall on the Confession of Belhar. We will host a lunch and learn session after the worship service on *Sunday, October 6th*, for anyone interested in learning more about the Confession of Belhar. Light refreshments will be provided, but feel free to bring your lunch. Those who are interested in designing and creating the banner will meet again in October, November, and December. The goal is to introduce the banner to the congregation in late December or early January.



MISSIONS, ACTIONS, CONCERN (MAC) COMMITTEE

Do you support a nonprofit 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 on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 10:00 am. If you want to join MAC, email Kristin at MissionsFPC145@gmail.com for the Zoom link.

Join us for our next meeting on *Wednesday, September 11th* from *10:00 am – 11:30 am* in the *church parlor*. In addition to having a meeting, we will also be doing a hands-on service project.

Local Missions:

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

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Liberty Ministries

Liberty Ministry is hosting its Annual Fundraising Banquet on Friday, October 17, from 5:30 PM to 8:30 PM at The Belle of Blue Bell (1800 Tournament Road, Blue Bell, PA 19422). Seating begins at 5:00 pm.



If you want more information or to attend, visit

<https://www.libertyministries.us/events>.

About Liberty Ministries:

Liberty Ministries was established in 1980 to serve the inmate populations of Montgomery County Correctional Facility and the State Correctional Institution at Graterford. Since then, Liberty Ministries has positively impacted thousands of men and women inmates and ex-inmates with the teaching of the Word of God, spiritual, physical, and emotional support, and the life-changing power of Jesus Christ. For more information, visit

<https://www.libertyministries.us/>.

People to People Online Auction:

A new People to People's MaxSold Auction is up and running **now through Wednesday, September 4th**. Pick-up will be in Fellowship Hall on Saturday, September 7th from 10:45 am – 12:30 pm. There are many, many interesting items like Elvis memorabilia, a doll house and dollhouse furniture, electronics, kitchenware, angels, books, toys, and vintage items. Enjoy looking, the thrill of bidding, and the joy of winning! Take a look, and bid often by visiting this link <https://bit.ly/augsep24auction> or by scanning the QR Code. All the money raised goes to our People to People mission. Thank you!



People to People Garage Sale:

Fall is coming and so is People to People's next Garage Sale! It will be on Saturday, **September 28th**, from 8am – 1pm. Help is needed for setting up, bringing items out, arranging things, and assisting on the day of the sale. Please volunteer during any of the following shifts (even if it's just for an hour):

- **Wednesday 9/25:** 12pm – set up tables & racks
AND 4pm – 8pm – bring out items
- **Thursday 9/26:** 9am – 12pm – arrange items on tables
AND 6 pm – 8pm – arrange items on tables
- **Friday 9/27:** 9am – 12pm – arrange items on tables
- **Saturday 9/28:** 7:45am– 1pm – cashier, assist shoppers
AND 1pm – 2pm – clean up, put tables away

Many hands make this more enjoyable and quicker. People have been so generous and we have an abundance of wonderful items. NOTE: The last pre-sale donation drop-off date is Thursday, September 19th. Please hold your items after the 19th until a new drop-off date is announced for October. Contact [Sandy Heidel](#) if you have any questions about the sale.

Thank You, People to People

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National Missions:

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

Bread for the World:

One of Bread for the World's goals this year is to hold "Listen In" sessions to hear from people on the ground on how SNAP, WIC, the Child Tax Credit, and college student hunger are affecting how they are working with their clients and the other needs that arise if these benefits were cut.

MAC held a Listen-In on Saturday, August 3rd to listen to nonprofit leaders working to alleviate hunger in Phoenixville. As part of the discussion, we are hoping to bring some new ideas on how we as FPC can assist and build stronger connections with these organizations with FPC and with each other.

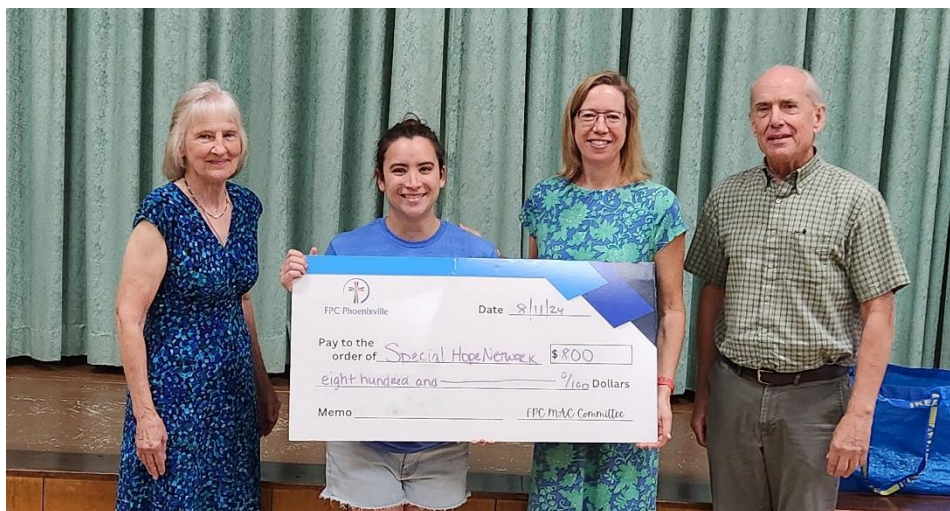
Global Missions:

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

Special Hope Network

Thank you to everyone who attended our Special Hope Network luncheon after service on August 11th. It was so great hearing from Holly and the incredible impact she is having in Zambia for families who have children with intellectual disabilities.

Special Hope Network exists to bring glory to God by creating a world where all kids are valued. We impact communities by improving care for kids with intellectual disabilities. This starts by equipping families and caregivers to provide these children with a loving home, holistic health care, and exceptional education and therapies. To learn more about Special Hope Network, visit <https://specialhopenetwork.org/>.



TOWARD SPIRITUALITY: PSYCHIC JARGON

- Practice gentle tolerance toward yourself and others.
- Perfection is a hope, a dream and an illusion.
- Lower your standards, and your performance will rise.
- If I control my speech, usually I will have nothing to regret.
- There are enough complications in everyday conversation to lead to a mountain of misunderstanding.
- One victory over “inner environment” is worth a multitude of victories over “outer environment.”
- The opposite of fearfulness is not so much courage, as it is hopefulness.
- Good mental health is making yourself and others feel good.
- Legal, moral and ethical issue share their gears of right or wrong.
- There is no right or wrong in the trivialities of everyday life.
- When peace is the good, peace will prevail.
- Self-endorsement leads to sure and determined action (self-endorsement means giving yourself a mental pat on the back).
- There is no duty to overdo.
- We try to be exceptional and fear we are not even average.
- Worry does great harm, and gives little aid, faced with a seemingly overwhelming task.
- Do it in ‘part-acts’, and endorse yourself with every ‘part-act.’
- Hurt feelings are, simply, beliefs not shared.
- Fearful anticipation is greater than realization.

From: *Manage Your Fear, Manage your Anger* by Abraham A. Low, MD

P.S. My recent and current challenges continue, but your generously wonderful words have my appreciation and gratitude beyond what you might think.

*Submitted by Sharyn Funderwhite, FPC Member
(610) 718-8036 | 30 Old Schuylkill Road, Pottstown, PA 19465*



CELEBRATE SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS!

Happy Birthday!

Sept. 1: Cora Carlino

Sept. 13: Judy Tonkin

Sept. 4: Eileen Naughton

Sept. 16: Thomas Smith

Sept. 6: Celia Breden, Pat Guthan, Mary Tyson

Sept. 24: Connie Wilson

Sept. 8: Solveig Anderson

Sept. 25: Martha Mandrusiak

Sept. 10: Kevin Carrabine, Ridge Palko

Sept. 27: Karin Goodman, Ann Moskowitz

Sept. 11: Adam Kleppinger

September 2024

First Presbyterian Church of Phoenixville

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10:30a Communion Worship 11:45a Lemonade in the Shade	2 LABOR DAY Office is closed.	3 6:30p Zumba 7:30p Praise Team	4 10:30a-3:00p Music Ministry 6-8p BDA Office Hours 7:30p Handbells	5 9:00a WIC 9:00a People to People Clothing Ministry 10:00a People to People Food Ministry 7:00p Choir	6 9:00a WIC	7 9:30a Zumba 10:45a-12:30p P2P Auction Pick-Up
8 9:45a Pick-Up Choir Rehearsal 10:30a Worship 12:00p Worship & Music 7:00p Pub Theology	9 9:00a People to People Clothing Ministry 12:30p Staff Meeting 6:30p Zumba 7:00p Stewardship	10 5:30p Parish Life 6:30p Zumba 7:00p Personnel 7:30p Praise Team	11 10:00a MAC 10:30a-3:00p Music Ministry 6-8p BDA Office Hours 7:00p Finance 7:30p Handbells	12 9:00a People to People Clothing Ministry 10:00a People to People Food Ministry 7:00p Compassionate Friends 7:00p Choir	13 10:00a Grant Writing 11:00a Church Growth	14
15 8:30a Bible Study 10:30a Worship 10:45a Sunday School 12:00p Women's Circle 7:00p Queer Circle	16 9:00a People to People Clothing Ministry 6:30p Zumba	17 6:30p Zumba 7:30p Property 7:30p Praise Team	18 10:00a MAC Meeting 10:30a-3:00p Music Ministry 6-8p BDA Office Hours 7:30p Handbells	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 Through Bars
22 8:30a Bible Study 10:30a BLESSING of the ANIMALS Youth in Worship (outdoors) 10:45a Sunday School 12:00p Youth Choir 7:00p Antiracism Book Club	23 9:00a People to People Clothing Ministry 6:30p Zumba	24 6:30p Zumba 7:00p Session 7:30p Praise Team	25 10:30a-3:00p Music Ministry 12:00p Garage Sale set-up 4:00p-8:00p Garage Sale set-up 6-8p BDA Office Hours 7:30p Handbells	26 9:00a-12:00p Garage Sale set-up 10:00a People to People Food Ministry 6:00p-8:00p Garage Sale set-up 7:00p Choir	27 9:00a-12:00p Garage Sale set-up	28 7:45a-1:00p Garage Sale 1:00p-2:00p Garage Sale clean-up
29 8:30a Bible Study 10:30a Worship 10:45a Sunday School 11:45a Spectacular Salad Luncheon	30 9:00a People to People Clothing Ministry 6:30p Zumba			OCTOBER DATES to NOTE 1st Week: Meals for St. Mary's Shelter Oct. 6: World Communion Sunday, Confession of Belhar Lunch & Learn, Youth Choir Oct. 13: Pub Theology Oct. 20: Music Appreciation, Women's Circle, Queer Circle Oct 27: Octoberfest Luncheon, Pumpkin Decorating, Antiracism Book Club		



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