

Perspective

A Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church
of Phoenixville, Pennsylvania

Volume XLVI No. 9 October 2021

Phone: 610-933-8816

Fax: 610-933-8060

www.fpc-phoenixville.org

email: secretaryfpc145@gmail.com



First Presbyterian Church
Phoenixville, Pennsylvania
1846 – 2021

The *Perspective* is published 10 times a year by the First Presbyterian Church of Phoenixville. Please direct information or comments to the Church Office at 610-933-8816 or to secretaryfpc145@gmail.com.

Publisher: Sue Smith Contributors: Church Family; Proofreader: Jeanne Blackburn

Table of Contents

Message from Pastor Doug.....	2
Worship and Music Notes.....	3
All Saints' Service.....	3
Mission Action Committee.....	4
Scrip Card Orders.....	5
Parish Life.....	6
Sunday School.....	7
World Communion Sunday.....	7
Clerk of Session Report.....	8
Presbyterian Women's Circle.....	8
October calendar.....	9

From the Pastor

Matthew 7

“Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. ² For with the judgment you make you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. ³ Why do you see the speck in your neighbor’s eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? ⁴ Or how can you say to your neighbor, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ while the log is in your own eye? ⁵ You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor’s eye.

This past week was a week of training. I was away for a training retreat from this past Sunday until this past Tuesday, and then Wednesday night I had another training, the two hour culmination of hours of online training I’d been doing the weeks before.

The retreat was an intensive start to my third round of coach training. And no, I don’t mean coaching a sport (when people ask that, I wonder, have you met me?) - this is life coaching, specifically intended to allow us to help pastors and Sessions in our Presbytery. Donegal is helping to pay for the training, and in return I am available to area churches and pastors. I still have a long way to go, but currently I am on the path to become licensed with the International Coaching Federation. (Ask me in May 2022 how close I am to that goal.)

The training Wednesday was for my participation in Bridge of Hope, a faith-based nonprofit program that helps families who are facing, or experiencing, homelessness. We have a small cohort including folks from FPC who are going to join together in a ministry of “Neighboring” - being neighbors, and friends, to a local family facing homelessness.

Why do I mention these things? Partly just as an update on what I’m doing, as pastor, for anyone who is interested. I also mention this learning I’m doing because I am seeing a lot of connections, and I always find those interesting.

One of the main elements of both coaching and ‘neighboring’, as I am learning to do them, is non-judgmental listening. As a coach, it isn’t my job to tell anyone what to do, but to help them figure out what they want to do, and how to do it (as long as there’s no ethical issue of course). With neighboring, it is our place to be friends and support the family, but not to try to live their lives for them. In both cases, a person might make a decision I don’t agree with, but I’ve been reminded in both trainings that people are experts in their own lives, and their decisions are influenced by innumerable things I may know nothing about. Sometimes a person has to make the wrong choice, and see how it turns out, before they are able to make the right choice. Other times, I’m simply wrong, and what I thought was the wrong choice was the right one for their situation.

Either way, it isn’t my place to judge.

Which got me thinking about Jesus, who has a lot to say on judgment. On the one hand, he promises a final judgment of God for everyone, according to the standard of what we did to, and for, the least among us (Matthew 25). On the other hand, he says for us not to judge, or else we will be judged in the same way.

Some of us might be willing to take this deal. We think we make good decisions, and are good people, and would love it if other people lived up to our standards. I’m not sure this is precisely what is meant, however. Rather, I think that the issue here is autonomy. The right, and ability, of a person to make their own decisions (something central to both coach and neighbor training). If we really do make great decisions and live righteous lives, then that will be obvious to anyone who spends time with us. We don’t need to impose that on anyone else.

What happens more often is we are overbearing and presumptuous, assuming we could live someone else’s life better than they can. *Maybe we’re even correct about that.* But the problem is that to live someone’s life for them, we first must take away their dignity, and deny them their autonomy. We have to take their decisions away from them so that we can make those decisions instead.

2. *continued....*

Matthew 7 encourages us to imagine that happening to us. Someone else disrespects us, takes away our dignity and autonomy, and makes our decisions for us. Who would welcome that? To whom would that seem fair? Even if we acknowledge that we make mistakes, we still want the chance to make our own choices.

This is what it means to listen to someone, to support them, without judgment. Not that we approve, or don't have our own thoughts and values, but rather this listening is rooted in respect for the person's autonomy, just as we would want someone helping us to respect our autonomy. We might even share our thoughts, keeping foremost in our mind that we should not judge someone else in a way we would not want to be judged. We value our own dignity and autonomy, and so we value theirs as well.

Pastor Doug

P.S.

I'll say more about this in other venues, but as of the training retreat I am now officially able to offer coaching services as an ICF trainee. This might be of interest to some of you - or not! As members of FPC, coaching is something I can offer for free, and it still counts toward my required paid coaching hours because I am the pastor here. If anyone wants to know more or discuss this further, I am easy to find.



Upcoming Scripture Readings

October 3rd: Job 1:1; 2:1-10; Genesis 2:18-24
October 10th: Hebrews 4:12-16; Mark 10:17-31
October 17th: Isaiah 53:4-12; Hebrews 5:1-10
October 24rd: Hebrews 7:23-28; Mark 10:46-52
October 31st: Jeremiah 31:31-34; Romans 3:19-28

Worship and Music Notes

“We are one in the Spirit; we are one in the Lord.” That is the first phrase of our hymn number 300. On the first Sunday of October we get to remember this phrase and celebrate it on World Communion Sunday. We will join Christians around the world by partaking of Communion. Join us either in person or via YouTube. There will be some special music and text celebrating our worldwide connections. It's wonderful to have the choir back again. Wouldn't you like to join? Just show up in the sanctuary at 7 PM on Thursday evening. See you in church



Remembering Loved Ones

On November 7th, All Saints' Sunday, we will note in the bulletin the names of the saints (believers) from our congregation who have died during the past year. We will also note other relatives and loved ones who have died in the past year but were not members of this church.

If you would like the names of those loved ones listed, please send a message to Sue Smith at secretaryfpc145@gmail.com or call the church office at 610-933-8816.



Mission, Action, Concern Committee (MAC)

My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.
(Psalm 73:26)

Care Packages for Alianzas de Phoenixville

On Sunday, September 17, our Sunday School children met as a group ... and in person! In addition to celebrating the reunion, the children prepared cards for inclusion in the Care Packages to be delivered to Alianzas de Phoenixville. These bags of household supplies will be distributed to single-parent families in the Phoenixville area. Though we initially asked for 42 bags, we actually received approximately 50 bags from members of the congregation. Thanks to all who assisted with this project and especially to Jill Kleppinger, who organized the effort.

Assistance for Victims of Natural Disasters

We continue to accept contributions toward the work of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) to address needs in areas affected by recent natural disasters. To contribute, make your check payable to First Presbyterian Church of Phoenixville and indicate (this is important!) "Presbyterian Disaster Assistance" on the memo line. You may also specify whether you would like your donation to go toward Haiti, California, or Hurricane Ida. If no preference is indicated, we will divide your contribution equally among the three areas. Checks can be placed in the offering plate, mailed to the church, or dropped off at the church office. MAC has also contributed additional funds to each of the three relief efforts. Information regarding local needs in the wake of Hurricane Ida have been included in the *Sunday Bulletin* and in *The Beat*.

Volunteer Opportunities - Are you feeling called?

Good Works Lunch: Saturday Oct 9, 2021 – 10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Volunteers are needed to help with lunch preparation and/or to deliver lunches to the Good Works site. Contact Bob Russell for details at Bob@rtact.com.



October 30th Garage Sale

We need volunteers for set-up, cash register, baggers, floor walkers, and tear-down. Contact Sandy Heidel at csheidel@verizon.net.

Star Tree

For the upcoming Christmas season, we will once again create a Star Tree, with gift options for local families in need. Stay tuned for details.

Local Mission and Ministry Updates

St. Mary's Franciscan Shelter Meals

During the week of October 4 – 8, 2021, members of our congregation will be supplying meals for families at St. Mary's Shelter. Thanks to all who are participating. The next opportunity will take place in February of 2022.

And speaking of St. Mary's Shelter, their new Transitional Housing Unit officially opened on September 23. These new apartments will double the capacity for families at St. Mary's Franciscan Shelter. You can learn at www.stmarysfs.org.

People to People

Between 15 and 20 meals continue to be provided each week, with the exception of Thursday, September 2, when no meals were served due to the storms and flooding throughout the Phoenixville area. In August, 86 requests were received for clothing and 118 people were assisted. Increased requests have occurred in the aftermath of Hurricane Ida. People to People typically sorts clothing on Thursdays from 9 a.m. to noon and often on Mondays (same time) as well. Volunteers are welcome and encouraged! Contact Sandy Heidel (csheidel@verizon.net) or Bob Russell (bob@rtact.com).

If you have household items or clothing that you have been holding to donate, please contact Sandy Heidel (csheidel@verizon.net) to determine the best time to bring your items to the church.

Global Missions

In addition to local and regional missions, the MAC Committee supports several global missions, including the work of **Dan and Mary Vissani**, farmers and teachers serving in Zambia. The Vissanis recently reported on the struggles of friends whose business and livelihood are threatened because of "widespread, blatant, and shameless corruption" among police and government officials in Zambia. One of these friends is currently serving a prison term based upon trumped-up charges and bribery of officials. The Vissanis ask that we pray for the families affected by this corruption and also pray that God will strengthen and encourage those who struggle against corruption and injustice in Zambia.

Scrip Gift Card Orders



We will be placing orders for gift cards every other Wednesday (October 6 & October 20).

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 (October 5 & October 19). Please make checks payable to "First Presbyterian Church DR".

As always...Thank you for continuing to support this program as a percentage of each order goes to benefit the church. The Stewardship Committee

Help our neighbors in Mont Clare...

As we were looking for ways to help our neighbors and friends in Mont Clare, who were profoundly affected by flooding caused by Hurricane Ida, we were informed that donations of Lowes and Target gift cards (\$25 denomination) would be greatly appreciated.

If you would like to order cards through our Scrip program, we will deliver them to the appropriate organization for you. Many families have months of work ahead as they try to rebuild their homes and lives. All donations are greatly appreciated. Thank you.

PARISH LIFE



Trivia Night is back! All Church ZOOM Meetings

We're very happy to announce the return of an honored tradition,
Wednesday night all church **Zoom Trivia Night**.
Judy and Hermann Ball have graciously agreed to host our first event on
Wednesday, October 13 at 7:30 p.m.
The zoom link will be sent out prior to the event.



We Passed!

Thank you to all of those who helped us prepare the kitchen for our annual inspection.
We passed with flying colors!

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!*



Used/Empty Ink Cartridges

Please remember to save and bring to church, any used computer ink cartridges to be recycled. The church receives credit from Staples which is then used to purchase office supplies. Please also ask friends and relatives to donate used cartridges and place them in the mail slot in the church office door.



Sunday School is Back!!

Sunday, September 19 was our first in-person Sunday School after 18 months apart.

Children, families and teachers gathered outside on the lawn to sing songs, chat, and discuss the bags put together by members of the congregation for Alianzas. After singing and reconnecting outside, everyone traveled to Fellowship Hall to create cards to include in the bags. After time spent drawing, coloring and

adding lots of stickers, 50 cards were ready to bring some happiness to those receiving them. What a blessing to the families in our community!

It felt so good to be together again!

Throughout our time together, everyone wore a mask and stayed at a safe distance. Safety is and will remain a priority!

Based on feedback from the parents, Sunday School will be in-person once a month in October, November and December. Please look for emails as to the dates and specifics of these gatherings, as well as information in The Beat.

We are evaluating how to proceed with Sunday school in 2022 and are looking at several options. We would like to support the wishes of our parents and want to make sure our children are safe.

Also, we will continue to have coverage in our Nursery for the children up to and including 3rd grade during the worship service.



WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

Prepare to celebrate our oneness in Christ with all our brothers and sisters around the world. Join us this Sunday for this once-a-year special recognition of unity. Worship begins at **10:30 AM**, onsite or [online](#).

Let us pray - *We will become bread for a hungry world. And we will become drink for those who thirst. And the blessed will become the blessing. And everywhere will be the feast. Amen.* (Source: Jan Richardson, Painted Prayerbook)



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.

From the Clerk of Session

- Average Sunday morning attendance:
In August we had an average of 41 worshipping in person (wearing masks) and an average of 17 households viewing the 10:30am YouTube premiere with 6 *chatting*. I'm assuming most of the chatters 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: Current membership is 174.
 - Birth: September 16, 2021 – Thomas Hart Smith, son of Adam and Megan Smith.
 - Death: August 29, 2021 – Donald Jarrell joined the Church Triumphant. The family will spread his ashes next to Joanne's.
 - Wedding: none
 - Baptism: none
- Session Meeting Information:
 - Motions passed at the June 22, 2021 Stated Session Meeting
 - Session is in agreement with the Property Committee to wait to replace the storage shed and to hold off replacing the toilet in Mom's House area.
 - Website logo discussion continues.
 - In person worship allowed with masks. Nursery will be available beginning July 11, with masks.
 - Session approved WIC meeting inside Fellowship Hall with masks.
 - Our 2020 Minutes passed without exception at the Donegal Presbytery Minute Review on June 27 via Zoom.



Information from the August 31st Stated Session Meeting will be reviewed/approved at the October 26th Stated Session Meeting and will be in the following Perspective.

Jewell Baker, Clerk of Session



Presbyterian Women Circle

This year we will follow the Horizon Bible Study *What My Grandmothers Taught Me, Learning from the Women in Matthew's Genealogy of Jesus*, written by Merryl Blair. Please pack your lunch and join us after worship on the third Sunday of each month. This study began in September but it's never too late to join. The parlor windows will be open and a fan on. Because many of us have small children in our lives we are asking that all participants be vaccinated for Covid.

Jewell Baker

October 2021

First Presbyterian Church of Phoenixville

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 9:00a WIC	2 8am-1pm People to People Auction Pick Up
Offering: K Brown 3 8:30a Bible Study via Zoom <i>World Communion</i> 10:30a Worship	4 6:30p Zumba class <i>7:30p Property</i> Shelter Meals →	5 6:30p Zumba class <i>7:00p MAC</i> Shelter Meals →	6 Shelter Meals →	7 9:00a WIC 9:00a People to People Clothing ministry 10:00a People to People Food ministry 7:00p Choir 7:00p “We Are” Vigil Via Zoom Shelter Meals →	8 Shelter Meals	9 10:30a – 1pm Good Works lunch preparation
Offering: K Carrabine 10 8:30a Bible Study Zoom 10:30a Worship <i>12:30p Worship & Music</i> <i>7:00p Pub Theology @ The Foodery on Bridge</i>	11 6:30p Zumba class	12 6:30p Zumba class <i>7:00p Personnel</i> <i>7:00p Parish Life</i>	13 7:30p All Church Zoom Event Trivia Night	14 9:00a People to People Clothing ministry 10:00a People to People Food ministry 7:00p Choir 7:30p Compassionate Friends	15 9:00a WIC <i>Sue Smith vacation</i>	16
Offering: A Miller 17 8:30a Bible Study via Zoom 10:30a Worship 12:00n Women’s Circle	18 6:30p Zumba class <i>7:00p Finance & Stewardship</i> <i>S Smith vacation</i>	19 6:30p Zumba class <i>7:15p Church Growth</i> <i>Sue Smith vacation</i>	20 <i>Sue Smith vacation</i>	21 9:00a WIC 9:00a People to People Clothing ministry 10:00a People to People Food ministry 7:00p Choir 7:00p “We Are” Live Vigil (Main & Bridge)	22	23
Offering: R Warwick 24 8:30a Bible Study via Zoom 10:30a Worship <i>7:00p Antiracism Book Study via Zoom</i>	25 <i>6:00p Staff meeting</i> 6:30p Zumba class	26 6:30p Zumba class 7:30p Session meeting	27	28 9:00a People to People Clothing ministry 10:00a People to People Food ministry 7:00p Choir <i>Set up FH for flea market</i>	29 <i>Set up FH for flea mkt</i>	30 8:00a-1:00p People to People Flea Market
Offering: J Osterhoudt 31 8:30a Bible Study via Zoom 9:15a Sunday School 10:30a Worship						