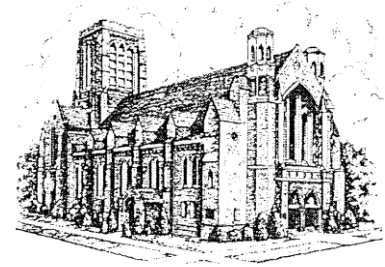


First Presbyterian Church
300 South Main Street, P. O. Box 1038
Greensburg, Pennsylvania 15601-5038
Phone: 724.832.0150 fax: 724.832.0152
Email: fpcgreensburg@comcast.net
Website: www.firstpresbyteriangreensburg.com

NON-PROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
GREENSBURG, PA
PERMIT NO. 428



February 2024

SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE
Sunday School 9:00 a.m.
Worship 10:00 a.m.

FIRST NEWS:

THE NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

DEADLINE FOR MARCH ISSUE: MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2024
Email submissions to fpcgreensburg@comcast.net or mail to church office.

*The Coulter Society asks that you please consider
remembering our church in your will!*

CHURCH STAFF

The Rev. Dr. Martin R. Ankrum, Pastor / Head of Staff; revankrum@hotmail.com
Dr. William Jeffrey Jones, Minister of Music / Organist; FPCGMusicMinistry@gmail.com
Jennifer Slater, Youth Director; jennifer1996slater@gmail.com
Wendy McCann, Sunday School Coordinator; tjmwam@netzero.net
Lu Ann Peters, Financial Secretary; luannpeters@comcast.net
Kimberly A. Stoner, Executive Secretary; fpcgreensburg@comcast.net
Keith L. Huey, Sexton
Shannon Reid, FPC Preschool Teacher & Director; mrs.reid.preschool@gmail.com
Blythe Graft, Jeanine Solo, Allisa Zorn, FPC Preschool Teachers
Henry Forehan, Housekeeper
Richard Fabery & Garrett Kalinowski, Assistant Sextons
Galiana Clark, Nursery Attendant
Edgar B. Highberger, Minister of Music, Emeritus

Praying Through Lent: Pick Up the Psalter

One of the most prevalent complaints I receive from folks is in regard to their prayer life. For most, a ‘prayer life’ is non-existent. There seems to be no time in their busy schedules to sit and pray. They may attempt to do so while commuting to work, but find the distractions of being in the midst of traffic causes their minds to wander.

Or, for some, time may be set aside, but they feel that they either have little to say to God or that their prayers become routine, repetitive and mainly focused upon their own concerns. These walk away from prayer finding it shallow or meaningless primarily because the focus is always upon their own thoughts and desires.

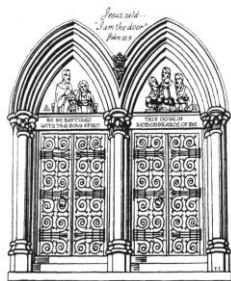
I have found the very same complaints in my own life of prayer. Most of the time, I feel way too distracted to pray about much of anything. The clock is merciless when it comes to finding some time alone or in quietude. Also, there have been times when I have realized that the only things for which I pray are those things which concern me directly or those whom I love. In those dry spells, it does feel quite meaningless and futile to pray.

But this is not what Christ intended for us when he said: ‘This, then, is how you should pray ...’ With that short sentence in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus introduces his disciples to the prayer that we have come to know as the Lord’s Prayer. Certainly, Jesus intends his followers to offer themselves to God in prayer. Just how do we do this in a truly meaningful and disciplined way? I would suggest to anyone interested that reading through the Book of Psalms (also called the Psalter), is a good exercise in learning to pray. Many of the psalms are actually prayers or calls to prayer.

When you’re feeling ‘stuck’ in your prayer life, pick up the Book of Psalms and begin to read ... this too is an act of prayer.

Grace and Peace,
-Martin

OUR CHURCH FAMILY NEWS



PRAYER LIST: Ben Addis, Charlie Andrews, Jeret Baker, Lisa Bulger, Art Caramella, Juan Carlos, George Chambers, Sandy Cole, Dan & Ginger Collier, Tracy Confer, Beverly Courtney, William Courtney, Edna Mary Cox, Kaitlyn Daniels, Diane Demorest, Chris Dieck, Lorelai Difonso, Bob Dittman, Karen Dubosky, Michael Felice, Richard Gracik, Heather H., Edgar and Joanne Highberger, Gretchen Highberger, Lucas James, Lee Jamison, Jennifer Kubit, Paige Lucas, Karen M., Marge Machesney, Kelsey Magness, George Maser, Joanne McIlhattan, Rick & Jan McNerny, Janet Metzela, Keenan Miller, Gretchen Nelson, John Noel, Dan P., Nancy Pallitta, Kathleen Piekut, Gerry Pricer, Jamie R., Colton Reid, Judy Rugh, Ron Russell, Julia Saul, Gene Sember, Barbara Sill and family, Christina Sinddorf, Nancy Skrot, Bob & Nancy Stahl, Eileen Stefl, Molly Stienbiser, Crystal Stone, Scott Sucke, Isabelle Taylor, Lynda Turin, Linda & Tom Turin, Matthew J. Washil, Don Whipkey, Sue Woodward and Marsha Zoruba.

BIRTHDAYS: Each month we observe the VIP’s and fourscore or more birthdays: If you are 80 or older and would like to be listed in the monthly newsletter, please contact the church. February birthdays are:

Chung-Hae Kim, 6805 Walnut Branch Lane, Apt 523, Charlotte, NC 28277 (17)

IN MEMORIAM: Lois Ann Watson, January 18, 2024

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS since December 18, 2023 – Chung Hae Kim, Pershing Children, Ted Dom

Stewardship Report

Total Disbursements through December 31, 2023	\$723,982.13
Total Receipts through December 31, 2023	\$671,453.69
Total Income over/under Expense	(\$52,528.44)

If you would rather receive an electronic version of the First News, please let us know at fpcgreensburg@comcast.net and we’ll add you to our email list and remove you from the paper copy list. Then you will receive the First News through your computer rather than the mail box, but you’ll have to let us know!! A copy of the latest First News can also be found at our website: www.firstpresbyteriangreensburg.com



Worship: Sundays 10 a.m.
Sunday morning worship services will be both in-person and by technological means (Simulcast, YouTube, the church’s website.) Join us for live simulcast service at: www.facebook.com/firstpresbyteriangreensburg.
Archived service at: www.firstpresbyteriangreensburg.com/worship video.

First Fridays: News & Updates: If you haven’t been receiving our First Fridays: News & Updates, please call Kim at the church office (724-832-0150) to verify and/or update your correct email address.

For Such a Time as This: A Daily Devotional – By ten o’clock in the morning each day, Monday through Friday, Martin posts a new devotion for the day. Please join in the practice of daily devotion for such a time as this.

Have You Considered Sponsoring a Fellowship Hour? Provide 6 dozen baked goods or \$35 donation to cover the costs. Use the sign-up sheet on the Dining Room bulletin board or call the church office. Your contributions and participation are greatly appreciated.

Nursery Open During Sunday School and Worship : Children, Birth – PreK :
Drop off care is now available Sunday mornings with Ms. Gali! Pack your child’s drinks and snacks and drop them off for the fun! Gali is looking forward to meeting you and your children!



Do you wish to give online?
To set up your own recurring donations, either visit the church website www.firstpresbyteriangreensburg.com or scan the QR code with your smart phone, or contact the church office for help. Your support of Christ’s church in this place is greatly appreciated!



THE PASTORAL CARE COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD OF DEACONS OVERSEES A VIP PROGRAM. VIPs are members of our congregation who are unable to attend church services on a short-term or long-term basis. The Board of Deacons, along with the pastor, provides these members with visits, phone calls, cards and reminders of their connection to our congregation, including the Sacrament of Communion, as requested. Please contact the church office (724) 832-0150 for more information and/or to request that you, or someone you know, be added to our list.

THE DEACONS ARE COLLECTING FOR THE BLACKBURN CENTER – They are collecting new women's pajamas and sweatsuits, in sizes Small, Medium, Large, XL, and XXL, for the local center that provides housing and other services to promote the well-being and safety of individuals impacted by violence. These pajamas and sweat suits would be provided to women presenting to local hospitals and police stations due to experiencing violence. Often, the clothes the women were wearing at the time of an assault are collected as evidence and a clean set of clothes may provide comfort. You may place your donations in the box located in the Narthex. Thank you so much for helping women in our community who have been affected by violence.



Sundays, February 4 & 18

The Deacons cordially invite the congregation to gather for Fellowship Hour twice in February! Join us in the Dining Room immediately following worship for Coffee, Baked Goods AND Fellowship! Coffee provided by the Millers of 19 Coffee! If you would like to sponsor a Fellowship Hour, please use the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the Dining Room or call the church office.



Lenten Services 2024

Ash Wednesday - February 14 – 7:00 pm.

Our Lenten journey always begins with our Ash Wednesday evening service. Held in the main sanctuary of the church and through Simulcast, YouTube and the church's website. Join us to begin this season of repentance and hope.

Sundays in Lent ...

Lent 1 – February 18 – 10:00 a.m.

Lent 2 – February 25 – 10:00 a.m.

Lent 3 - March 3 – 10:00 a.m. - COMMUNION SERVICE

Lent 4 – March 10 – 10:00 a.m.

Daylight Savings Time begins on Sunday, March 10

Lent 5 – March 17 – 10:00 a.m.

Palm Sunday - March 24 - 10:00 a.m.

Mid-Week Lenten Services:

Wednesdays in Lent – 7:00 p.m.

During the Wednesdays in Lent, we will gather for a thirty-minute service of prayer, meditation, music and a homily. These services will be held in the sanctuary and simulcast as well. Wednesdays, February 21, 28, March 6, 13, and 20.



STEWARDSHIP

Managing God's Gifts To Us

MAKING PLACES FOR TREASURES IN YOUR HEART - FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Consider the following from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount in which he tells his listeners: 'For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.' A good spiritual discipline for any member of a congregation is to take a long, hard look at where one's funds are placed. Whatever we spend on the most, there is where our hearts are. Following Jesus Christ entails a serious engagement with the resources that God has granted us and the needs of Christ's ministry in this world. 'Where is my heart?' is a good question that we should all be asking ourselves.

-Martin Ankrum

OLD-FASHIONED POTLUCK: SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25 - AFTER WORSHIP- The Stewardship Committee is at it again, bringing back a bit of nostalgia with our all-church after worship potluck. Like all good potlucks, we need your help. Please consider signing up in advance and giving us a 'heads up' as to what you will be contributing ... the categories include: Casserole, Salad, Side-dish, or Dessert. The drinks will be provided as well as the table service. We'll gather immediately following worship on Sunday, February 25 in the Fletcher Room. Potlucks are a lot like congregations in general; we are all called to contribute something from our gifts and talents so that all may be filled. Please let us know by either signing up during upcoming Fellowship Hours, calling the church office or send us an email at fpcgreensburg@comcast.net. **SIGN UP TODAY!!!!**



YOUTH GROUP NEWS

GAMES WITH RICK, Sunday, February 18 from 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. in the youth room. The kids play characters and interact with the Eberon game world, guided by Rick Crowe. They work together to solve problems and overcome obstacles in a fantasy world setting that blends magic and machine. They've defeated pirates, saved a town by rescuing a dragon and become movie stars. If cooperative storytelling sounds like fun to you, then this may be your scene! We meet in the youth room.

"THE CHOSEN" – Join us on Saturday, February 10 at 3:00 p.m. for Season 4, Episodes 1-3 and then again on Saturday, February 24 at 3 p.m. for Episodes 4-6. We'll meet at AMC Theatre at Westmoreland Mall. Please RSVP to Jennifer Slater by February 7 for Episodes 1-3 and by February 21 for Episodes 4-6, at 724-217-3448.

UPCOMING EVENTS: Weekend lock-in; Fellowship hour hosting; "Bottoms Up" Diaper Bank Drive; Escape Room and Police Appreciation gifts.

Confirmation

THE 2024 CONFIRMATION CLASS FORMING IN FEBRUARY; Each year, FPC is pleased to assist the young people of our church become confirmed members of the congregations. Typically, those in the Confirmation Class are in the seventh or eighth grade, though any child of a member of the church who is in Middle School or High School would be eligible. The class will meet on the fourth Sunday of February, March and April, and the third Sunday of May from 1 – 2:30 p.m. The class will be received into membership on the first Sunday of June. Dr. Ankrum teaches the Confirmation Class ... please call the church office for more information.



Tweens/Teens: Feasting on the Word invites learners into the rhythm of the church by studying passages from the Revised Common Lectionary. February’s Surprise!, Mountains and Valleys, God’s Covenant, and Winning by Losing.

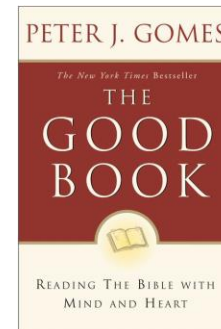
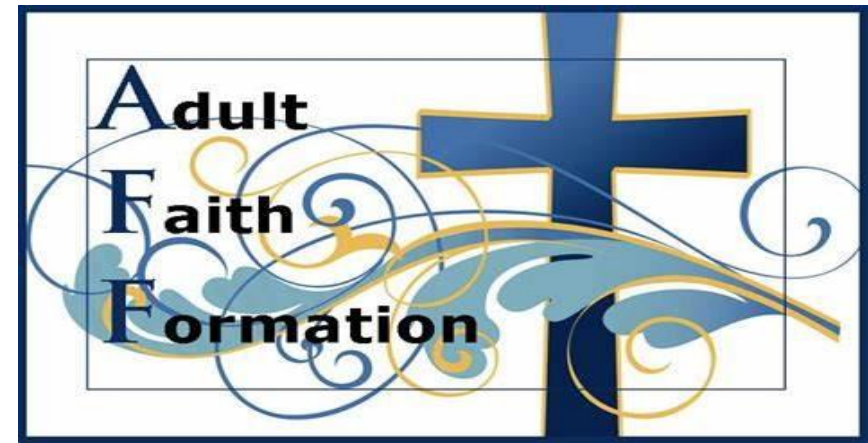
Children: Spark Lectionary builds biblical literacy by diving deep into Bible stories in a workshop-style setting. February’s Jesus Heals, Transfiguration, and Noah’s Ark.

“Lenten Prayer Practices”

Coming Soon! Check your mailbox the week before Ash Wednesday for this year’s children’s Lenten devotional Lenten Prayer Practices to arrive. It contains 5 small activities designed for family fun and to enhance your family’s Lenten prayer routine.

“Praying Through Holy Week”

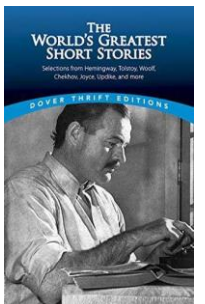
Save the Date! Join your friends at church on Good Friday, March 29, for the children’s program, Praying Through Holy Week. Participate in art, science, and food activities and learn new ways to pray throughout the Easter season.



ADULT FORUM ON SUNDAY MORNING meets on **Sundays at 9 a.m.** in the PW Lounge on the first floor of the CE Wing. We are reading and discussing a wonderful book written by the late Rev. Peter Gomes: ***The Good Book: Reading the Bible with Mind and Heart.*** Gomes unpacks the scriptures for his reader, covering how the Bible is often misunderstood by Christians and others alike. The book helps to open up our hearts and minds to the profound words of scripture that give us comfort and challenges our faith as well.

MEN’S BREAKFAST BIBLE STUDY - EVERY WEDNESDAY MORNING AT 7:30 A.M.: This Bible study has many wonderful ingredients: warm fellowship, good friendships, open discussions, great breakfasts AND the opportunity to grow in faith together. We gather every Wednesday morning at 7:30 a.m. at Eat n’ Park across from Westmoreland Mall. We are currently studying the book of Joshua.

THE LAST TUESDAY BOOK CLUB will meet Tuesday, February 27 at 7 p.m. in the PW Lounge on the first floor of the CE Wing. This year, all the stories will be taken from ***The World’s Greatest Short Stories***, Dover Thrift Edition. In February we will read and discuss the following: Rainer Maria Rilke – How Old Timofei Died with a Song; Virginia Woolf – The Mark on the Wall and Franz Kafka – The Hunger Artist.



THRU THE BIBLE CLASS will meet Monday, February 26 at 7 p.m. in the Assembly Room of the church building. We have been working our way through the Bible from cover to cover and will be discussing Paul’s Letter to the Colossians. The class lasts just an hour and is led by Dr. Ankrum. Please join us for a lively discussion!

Circle Meetings for Presbyterian Women



ABIGAIL CIRCLE MEETS WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14 @ 10:00 A.M.

... in the Refectory off the church dining room., The 2023-24 Horizons Bible Study is: **Sacred Encounters: The Power and Presence of Jesus Christ in Luke-Acts** by Olive Mahabir with Suggestions for Leaders by Wilma Angelica Quiñonez Cubero. Anyone wanting to order the study guide, please call Gretchen Lowry, 724-838-9726. All women are welcome.

For more information about this study visit the PW website:

<https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/product/sacred-encounters-english-edition>.

AN OPEN INVITATION to members and friends of First Presbyterian Church to join the Monday Morning Sewing Circle that meets at

9:00 a.m. Monday mornings in the Fletcher Room. You don't have to be an expert tailor to hem the cotton flannelette baby receiving blankets or to sew the "little dresses for Africa". If you are interested, please contact Sylvia Carlson at 724-755-2288 for information. Membership at this church is not a requirement. Anyone is welcome.

THANK YOU - Words will never adequately express our gratitude for all of the support we have received from everyone at First Presbyterian Church. When Lucas was diagnosed with leukemia just over two years ago, there was an immediate and overwhelming outpouring of love and prayer, and it has continued to this day. Your meals, gifts, cards, messages, and calls helped us find our way out of despair. When we couldn't find the words, you lifted us up in prayer. As Lucas completes treatment and this part of his cancer journey, we don't know what lies ahead, but we know that he goes with God. Thank you for walking this path with us. You have truly been a light in the darkness.

-Sincerely, Don, Megan, and Lucas James



THE GATHERING – TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2024: 11:30 A.M. – 1 P.M.

THE BOULEVARD RESTAURANT

JERRY CUMER – THE HISTORY OF CALLIGRAPHY

On the second Tuesday of each month, we reserve space at The Boulevard, a local restaurant and invite those who are available to join us for lunch, conversation and a bit of education. We'll hear from folks that you already know and folks that you haven't yet met. The topics will be informative and helpful to our faith and some will be just fun and allow us to learn a bit more about each other. **We'll hear from Jerry Cumer, our Church Librarian, who will speak on 'The History of Calligraphy.'** **Contact the church office by noon Monday, February 12 to reserve your space.**

THE CORNERSTONE GROUP INVITES YOU TO JOIN THEM ... We will be dining at Baldy's on Main St. in Greensburg on February 10, at 5:00 p.m. For those that think Baldy's only serves pizza and wings, take a look at their on-line menu! Baldy's offers an assortment of salads, pasta dishes, burgers and a wide variety of subs. Since the parking and seating is limited, we can only take reservations for 10 people, so those that are interested should sign up before February 6 by calling Sandy Beauregard (724-834-2247 or 724-331-3457) or emailing her (sandbeau1@verizon.net) to reserve your spot.



EASTER LILIES – The Worship Committee will once again be taking orders for Easter Lilies in the coming months. The lilies will be \$15.00 each and may be placed "In Memory Of" and/or "In Honor Of" your loved ones. Please watch the bulletins and March First News for the order sheet. Lilies may be picked up following the Easter Sunday Service.