

Perspective

A Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church
of Phoenixville, Pennsylvania

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From the Pastor

The General Assembly “affirms its conviction that neither the Church as the body of Christ, nor Christians as individuals, can be neutral or indifferent toward evil in the world; affirms its responsibility to speak on social and moral issues for the encouragement and instruction of the Church and its members, seeking earnestly both to know the mind of Christ and to speak always in humility and love; reminds the churches that their duty is not only to encourage and train their members in daily obedience to God’s will, but corporately to reveal God’s grace in places of suffering and need, to resist the forces that tyrannize, and to support the forces that restore the dignity of all men as the children of God, for only so is the gospel most fully proclaimed; . . .” - (1958 Statement – PC(USA), p. 537)

There is no challenge facing our nation and, especially, our own church greater than the divisions based on racism. - *Building Community Among Strangers: A Plan for Study and Action* Approved by The 211th General Assembly (1999) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Of course we all know that February is Black History Month. Aside from the irony of it being the shortest month of the year, it is also a good time to give focused attention to the history and present reality of race relations in the United States. As usual, the other eleven months place White history and culture at the center, but this month is a good reminder that it is our place to push back.

It seems important all the time, but in particular right now, to talk about the long history our tradition has of resisting racism and white supremacy. The PCUSA has a modern history of making clear and forceful statements on a wide range of social issues, and has consistently encouraged clergy and leaders to speak out on political issues for at least the last 80 years or so. ([Check out this link](#)) Politics are nothing new to Presbyterians - John Knox, the founder of the Church of Scotland which would become the Presbyterian Church on this continent, published multiple provocative political tracts and got into plenty of trouble for it 500 years ago. I’m comfortable saying that if a preacher never touches on political issues, a preacher is not preaching from the Bible, and I’m thankful that I can refer back to our tradition to support that belief. The PCUSA has made statements on issues as various as abortion, worker’s rights, and human migration. Our scripture is a profoundly political collection of texts, and faithfulness to the God of that scripture makes political demands of us.

It matters, of course, how these things are said. It’s easy to say things clearly in a way that will alienate people who differ from me politically. That, like avoiding politics, would be pastoral malpractice. Sometimes that’s the fun challenge of being a preacher, and sometimes that’s the overwhelming part. But our tradition, as Presbyterians, is to take clear political stances on some issues, where they overlap with what we find in scripture and what we discern we are called to do as citizens of the kingdom of God. As a congregation we also have to look at how we make the statements we make, so that we are loud when we need to be loud, and always clear, but also saying things in a way that is likely to be heard.

We are in the midst of making statements of our own. The Session shared a statement of support for BLM with our community, which joined statements from over 40 other congregations, business and non-profits. I have been organizing twice-monthly vigils that draw a wide variety of folks on the first and third Thursday of each month. Our Little Free Library is filled with books by Black writers and books on Black history. We have been supporting organizations like Alianzas serving people of color in our community who have been the most severely impacted by every aspect of the pandemic - illness, death, food insecurity, job losses, and so on. We do these things not because of whatever political party we belong to, but because the Gospel calls us to serve the last and the least among us as we would serve Christ, and to speak up and act on their behalf, no matter what month it is.

PARISH LIFE



Join us for these upcoming all church ZOOM meetings - Wednesday nights, 7:30.
We will continue the fun on Wednesday nights in January & February!
Stay tuned for upcoming church gatherings, brought to you by Zoom technology.
See you there!

Foodology



Honoring Sweethearts & Presidents alike in this February Foodology!

PINK PICKLED BEETS AND EGGS

DIRECTIONS:

Drain 1 lb. can of sliced red beets, reserving the liquid. (DelMonte brand is best)
Pour liquid into a GLASS jar or bowl and add 1 cup Heinz cider vinegar, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar, 1 tbs. salt.
Stir till sugar dissolves.
Add beets, 6 peeled hard cooked eggs, 1 medium onion, thinly sliced and separated into rings.
Cover and chill several hours (overnight is better) before serving.
Submitted by: Barbie Kepler



BROWNIES



INGREDIENTS:

4 oz Unsweetened chocolate	1-1/4 Cups All-purpose flour*
2/3 Cups Shortening	1 Tsp Baking powder
2 Cups sugar	1 Tsp Salt
4 Eggs	1 Cup chopped nuts
1 Tsp Vanilla	

DIRECTIONS:

Heat oven to 350°. Grease baking pan, 13x9x2. Melt chocolate and shortening in large saucepan over low heat. Remove from heat. Mix in sugar, eggs and vanilla. Stir in remaining ingredients. Spread in pan.
Bake 30 minutes or until brownies start to pull away from sides of pan. Do not over bake.
Cool slightly. Cut into bars, about 2x1-1/2".
*If using self-rising flour, omit baking powder and salt.
Submitted by: Lynne Williams

3. *continued.....*



CHOCOLATE STRAWBERRIES



INGREDIENTS:

6 OZ Semisweet chocolate
 3-1/2 Tbsp unsalted butter
 6-1/2 Tsp brandy
 24 Large fresh strawberries

DIRECTIONS:

Combine chocolate, butter and brandy in double boiler over hot water over moderate heat. Cook until chocolate and butter are melted, stirring frequently until blended and smooth; remove from heat.

Hold strawberries by the leaves, dip half way in chocolate mixture.

Place on platter lined with waxed paper. Chill for 10 minutes or longer.

Serve on a dessert tray.

Submitted by: Lynne Williams



CHOCOLATE MOUSSE



DIRECTIONS:

Combine 1/3 cup very hot coffee and 1 6OZ package of semisweet chocolate pieces (chocolate chips).

Whirl at high speed in blender for 30 seconds.

Add 4 egg yolks and 2 Tbsp Crème de Cacao liqueur.

Whirl in blender for 30 seconds or until thick and smooth.

Beat 4 egg whites (in small bowl) until stiff.

Pour chocolate mixture over egg whites and fold in until no streaks of white remain.

Pour into serving cups and chill at least 1 hour.

Submitted by: Lynne Williams

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 Zoom Parlor...Please join us!

Painting with Jackie

Stay tuned for "Painting with Jackie", a ZOOM event coming in mid-March for all ages.

We will be led in a painting session in the safety of our homes, and will create amazing masterpieces 😊. Supplies will be delivered prior to the event. Details will be provided in the near future, and we look forward to sharing this together with the congregation."



From the Clerk of Session



- Average Sunday morning attendance: As YouTube viewing of the service is available anytime there isn't a way to accurately count attendance. In November the average for viewing the 10:30am premiere was 38 (households) and 24 households *chatting*. In December the average for viewing the 10:30am premiere was 40 (households) and 25 households *chatting*. On Christmas Eve 35 attended the 5:00 service and 38 the 9:00. Please think of *chatting* as the YouTube version of signing the Red Friendship Book and join in the chat, if you are able. ☺
- Session Meeting
 - October 27th Stated Session (Zoom) Meeting:
 - There were no motions to report from this meeting.
 - November 24th Stated Session (Zoom) Meeting:
 - Appalachian Mission Trip approved unanimously
 - Virtual/in-person worship. We will continue virtual until worshiping in person is safe.
 - Fellowship Hall rental – following discussion Session unanimously decided to end our rental relationship with the Universal Church and will not be renting Fellowship Hall during the pandemic.
 - Life of the church
 - Birth –
8/5/2020, Tessa Ball, daughter of Katie (Merkel) and John Ball. Granddaughter of Karen Merkel.
10/6/2020, Cade William Krauth, son of Meg (Fetter) and Jason Krauth
 - No other congregational changes
- Sunday December 30th Congregational Meeting Minutes
 - Pastor Hagler then introduced Nominating Committee Chair, Becky Sinapius and she presented the following names for church leaders:
 - Elder for 3 year term; Ken Brown, Kevin Carrabine, Ann Miller, and Roger Warwick.
 - Deacon for 3 year term; Jen Johnson, Gail Schnaedter, Kathy Thais, and Ellen Williams.

Pastor asked for nominations from the floor and hearing none the nominations were closed and called for a vote of the congregation to accept the Elders and Deacons presented. Vote passed unanimously.

Information from the December 22nd Stated Session Meeting will be reviewed/approved at the January 26th meeting and will be in the next Perspective.

Jewell Baker, Clerk of Session

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:(610)933-8816) and she will forward your requests on to Amy.



Deacons' Dialogue

It is a new year and the Board of Deacons wants to take this opportunity to thank those who have served on the board and welcome the new members who were elected at the congregational meeting on December 13, 2020. Those who are retiring are Chuck Heidel and Barbie Kepler. We extend our appreciation to them for all they have done to serve our congregation and our Lord during their tenure. God bless you!

And now we welcome back on the Board Ellen Williams, whose term ended this January, but she was eligible for and agreed to another three year term. Also joining are Gail Schnaedter and Kathy Thais, both having served as deacons in the past, and newcomer Jen Johnson. Welcome and may God bless you and all the deacons in their service to God and our church family.

What does it mean to be a deacon? *The ministry of deacon as set forth in Scripture is 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. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, sincere compassion, and sound judgment should be chosen for this ministry.* (The PC(USA) Book of Order). Please pray for all on the Board of Deacons as we live our ministry to the best of our ability, to the glory of God, always showing His love.

One of our ministries is to actively care for the members of our congregation, especially during this time when we cannot be together in person to worship and socialize. In order to meet this goal, each deacon is assigned a Care Group comprised of 11 or 12 members/families of FPCP. Each deacon will be in regular contact via letter or email with the members of his/her group. In the March issue of *Perspective*, look for the listing of the assignments so you know who your deacon is.

Notes from Worship and Music

Not much to say at this time. However it is important that we remember that Ash Wednesday is on February 17. We will have a Zoom worship service at 7:30 PM. It will be good to be seen and able to see others for this special worship service. Keep your eyes out for the Zoom link in an email.

As we begin Lent this month, we will be providing Lenten Devotionals. The devotional will be sent via email and for those who prefer hard copies let the office know and we will have hard copies available for pick up or to mail. If you already get *Perspective* mailed to you, a copy of the devotional will automatically be sent to you.





Ink Cartridges

Thank you to everyone who dropped off used ink cartridges in 2020. You helped to raise \$440 to be used for church office supplies at Staples. 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. Thank you for letting us help you recycle your cartridges, while at the same time assisting the church.

Scrip Gift Card Orders

We would like to thank everyone who continued to support the Scrip Gift Card Program in 2020. Even at COVID distance, we were able to raise funds for the good of the church.

We are placing orders for gift cards every other Wednesday in February (Feb. 3 and Feb. 17).

If you would like to place an order, please call Lynne Williams at 610-415-1581 (home) or 610-955-4749 (cell).

You may mail your check to Lynne or drop it off at her home, (14 Schofield Road, Phoenixville, PA 19460). We will complete the order forms for you.

Orders and checks must be received by the day before the orders are placed (Feb.2 & Feb. 16).

Please make checks payable to "First Presbyterian Church DR".

Thank you...Thank you for continuing to support this program!



Mission, Action, Concern Committee (MAC)

Isaiah 6:8

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I; send me!"

People to People- A Ministry of MAC

Food Ministry Updates (Bob Russell)

People to People currently has a small team that prepares and distributes lunches on Thursdays at the St. Peter's Episcopal Church parking lot in Phoenixville between 12:00 and 12:30. These lunches are available to anyone in the community free of charge. We serve the lunches in a grab-and-go style, i.e. all items are packed into containers and contained in an outer bag. These containers add to our costs and to the budget bottom line.

Recently we have distributed up to 24 meals, although the total number served varies each week.

People to People also do a weekly bakery donation pickup from Giant in Audubon (one-two shopping carts) for our Food Ministry. We distribute the remainder to PACS, the Collegeville Daily Bread Community Food Pantry, and occasionally to Mom' House.

7. *continued...*

People to People covers the cost of this food ministry through budget, flea markets and donations. The COVID pandemic prohibited us from hosting our two flea markets which has negatively impacted our overall budget. If you are able to donate to our food ministry, please contact Bob Russell at bob@rtact.com and we will gratefully receive your donation.

Clothing Ministry Updates (Sandy Heidel)

Sandy Heidel, Celia Braden, and Cheryl Messere continue to fulfill orders from the clothing ministry and organize solicited collections on Mondays and Thursdays. Chris Wittrock has started helping with organization and sorting on Wed afternoons.

From May-Dec 2020 in service to the PXV community, we processed 71 requests, meeting the needs of approximately 100 people through requests. This doesn't include the people we helped at our multiple, free giveaways. Good things are happening even during these difficult times!

Please keep in mind we are still declining donations at this time. Please DO NOT leave any items at the stage or on the steps.

Local Mission Activities

St. Mary's Franciscan Shelter

During the week of Feb 8th-12th, [St. Mary's Franciscan shelter](#) needed our support to prepare meals for 12 people currently staying at the shelter. Thank you to all who signed up to meet the need.

2021- Mark your calendar for volunteer opportunities

If you are looking to help people while keeping yourself safe, we have a few opportunities. Please contact Chris Wittrock if you would like to participate (cwittrock22@gmail.com)



Good Works Lunch- Help Prep and/or deliver lunch

Saturday May 8, 2021 from 10:30 am-1:30 pm

Saturday Oct 09, 2021 10:30 am- 1:30 pm

St. Mary's Franciscan Shelter meals- Help prepare and deliver alone or with a friend

Oct 4th – 8th

Upcoming Mission Trips

Appalachian Service Project (ASP) - Sarah Shulman Group Leader

As you heard this week, Sarah Shulman is spearheading a summer mission trip through [Appalachian Service Project \(ASP\)](#). The mission is focused on making homes warmer, safer, and drier for Appalachian families by providing critical repairs. The mission also underscores the critical importance of service by youth and adults of all ages, backgrounds, and skill levels. The MAC committee is supporting this mission project as far as scheduling, advertising and assisting with fundraising projects for this mission. Please stay tuned as we will be hosting events and fundraisers to support our efforts in this endeavor. We ask God to bless the work of our hands.

Mission Updates

We support several local, regional and global missions through our budget, and this is our space to provide updates on our brothers and sisters in Christ. We recognize all needs are high priority however these missions presented the highest needs due to a combination of lack of alternate funding and/or COVID impact. We share our highest priority mission supports for 2021

Phoenixville Area Mission Funding

- [Alianzas de Phoenixville](#)
- [Meals on Wheels](#) of Phoenixville
- [The Clinic](#)
- [Good Works, Inc.](#) We provide lunch for the volunteer workers of Good Works, a Christian nonprofit organization, founded in 1988, and dedicated to repairing homes and restoring hope for low-income homeowners in Chester County, PA. Many of the churches in the area work together over the summer to take a weekend and feed these amazing volunteers, as a way to thank them for all they do for our families and communities. Please take note we participate on May 8th and Oct 9th.

Regional Mission Funding

- We are making the [Spanish Health Ministry](#) a high priority this year as COVID has impacted these multi-generational families extra hard. The focus of the ministry is to help Spanish speaking families identify health needs and obtain medical care for pregnant women, newborns, chronically ill babies and children who live in the area from Kennett Square to Oxford, PA. The organization works to meet the physical, medical and spiritual needs of the children and families.

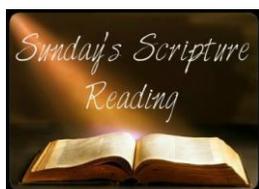
Global Mission Funding

- Jose & Pam (Lawrence) Munoz work at the [Utatlan Christian School](#) in Quiche, Guatemala. The Munoz work through the Primitive Methodist Church Organization and hosted a few FPC members on mission trips in the past.
- This is a current article from [The Guardian](#) describing the extraordinary feeding crisis in Zimbabwe. MAC will provide donations to the Hunger Program in Zimbabwe which we pray will help alleviate some of the pain and suffering and build toward a better planning process for the country. We will also provide a modest donation to Reverend Jonah Masaka, retired pastor of the Kuwadzana Church in Zimbabwe, who presently volunteers at the Theological Training Center to train pastors and elders in Bible education, as a way to reassure the church members and preschool that Jesus cares about them. We ask you to keep the people of Zimbabwe in your prayers as they live in fear, hunger and religious persecution.
- We continue to support the Vissani Family in their ministry [Foundations Zambia](#) as they work through New Mission Systems International to provide hands-on farming, composting and irrigation training as well as classroom instruction opportunities with a goal toward food security and sustainable systems. Read more and subscribe to their newsletter [here](#).

May God Bless you and keep you safe until we meet again.

Chris Wittrock (cwittrock22@gmail.com)

Chair, MAC Committee



February 7th: Isaiah 40:21-31; 1 Corinthians 9:16-23

February 14th: 2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9

February 2021

First Presbyterian Church of Phoenixville

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 7:30p Property	2 7:00p MAC	3 1:00p Organist Rehearsal 7:30p Parish Life Zoom Event <i>Souper Bowl of Caring donation deadline</i>	4 10:00a Food ministry 1:00p WIC	5 1:00p WIC 1:00p Organist Rehearsal	6
7 <i>Communion</i> 8:30a Bible Study 10:30a Worship 11:45a Joys & Concerns 1:00p Congregational Annual Meeting 7:00p Book Club	8 <i>Shelter Meals →</i>	9 6:00p Staff meeting 7:00p Parish Life <i>Shelter Meals →</i>	10 1:00p Organist Rehearsal 7:30p Parish Life Zoom Event <i>Shelter Meals →</i>	11 10:00a Food ministry 7:30p Compassionate Friends meeting <i>Shelter Meals →</i>	12 1:00p Organist Rehearsal <i>Shelter Meals →</i>	13
14 8:30a Bible Study 10:30a Worship 11:45a Joys & Concerns 12:30p Worship & Music	15 7:00p Finance and Stewardship Church office closed <i>Presidents' Day</i>	16 7:15p Church Growth	17 <i>Ash Wednesday</i> 7:00p Ash Wednesday Worship Service	18 10:00a Food ministry 1:00p WIC	19 1:00p WIC 1:00p Organist Rehearsal	20 <i>Perspective Articles due for March</i>
21 8:30a Bible Study 10:30a Worship 11:45a Joys & Concerns 7:00p Book Club	22	23 7:30p Session	24 1:00p Organist Rehearsal 7:30p Parish Life Zoom Event	25 10:00a Food ministry	26 1:00p Organist Rehearsal	27
28 8:30a Bible Study 9:30a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 11:45a Joys & Concerns						