

# Perspective

A Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church  
of Phoenixville, Pennsylvania

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First Presbyterian Church  
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# From the Pastor

## Exodus 4

<sup>10</sup> But Moses said to the Lord, “O my Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor even now that you have spoken to your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.” <sup>11</sup> Then the Lord said to him, “Who gives speech to mortals? Who makes them mute or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? <sup>12</sup> Now go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you are to speak.” <sup>13</sup> But he said, “O my Lord, please send someone else.” <sup>14</sup> Then the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses and he said, “What of your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he can speak fluently; even now he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you his heart will be glad. <sup>15</sup> You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth; and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and will teach you what you shall do.

Moses offers a total of four excuses to God, trying to find a way to get out of doing what he has been called to do. The text above is his fourth excuse. His first is: “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” And God reminds him that ‘I will go with you.’ Then Moses says “If I come to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” At this point, God gives Moses a new name, I AM, by which God will be known from this point onward. ‘Tell them I AM sent you.’ Next Moses asks “But suppose they do not believe me or listen to me, but say, ‘The Lord did not appear to you.’” In response, God teaches Moses some signs that he can work, using his staff, and his hand, and water from the Nile itself. If he shows these signs, they will be convincing to onlookers (or so Moses must hope).

And then fourth, having shared all of his anxieties about whether he will be heard, Moses brings up the fact that he is not sure he will even be able to speak. And we have to take a moment, here, and ask - what is God thinking, choosing Moses? Aaron is about to arrive on the scene, couldn't God have enticed Aaron over to the burning bush to call him? One would think that to speak, God would call the eloquent. To fight, God would presumably call a warrior. To lead, we'd expect God to call a ruler; and so on.

God does none of the above. For a ruler, a shepherd. To battle hundreds of Ba'alite prophets, a lone grumpy old man. For a speaker, a nervous stutterer making excuses...who is also a fugitive wanted for murder. I think God gets a kick out of calling people to do things they are not best-suited to do. Even when called to love, Jesus reminds us that we are not primarily called to love those who love us - anyone can do that. We are called to love our enemies - the most difficult people to love. No one is innately good at loving their enemies and I believe that is the point.

The point of God calling someone to do something, calling you or me to do something, is not to show us how skilled we are and well-suited we are to the task. The point is to make us rely on God as the one who has called us.

Pastor Doug

P.S.

I've seen a concern expressed a few times, and clearly it's on some people's minds, so I thought I'd respond here as I've been responding in person when appropriate. (No one has brought this concern to me personally, which is disappointing, and I was tempted to talk about Matthew 18 this month). This past Maundy Thursday, we used a pre-recorded worship service from last year. The reason for this was so that our worship volunteers, who had been working so hard for the past year of the pandemic, could have some time off. It takes hours to set up and record a worship service, and then more hours for the video to be processed and edited so that it can be uploaded to YouTube. With Easter coming that Sunday, I asked our worship team if they would appreciate having Maundy Thursday off and using a prior recording, and they enthusiastically said they would. I let Worship and Music and Session know of the decision. After a few weeks, not long before Maundy Thursday, the person who had signed up to host our bi-monthly vigil let us know they were unable to do so. I realized that I was available that Thursday, so I stepped in to host the vigil.

2. *continued.....*

At the time, I saw those two things as separate - giving our volunteers much-appreciated time off, and stepping in close to the last minute to host a vigil. In retrospect, I can definitely understand why some came to the conclusion that I cancelled a worship service so that I could host a community vigil. That would definitely have been inappropriate if I had done that. Rather than let this concern I've noticed more than once now linger, I thought I'd clarify all at once.



### Upcoming Scripture Readings

August 1<sup>st</sup>: Exodus 16:2-4, 9-15; John 6:24-35

August 8<sup>th</sup>: Ephesians 4:25-5:2; John 6:35, 41-51

August 15<sup>th</sup>: TBA

August 22<sup>nd</sup>: Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18; Ephesians 6:10-20

August 29<sup>th</sup>: TBA



### "My Cup Runneth Over"

To my Church Family,

I want to thank each of you for the many cards and notes received on my 94<sup>th</sup> birthday.

I have such good memories of our church and all of you.

Love & prayers,  
Ruth Ann Dabback



As a longtime member of First Pres, and a longtime member of our Finance Committee, I would like to personally thank John Souder for his 40+ years of service to our church. Over the decades he has helped our congregation improve the quality and return of our endowments that were entrusted to our care. The increased return has enabled us to fill many holes in our budget over the years, and we continue to enjoy those benefits while retaining the value of the original bequests.

In addition, he has guided us in ways to reduce the large debt that we incurred in the renovation of our beautiful sanctuary. By counseling us on ways to utilize favorable returns, combined with excellent timing of market conditions, he has allowed us to almost eliminate our long-term debt.

Our future financial help is certainly unknown in these difficult times, but it only because of John's ongoing efforts to manage our finances in a conservative, but knowledgeable fashion, that we have the resources we need to build our church into the future.

Thank you John, for your many years of faithful service, and I wish you a long and happy retirement.

Lew Osterhoudt

## Notes from Worship and Music

Now that we are in the dog days of August, coming to church is a good idea. We have windows open for fresh air, air conditioning on to make it comfortable and others in the sanctuary to make it a more meaningful worship service. Come sing, pray and learn together.

We are working on a solution to the wafer in the Communion set we are using. In the meantime, if you prefer, feel free to bring your own substitute for the wafer. Also, you will notice that on Communion days the paper bags in the pews will have a plastic bag inserted. Please put your used Communion set in the plastic bag to avoid spillage.

Please look elsewhere in Perspective for a note from Diane about choir. Even if you have not been in our choir before, you are most welcome to join. Joining choir sounds like a good way to get the “pandemic normal” started in September.

See you in church



## Scrip Gift Card Orders

The Scrip program continues...even throughout the summer! We will be placing orders for gift cards every other **Wednesday (Aug. 4 & Aug. 18)**.

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 (**Aug. 3 & Aug. 17**).

Please make checks payable to “First Presbyterian Church DR”.

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

The Stewardship Committee



## FPC ‘S CHOIR IS BACK!

It has been almost a year and a half since the FPC Choir sang from the choir loft. I have truly missed the experience of working with our Choir and have missed the musical leadership that is an important part of our worship experience.

We will be having our first rehearsal on Thursday, September 9<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 p.m. Sunday, September 12<sup>th</sup> will be our first Sunday to lead our worship service.

The choir room is usually still warm at the end of the summer, so we will gather in the sanctuary pews in air-conditioned comfort. I am hoping to see all of our returning members and hopefully a few new ones, too.

You can always find me at the organ on Sunday morning if you have any questions about our Fall startup. See you soon!

Diane Legnini





Back in June, Deacons' Dialogue featured our favorite four-legged FCPC Ambassador, Dawkins. As many of you likely saw, Dawkins visited us on July 11<sup>th</sup>. We learned more about him, and his mission, that day. We thought it would be nice to follow up on that visit.

Dawkins was introduced to the congregation and stayed afterward to meet members during 'Lemonade in the Shade'. Many of the members enjoyed Dawkins' time at church - and we all hope for another visit in the near future!

The primary objective of a TDI dog and handler is to provide comfort and companionship by sharing the dog with others. This is done in a way that increases emotional well-being, promotes healing and improves the quality of life for the person being visited. Four-legged therapists give something special to enhance the health and well-being of others. It has been clinically proven that through petting, touching and talking to animals, that a person's blood pressure is lowered, stress is reduced, and depression is eased.

Please reach out to Jen or Ann if you would like Dawkins to visit a church member or know of someone that would benefit from pet therapy. Dawkins would love to snuggle with anyone who just may need some extra affection, comfort or support on a 'cloudy day'.



Please contact Jennifer Johnson (267-253-0247) or Ann Miller (610-554-6391) for more information. Thank you.

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

Submitted on behalf of the Deacons by,

Ellen Williams

## 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](mailto: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.



## Parking Lot Attendants Needed

We continue to need volunteers to collect parking donations on **Friday and Saturday evenings from 5:00pm – 8:00pm**. It is a great opportunity to spend some quality time with a fellow church member, as well as a chance to interact with folks in our community. Not only does this benefit

our church, but it also makes it convenient for those who park in our lot.

If you would like to help, you may sign up on the Sign-Up Genius that Sue Smith emails each Monday. If you have questions, please contact Pam Bodam at 610-496-1933.

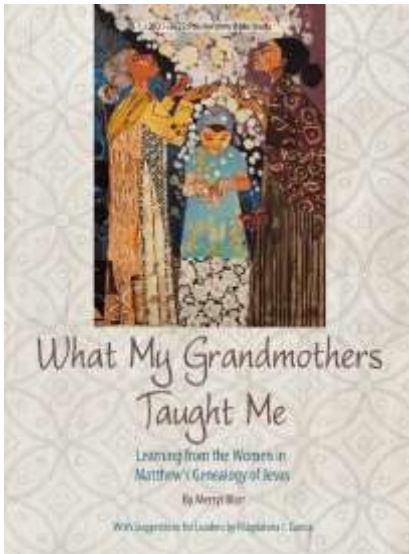
The Stewardship Committee appreciates your help.

## From the Clerk of Session

- Average Sunday morning attendance:  
In June we had an average of 43 worshipping in person (wearing masks) and an average of 18 households viewing the 10:30am YouTube premiere with 4 *chatting*. I'm assuming most of the chatters are now worshipping in person. Please think of *chatting* as the YouTube version of signing the Red Friendship Book and join in the chat, if you are able.
- The Life of the church
  - Membership:
    - Ed Bodam and John Souder have requested removal from the roll.
    - Current active membership is 175.
  - Birth: none
  - Death:
    - July 14, 2021 - Grace Harrop (former member) joined the Church Triumphant.
  - Wedding - none
- Session Meeting Information:  
Information from the June 22<sup>nd</sup> Stated Session Meeting will be reviewed/approved at the August 31<sup>st</sup> Stated Session Meeting and will be in the following Perspective.



Jewell Baker, Clerk of Session



## Ladies of our church,

Chris Wittrock and I spent the weekend of July 9-11th attending the Bible Study Workshop at Stony Point Retreat Center led by Rev. Jane DeFord. We met with other Circle leaders, mostly from New York and New Jersey, to review the Horizon Study for this year "What My Grandmothers Taught Me".

We think this will be a great study with so much to learn from the women in Jesus' family tree and at the same time share what we've learned from our grandmothers.

Please join us on August 15th as we kick off 2021-2022 Circle year with a LADIES TEA.

We will gather in the parlor following worship to share memories of our grandmothers as we enjoy some of the goodies she may have made.

Jewell Baker, for Presbyterian Women

## Speaking Out Against Hunger and Poverty



Thanks to all who participated in the Offering of Letters, held on Zoom on Wednesday, May 26 and completed in a dedication service during worship on June 6. As a congregation, we sent a total of **27 letters** to members of Congress, urging them to protect important programs like SNAP and tax credits for low-income families. We also encouraged them to increase U.S. leadership and funding for global nutrition programs.

Members of Congress often emphasize that constituent letters do influence their decision-making and actions. So, thanks again to all who participated in this important effort on behalf of the poor and hungry among us.

## Parish Life



## Announcement regarding All Church ZOOM Meetings

Our all church ZOOM meetings gave us the opportunity to come together as a congregation when we were unable to meet in person. Thankfully, we are now back to in-person services. With summer comes vacations, sports leagues, and the rattle & hum of warm weather activities – keeping us all very busy! Therefore, we are ending the online meetings for the happier prospect of more in-person events in the fall.

A big thank you to everyone who attended, and especially our content contributors!



## Help Wanted – Lemonade Servers



Who doesn't enjoy a cold glass of lemonade after service? Would you consider hosting this fun event on a sunny summer Sunday? Parish Life is looking for volunteers to bring the snack/drink cart out and pour lemonade. We provide the snacks and drinks.

There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex. Please sign up for the open Sunday of your choice!

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!*



### **Mission, Action, Concern Committee (MAC)**

May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
Romans 15:5-6

### **Speaking Out Against Hunger and Poverty**

A total of 27 letters from our congregation were written, dedicated in prayer, and mailed to members of the U.S. Congress and Senate. In these letters, we urged our elected representatives to protect important programs like SNAP and tax credits for low-income families. We also encouraged them to increase U.S. leadership and funding for global nutrition programs.

You may have noticed, in the news, that families (including 2.2 million children in Pennsylvania) are now receiving tax credits as part of the American Rescue Plan. These are the very tax credits that we are urging Congress to make permanent, potentially cutting child poverty in half in the United States.

Members of Congress often emphasize that constituent letters do influence their decision-making and actions. So, thanks to all who participated in this important effort on behalf of the poor and hungry among us.

~ Jeff McLaughlin

### **Volunteer Opportunities- Are you feeling called?**

#### Household Care Packages for Alianzas Families

Chris Wittrock (MAC) and Jill Kleppinger (FPC Families) have been working with Nina Guzman at Alianzas de Phoenixville to identify ways FPC can help families prepare for the upcoming school season. We began our project thinking "backpacks" but that need has already been met by others in the community. Nina helped us identify a new project that is simple, and will help single-parent families with urgent household needs. Our new project is to coordinate **household care packages**, containing Dollar Store items such as Laundry Detergent, Dish Liquid, Shampoo and Conditioner, Bath Soap, Toilet Paper and Toothpaste. The cost of each package will be around \$10/family. We are discussing the details and the logistics at our next Christian Education/Christian Growth Meeting and will share with the congregation via the bulletin. Feel free to stock up on these general items if you know you want to participate. We are excited to include our children in this project and pray this can be the start of more opportunities for their mission.

8. *continued....*

### Little Free Library- Children's Book Drive "Who Is My Neighbor"

Chris Wittrock has organized a list of children's book titles to share with the congregation as part of the Church Education and Church Growth Committees (CE/CG) book drive, themed 'Who Is My Neighbor' to expand our children's book collection. Once the list is reviewed and approved, we will share with everyone via Sign-Up Genius and a sign-up sheet in the Narthex (and by other creative methods for those without a computer). We want everyone to feel welcome to participate in this fun church-wide project. We are organizing a presentation of the books by the children, complete with church picnic of course! Stay tuned to the bulletin for the full details.

Contact Chris Wittrock [cwittrock22@gmail.com](mailto:cwittrock22@gmail.com) with questions.

### 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 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>. Watch the bulletin for sign up opportunities.

### Good Works Lunch- Help Prep and/or deliver lunch

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

## **People to People Updates**

### Clothing Ministry Updates (Sandy Heidel)

Requests continue to come to us for help with clothing, linens and kitchen items. We have had 74 requests to supply 107 people (33 women, 43 men, 31 children) so far this year. You are always welcome to come and assist us with helping our neighbors. If you have items to donate, please contact Sandy Heidel ([csheidel@verizon.net](mailto:csheidel@verizon.net)) to set up a time to drop them off.

### Flea Market (Sandy Heidel and Bob Russell)

Over 100 people attended the recent Garage Sale of clothing, shoes and books on July 17th and earned \$571.19 for the People to People ministry. We are grateful to the 11 people who helped set up Thursday and Friday for the sale and the 15 people who assisted with the sale and clean up! The total proceeds raised for the People to People Ministry with both sales is \$1,052.07 (\$576.19 July + \$475.88 June). Many of the leftover books were dropped off at Liberty Thrift in Collegeville

A summer clothing give away has been scheduled for Saturday, August 7<sup>th</sup>. Watch the bulletin for details.

### Food Ministry Updates (Bob Russell)

Contact Bob if you'd like to help with our weekly feeding ministry ([Bob@rtact.com](mailto:Bob@rtact.com))

## **Mission Update**

Have you been inspired during this pandemic? Is there a community project you think FPC might like being part of? Reach out and let's talk- good stuff happens when we come together in love.

## **Business Note**

Chris Wittrock will join George Cockerill as co-Chair of the Church Growth Committee, and will support Pastor Doug and the Session on projects both internal and external to the church. She will continue as an active member of the MAC committee, supporting the interim co-Chair, Jeff McLaughlin (member at-large and former Chair of MAC) and co-Chair Roger Warwick (Session representative and Treasurer of MAC).

Faithfully submitted,

Chris Wittrock ([cwittrock22@gmail.com](mailto:cwittrock22@gmail.com))  
Chair, MAC Committee

## Quotations and Inspirations –

- The world will step aside to let any man pass who knows where he is going.  
Unknown
- If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet a success unexpected in common hours.  
Thoreau
- The world's a theatre, the earth is a stage which God and nature do with actors fill.  
Thomas Bleywood
- Lord, who am I to teach the way to little children day by day,  
so prone myself to go astray?  
Lord, if their guide I am to be, oh let the children see the teacher leaning hard on Thee.  
Leslie Hill
- To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; to appreciate beauty to find the best in others; to leave the world a bit better; ...to know even one life has breathed easier because you lived.  
This is to have succeeded.  
Ralph Waldo Emerson
- Our lives are song; God writes the words, and we set them to music at pleasure;  
And the song grows glad or sweet or sad;  
As we choose to fashion the measure.  
Unknown
- I have four things to learn in life; To think clearly without hurry or confusion;  
To love everybody sincerely; To act in everything with the highest motives;  
To trust God unhesitatingly.  
Helen Keller
- Teach us good Lord, to serve thee as thou deservest,  
To give and not count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds,  
To toil and not seek for rest, to labor and not to ask for any reward,  
Save that of knowing that we do Thy will.  
Ignatius Loyola
- Hoping, dreaming and joyfully anticipating are the very essence of life.  
A. A. Low M.D.
- Your Father knows exactly what you need, even before you ask Him. Matthew 6:8  
*Compiled from The Log (1967) yearbook of Eastern University students and  
submitted by Sharyn L. Funderwhite*



### Free Yarn

Are you a knitter? Do you crochet?

A very generous donation of yarn has come our way...15 tubs plus multiple bags of yarn are awaiting you in the old Library (most recently the office for The House).

Please help yourself either after church or during the week.

Knit to donate or knit for yourself.

There is a signup sheet on the table to let us know you have taken some yarn; we just want an idea of who is taking it and for what use as it disappears, nothing more than that. If you have any questions, contact Barbie Kepler, [bkepler@aol.com](mailto:bkepler@aol.com) or call/text 610-653-0126.

**Congregation B'nai Jacob, First Presbyterian Church of Phoenixville, and Alianzas de Phoenixville Present a Virtual Event:**

**Focusing on Inequities of Public-School Funding in Pennsylvania**

**Presented by: Dr. Myra Forrest**

**August 9, 2021**

**7:30 PM via Zoom**

**Pennsylvania has the distinction of being the worst in the nation for funding inequity in our public schools.**

**Inequity of funding shows clear racial bias:**

- **The whiter the district, with few exceptions, the more money PA state funding provides to the school district**
- **The more diverse the district, with few exceptions, the less money it receives from PA state funding**

Dr. Forrest has years of experience in public school administration and is currently the Education Advocate for Pottstown Health and Wellness Foundation. She will discuss the legislative call to action that was based on the case study of inequitable school funding and Pottstown. She'll explain the current system for school funding, the devastating results, the harm in "hold harmless", and the Fair Funding lawsuit. She'll discuss reform legislation in Harrisburg and ways that individuals and groups can advocate for change.

To register for the Zoom Link, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/FPCCBJ>

Or use the QR code:



August 2021

# First Presbyterian Church of Phoenixville

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Offering: J Baker 1  <b>10:30a Communion Worship</b> 12:30p Deacons meeting 5:00p Piano recital	2  6:30p Zumba 7:00p Property	3  6:30p Zumba 7:00p MAC meeting	4	5 9:00a WIC 9:00a Set up for Clothing give away 10:00a Food Ministry 7:00p "We Are" Vigil Via Zoom <i>S. Smith vacation</i>	6 9:00a WIC 9:00a Set up for Clothing give away  <i>S. Smith vacation</i>	7  <b>10:00a-12:00n Free clothing give away</b>
Offering:L Williams 8  <b>10:30a Worship</b> 12:30p Worship & Music 7:00p Pub Theology @ The Foundry	9  6:30p Zumba 7:30p School Funding Program via Zoom <i>Rev Hagler vaca. S Smith vacation</i>	10  6:30p Zumba 7:00p Parish Life  <i>Rev Hagler Vacation</i>	11 10:00a AARP Board meeting  <i>Rev Hagler Vacation</i>	12 10:00a Food ministry  7:30p Compassionate Friends meeting  <i>Rev Hagler Vacation</i>	13  <i>Rev Hagler Vacation</i>	14  <i>Rev Hagler Vacation</i>
Offering: Sinapius 15  <b>10:30a Worship</b> 12:00n Women's Circle  <i>Rev Hagler Vacation</i>	16  6:30p Zumba  7:00p Finance & Stewardship	17  6:30p Zumba 6:30p Staff meeting 7:15p Christian Educ	18	19 9:00a WIC 10:00a Food ministry  7:00p "We Are" Live Vigil @ Main & Bridge Streets	20 9:00a WIC  <i>Perspective articles due for September</i>	21
Offering:G Cockerill 22  <b>10:30a Worship</b>  7:00p Antiracism Book Study via Zoom <i>Diane Legnini Vacation</i>	23  6:30p Zumba  <i>Rev Hagler vaca. D Legnini vacation</i>	24  6:30p Zumba  <i>Rev Hagler vacation D Legnini vacation</i>	25  <i>Rev Hagler vacation D Legnini vacation</i>	26  10:00a Food ministry  <i>Rev Hagler vacation D Legnini vacation</i>	27  <i>Rev Hagler vacation D Legnini vacation</i>	28  <i>Rev Hagler vacation D Legnini vacation</i>
Offering: Osterhoudt 29  <b>10:30a Worship</b>  <i>Rev Hagler vacation Diane Legnini vacation Sarah Shulman vacation</i>	30  6:30p Zumba  <i>D Legnini vacation</i>	31  6:30p Zumba 7:30p Session  <i>D Legnini vacation</i>				