

Perspective

A Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church
of Phoenixville, Pennsylvania

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From the Pastor

Leviticus 19:9-18

⁹ When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest. ¹⁰ You shall not strip your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the alien: I am the Lord your God.

¹¹ You shall not steal; you shall not deal falsely; and you shall not lie to one another. ¹² And you shall not swear falsely by my name, profaning the name of your God: I am the Lord.

¹³ You shall not defraud your neighbor; you shall not steal; and you shall not keep for yourself the wages of a laborer until morning. ¹⁴ You shall not revile the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind; you shall fear your God: I am the Lord.

¹⁵ You shall not render an unjust judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbor. ¹⁶ You shall not go around as a slanderer^[a] among your people, and you shall not profit by the blood^[b] of your neighbor: I am the Lord.

¹⁷ You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbor, or you will incur guilt yourself. ¹⁸ You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.

I've said it before - when I want an example of what it looks like to be a Christian, one person I look to is Hugh Hollowell. My friend Hugh has worked with people experiencing homelessness, people on the margins, for his entire adult life. After his tour as a Marine ended, he came home and before long started finding ways to build relationships with people experiencing homelessness while selling hot dogs in front of local bars and clubs to support himself. He ended up founding a non-profit, won a huge lawsuit with a city government over whether he could feed people in the park (he called it "Biscuitgate" and it made national news briefly), and has recently relocated to his hometown in Mississippi to continue his work as a speaker, writer, preacher, organizer and general trouble-maker. Hugh often says that the opposite of homelessness is community.

I have another friend, Jason Godesky, who by day is a web designer and programmer, but his true passion is sustainability and permaculture. He often talks about how disaster preparedness has little to do with hoarding resources (or weaponry) or building bunkers, and everything to do with interconnectedness and community. People who best survive natural disasters and other crises are the ones who are most connected to their neighbors.

Turns out, the thing that can solve homelessness, and alienation in general, is the same as the thing that makes us most prepared for a natural disaster or crisis, and it's the same thing God tells us to do. Amazing, right? Turns out, the creator of the entire cosmos also has an agenda for us that is the best way of life. Loving our neighbors has very little to do with having warm feelings toward them, and very much to do with how we treat them and how we treat the resources upon which we all depend. The litany in Leviticus above is not a litany of how we should feel, nor is it about vague aphorisms. It is very concrete, and amounts to treating our neighbors fairly and being concerned for their welfare as well as our own. Why? Because "I am the Lord your God." If God is our Lord, then this is how we treat our neighbors.

Some of our neighbors are easy to treat well and have relationships with - the neighbors who mow their laws as much as we think lawns should be mowed; the neighbors who are as quiet as we think neighbors should be; the neighbors who share our values and priorities; the neighbors who pick up after themselves and bring tasty food when there's a cookout.

But we have other neighbors as well: neighbors who struggle with mental illness; neighbors who struggle with addiction; neighbors who have served time in jail or prison; neighbors who are experiencing homelessness; neighbors who don't speak English; neighbors who are here without the right paperwork. And then there are just the annoying neighbors, who are loud, inconsiderate messy, etc.

2. *continued...*

We want to differentiate, but God doesn't leave us room to do so. (God doesn't even let us limit "neighbor" to people who live near us, but I'm putting that aside for the moment) When someone came to Jesus and asked, "Who is my neighbor," we all know how that turned out. The answer Jesus gave was not the comfortable answer we might prefer.

To be clear, I don't share these thoughts because I think we as a congregation are going in the wrong direction. Quite the opposite! I am proud of what we do in our community. I am proud of our priorities, and of the commitment that this congregation has had to our neighbors for decades. As far back as we care to look. This is my way of saying we are on the right track. And not merely because it is commanded of us (which is true); not merely because it is how we show the world who is our Lord (which is also true), but for the simple reason that the way we flourish in the world, in the everyday life that we all live, is by working to ensure that our neighbors can flourish as well. I celebrate the things that we already do - the food, and clothing, and financial assistance; the Fairies of Happiness, and the Sunday School, and Sunday worship; the many one-on-one interactions we have each week that sustain one another; the many more things I could mention. The many things that I'm sure happen behind the scenes, of which I'm not even aware.

I just want to share my perspective, which is that this is what being on the right track feels like. Look at how we have flourished despite a worldwide pandemic. Look at how our relationships have grown and deepened in the last year. Look at how we have continued to serve, even when it has become more difficult. To quote the Mandalorian: "This is the Way."

Pastor Doug



Thank You!

A big "Thank you" from the Stewardship Committee to everyone who participated in our "Moe's Fajita...Drive-thru / Pick-up" fundraiser. Twenty four families enjoyed an evening free from cooking and a delicious meal, as they helped to raise \$240 for our church.

We may have discovered a new style of "Dine Around Phoenixville" fundraiser! **Thank you again!**

Scrip Gift Card Orders

We will be placing orders for gift cards every other Wednesday in March. (March 31, April 14 & April 28). 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 (March 30, April 13 & April 27). Please make checks payable to "First Presbyterian Church DR". Thank you...Thank you for continuing to support this program!



NOMINATIONS ARE OPEN

The **Nominating Committee** requests names from the congregation for consideration for the next class of Session members (Elders) and the next class of members of the Board of Deacons. When selecting names to be submitted to the Committee, please consider the qualifications and duties of the elders of the church as described in the Book of Order.

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

The office of Deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of sympathy, witness, and service after the example of Jesus Christ. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, warm sympathies, and sound judgment should be chosen for this office.

It is the duty of deacons, first of all, to minister to those who are in need, to the sick, to the friendless, and to any who may be in distress.

Elders on Session

Class of 2022

George Cockerill
Jeanie Osterhoudt
Becky Sinapius
Lynne Williams

Class of 2023

Mike Eitl
Kathryn Grocki
Ron Williams
Chris Wittrock

Class of 2024

Ken Brown
Kevin Carrabine
Ann Miller
Roger Warwick

Board of Deacons

Class of 2022

Gail Landazuri
Chris Roussey
Mona Sabia
Barb White

Class of 2023

Pam Bodam
Karen Drummond
Paulette Mark
Bob Wittrock

Class of 2024

Jen Johnson
Gail Schnaedter
Kathy Thais
Ellen Williams

Please submit names to be considered for nomination to Becky Sinapius or to the church office by May 2nd.

(Becky's email: bsinapius@comcast.net or the church office at: secretaryfpc145@gmail.com)

3 names for **ELDER**

3 names for **DEACON**



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)

In addition to feeding our usual lunch bunch at St. Peter’s Episcopal on Thursdays, we will also be feeding a large crew of volunteers in early May through Good Works, LLC in Phoenixville. If you are able to provide donations (food or financial), please contact Bob Russell (bob@rtact.com). We greatly appreciate your support.

March Mission- Replenishing the PACS Pantry- Thanks to those of you who have been dropping off donations. At the time of this printing, we have made two deliveries to PACS but we will wait until the May Perspective to share all items and cash donated. Thank you for your generosity.

The Phoenixville Women’s Outreach, The House, shared the 2020 Annual Report which you can [read here](#). Many of you know Cheryl Messere has retired from her role as Executive Director however, she does remain on the Board of Directors.

Clothing Ministry Updates (Sandy Heidel)

Since January we have assisted 25 people (14 have been children) with clothing and linens. We are preparing for the changing of seasonal clothing by our give away of winter/ 3-season shirts, pants, sweaters and more. In the middle of these preparations, we learned of the fire at the Prima Hotel in Phoenixville had a fire today displacing 23 people. Orion called Cheryl to see if we could help. Cheryl, Celia and I were in this afternoon to fill 7 requests with one being for a family of 5 (helping 12 people). The requests were for clothing, shoes and lots of linens (towels, sheets & blankets). More requests may be sent tomorrow. The hard to fill requests were for men size 3X and 4X and size 12 shoes.

As Pastor Doug reminded us during his sermon this week (March 14th), we in Phoenixville have an escalating need for the basics (food, clothing and shelter). The MAC Committee thanks you for your generous gifts of time, talent, financial and in-kind donations. You are helping First Presbyterian Church restore the hope to many in our local community. We can’t do the work of this important ministry with you. Thank you.

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

These warm, delicious meals are a true blessing to the families after long days during difficult times. Our next opportunity to provide meals is Oct 4th-8th.

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.

Phoenixville Area Mission Funding

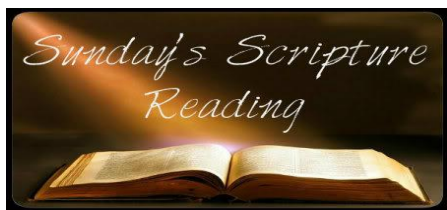
[Phoenixville Women's Outreach, The House](#)- Provides transitional housing and affordable housing to help single women who are homeless and low-income. The women develop skills to help them gain self-sufficiency, to break the cycle of dependence and poverty, and move from crisis to independence.

[The Clinic](#)- Provides quality health care to the uninsured and underserved, in an atmosphere that fosters dignity and respect. The Clinic provides comprehensive primary medical services just like a private family physician's office including diagnosis, treatment, medications, laboratory tests and follow-up care. As a primary health care provider, The Clinic sees patients from all walks of life. Some have been downsized from their jobs and no longer have insurance, some are small business owners, students or immigrants without access to affordable insurance.

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

Chris Wittrock (cwittrock22@gmail.com)

Chair, MAC Committee



Upcoming Scripture Readings

April 4th (Easter): Acts 10:34-43; Mark 16:1-8

April 11th: Acts 4:32-35; John 20:19-31

April 18th: 1 John 3:1-7; Acts 3:12-19



Sunday School will meet online on the following dates at 9:30 am:

Sunday, April 25th

Sunday, May 23rd.

We hope you will join us!

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 February the average for viewing the 10:30am premiere was 45 (households) and 26 households *chatting*. Please think of *chatting* as the YouTube version of signing the Red Friendship Book and join in the chat, if you are able. ☺
- January 26th Session Meeting, February 7th Congregational Meeting and February 23rd Stated Session Meeting:
 - Session voted that Jewell Baker will continue as Clerk of Session and John Souder as Treasurer.
 - Committee Chair Assignments:
 - Christian Ed/Church Growth – Lynne Williams (CE), Gail Landazuri (CG)
 - Finance/Memorial – Ben Dove
 - MAC – Chris Wittrock
 - Nominating – Becky Sinapius
 - Parish Life – Ann Miller, Becky Sinapius, Lynne Williams
 - Personnel – Jeanie Osterhoudt
 - Property – Doug Walker
 - Stewardship – Lynne Williams
 - Worship and Music – Ken Brown
 - Nominating Committee members Liz Carrabine, Jeff McLaughlin, Megan Smith and Cathy Walker were approved unanimously.
 - Pastor's Terms of Call were approved with one negative vote.
 - A motion to receive the Annual Report (with corrections) was received, seconded and passed unanimously.
- The Life of the church
 - Current active membership is 177
 - Birth – February 3, 2021 Camilla Jay, daughter born to Cassandra (member) and Kevin Sexton. Jeanie and Lew Osterhoudt are proud grandparents.
 - Death – January 30, 2021 Karen Morrison Merkel (member), Phoenixville, PA 19460. Funeral held February 4 at R Strunk Funeral Home, Phoenixville. Private burial in West Virginia.
 - Wedding – Joyce Lynn (Eitl) Hefferan (member) to Kevin Floyd Hefferan in the sanctuary on February 27, 2021. Pastor Hagler officiant.

Information from the March 23rd Stated Session Meeting will be reviewed/approved at the next Stated Session Meeting scheduled for May 25th and will be in the following Perspective.

Jewell Baker, Clerk of Session

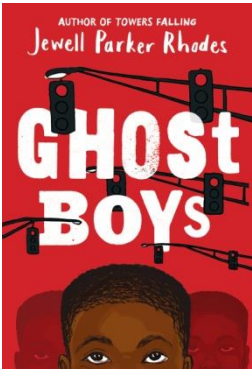


Prayer Chain & Prayer Requests

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:6109338816) and she will forward your requests on to Amy.



GHOST BOYS by Jewell Parker Rhodes...review...



Ghost Boys by Jewell Parker Rhodes is a timely and powerful story about the 12 year old narrator, Jerome, who was shot and killed by a police officer who thought Jerome had a real gun: Jerome was black, the gun was a toy, the police officer was white. Familiar scenery of recent days. The story set in Chicago, flip-flops between 'Alive' and 'Dead'. Jerome comes back as a 'Ghost Boy' and witnesses the destruction his death has caused his family, the police officer's family and the community. Along the way Jerome meets Emmet Till another ghost boy (Emmet was a 14 year old black boy who was lynched in 1955; 2 white men were acquitted of his death by an all white jury.). As leader of the Ghost Boys, Emmet introduces Jerome to other ghost boys, young black boys who have been killed due to racism.

Before death, one of Jerome's only friends was Carlos; Carlos was from San Antonio, where Carlos said schools were "always trouble. Everyone fights. Everyone's afraid." Needless to say Carlos was devastated that he was the one who gave Jerome the black toy plastic gun. Carlos became a good friend to Jerome's family, especially Jerome's sister, Kim. Was Carlos showing remorse?

After death Sarah, the police officer's daughter is the only live person who can see the ghost of Jerome. Sarah shares her thoughts and feelings about her father with Jerome. While Sarah loves her father dearly, she is confused and embarrassed by her father's actions. Sarah also feels she is supposed to see Jerome and help him somehow.

In the aftermath of his death, Jerome tries to figure out why this happened to him. The reader follows Jerome through school, his funeral, the trial of the police officer and the city of Chicago. The reader also feels Jerome's rage, frustration, sadness, loss of love and how he tries to cope with it all. Police brutality has existed for an extremely long time, 1955 with Emmet Till and continues to occur today. It must stop: but how?

As a retired sixth grade teacher of 34 years, I strongly recommend that Ghost Boys be read and discussed in our upper elementary schools. With events going on today students may be familiar with them and be able to make real life connections; especially connections to police brutality, racism. Students of minority, especially, will be able to make connections. Ghost Boys would be an excellent textbook for teaching social justice and diversity. As Jewell Parker Rhodes says as she speaks through Jerome, "Only the living can make the world better. LIVE AND MAKE IT BETTER."



Spring has sprung! Soon we will observe Palm Sunday and Easter, and the Sunday School Gang has been hard at work in preparation. Thanks to all the kids who did a fantastic job with the One Great Hour of Sharing fish coin collection boxes! Sunday school will meet again on Palm Sunday at 9:30AM in anticipation of a possible outdoor service at 10:30. Jeff McLaughlin will lead the group in songs, and the Easter lesson will include a summary of Holy Week and a discussion about Easter symbols and their origins.

Your Board of Deacons would like to give a big shout-out to our Fairies of Happiness - soon to be Bunnies of Happiness! Thank you all for the delicious baked goods, and the warmth and cheer that you bring to each lucky recipient!

In other goings-on, MAC had their winter clothing give away on Saturday, March 20th. We're sure the donations were gratefully received by all who participated, and thank MAC for providing this service to the community. MAC will reach out to donors who previously let Sandy Heidel know they have clothes they've been saving for the next give away. They're doing it in stages, so as not to overwhelm the volunteers in light of limited staff due to COVID restrictions. Also noteworthy is the procedure MAC uses to assist the community via Orion. Orion sends a fax with clothing requests, and the committee fills those and usually drops them off or, if need be, requests the bag(s) be picked up on a Wednesday when the office is open. MAC receives request orders from PACS, the school district, shelters, and others. They have helped many of the residents affected by the recent fire at Prima Hotel. So far, MAC has helped 42 people in 2021!

As always, your Board of Deacons stands ready to minister to your needs. Please make us aware of any needs you have so we can help you. We'll help with technology, so if you need it please ask. If it is personal contact, that can be arranged. We are here to assist in any way possible.

God bless you all and be a blessing unto someone each and every day.

Submitted on behalf of the Deacons by,
Ellen Williams



Joys and Concerns Live

Join Pastor Doug virtually on Sundays at 11:45 a.m. to share some happiness, heartache, or anything in between and lift up each other in spirit. Join Zoom meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87345268002>
Meeting ID: 873 4526 8002 One tap mobile +13017158592

Parish Life



All Church ZOOM Meetings - Wednesday nights, 7:30.

Wed. April 7th - Sharing Favorite Family Tradition – Easter or Other!

Wed. April 14th -Drums Alive with Jen

Wed. April 21st - One Year Anniversary

Wed. April 28th - Trivia with Judy & Hermann

Foodology



These recipes are sure to put a spring in your step!



BAKED PINEAPPLE



INGREDIENTS:

1 can of Crushed Pineapple
4 beaten eggs
3/4 cup sugar
1 stick butter - melted
6 slices cubed white bread

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 350°. Mix all ingredients together. Grease glass bowl (I use butter), pour mixture in bowl. Bake for 35 - 40 minutes.

Submitted by: Ann Miller

EMPTY TOMB ROLLS

INGREDIENTS:

12 Rhodes rolls (or homemade dough or crescent roll dough)
12 Marshmallows
1/4 Cup granulated sugar
1 TBSP Ground cinnamon
1/4 Cup melted butter

DIRECTIONS:

Heat the oven to 350°, grease 9x13" baking dish. Mix sugar & cinnamon in a bowl.

Press the dough out into a circle.

Roll a marshmallow in the butter, then cinnamon, & place on the dough.

Pinch the circle closed around the marshmallow & roll the dough in the butter & cinnamon sugar.

Place in baking dish. Can also be baked in a muffin tin. Repeat until you've used all the dough.

Let rest 15 minutes, then bake for 15 minutes or until golden.

Serve immediately.

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!



Be sure to like, follow, and subscribe to FPC online:

Facebook -

<https://www.facebook.com/FirstPresbyterianChurchOfPhoenixville>

Facebook Private Group -

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/194981514361191>

Instagram - @fpcphoenixville - <https://www.instagram.com/fpcphoenixville/>

Twitter - @fpcphoenixville - <https://twitter.com/fpcphoenixville>

YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrmNs7JdvZNJpsNjs0Ds8vg>

Please remember our hashtag, #lovingFPC, when posting about this great church!

Inspirations and Reflections, submitted by Sharyn Funderwhite

"A sense of humor is borne out of indifference to irritation no matter how severe."

"The main purpose in life is to maintain peace."

"Take care of your 'inner environment' and the 'outer environment' will take care of itself."

"I will do what I hate and fear to do, until I no longer hate and fear to do it."

"Pain borne with fortitude is better than pain borne with despair."

"Fear is a belief, and beliefs can be changed."

"Do not look regretfully into the past, or fearfully into the future."

"Worry does great harm, and gives little aid."

"Hurt feelings are nothing more than beliefs not shared."

The following was written on a card that was sent to me from Sue Shier and the Parish Life Committee:

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing. Romans 15:13

Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. John 14:27

Now these three remain: faith, hope and love – but the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 13:13



Notes from Worship and Music

Join us all in celebrating Christ's resurrection on Sunday, April 4, 10:30am via YouTube.

After Easter, we will continue having our regular services each Sunday at 10:30am via YouTube. That is until Pentecost (May 23). We hope we can get the weather to cooperate and have a wonderful celebration outside together. There may be one other outdoor service before Pentecost as a "practice run" to find any kinks in our planning. Keep your eyes and ears open.

See you in church



April 2021

First Presbyterian Church of Phoenixville

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