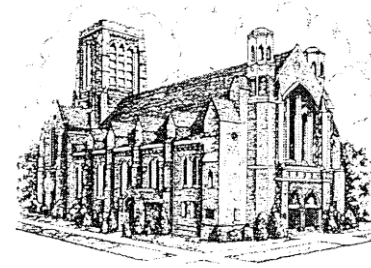


First Presbyterian Church
300 South Main Street, P. O. Box 1038
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September 2024

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 OCTOBER: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 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
Lori Gerendash, Jeanine Solo, Allisa Zorn, FPC Preschool Teachers
Garrett Kalinowski and Jay McCann, Assistant Sextons
Henry Forehan, Housekeeper
Galiana Clark, Nursery Attendant
Edgar B. Highberger, Minister of Music, Emeritus

A Reformed 'Habit of Mind'

Brian Gerrish, famed Reformed theologian, once delivered a lecture detailing five Reformed habits of the mind and concluded with this: **For my fifth and last note of the Reformed habit of mind, I come back to the full historic title: 'the churches reformed according to the Word of God.'** There surely is the foremost note of all, and even if it sounds terribly self-satisfied, and may even *be* self-satisfied, it has to have the final say.

Gerrish quotes a historic Lutheran source, the Formula of Concord, in his address. Presbyterians find the same sentiment rendered in the Book of Order, first in its Latin original and then in translation. Either way, the stress in the statement is that the church is always in the midst of reformation, always about the business of being transformed and reformed not by the changing contexts of human life, but rather by the very Word of God.

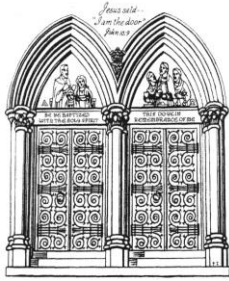
For some, this might be seen as a challenge to their faith. Some believe that once the scriptures have been read and heard, that is enough. There is ample opportunity to glean the truth of God's Word in scripture. Presbyterians, however, believe that though the Word of God does not change, our understanding grows, matures, and transforms over time, through the work of the Spirit. The Word of God cleaves our hearts and transforms our minds each time that we read it. Each time we open the pages of the Bible, it is the Word of God contained therein that might actually be used by the Holy Spirit to transform and reform our lives, our thinking, our action, and our faith. The Reformed hold this as central. Our growth and maturation are not ultimately under our control; they are dependent upon God's gracious work in us.

Gerrish puts it amazingly plain: **The Word is not something we discover, or read about, or decide to listen to. It comes – comes to us even when we are not listening, would rather not hear it, and would just as soon not have to talk about it. ... And what is this Word? For us it is the gospel – the good news that the Word has come, come in human flesh.**

Our faith and trust in God lead us to trust that God is at work even in the way we read, receive, interpret, and enact the scriptures. We do not control the Word of God, rather it changes us, transforms us and causes us to add our voices in witness to God's great love demonstrated in Jesus Christ.

See you in church, -Martin

OUR CHURCH FAMILY NEWS



PRAYER LIST: Nick Behun, Lisa Bulger, Wayne Clemens, Sandy Cole, Dan & Ginger Collier, Beverly & William Courtney, Edna Mary Cox, Bob Dittman, Karen Dubosky, Michael Felice, Duffy Greba, Edgar and Joanne Highberger, Gretchen Highberger, Lucas James, Lee Jamison, Weston Johnson, Heather Jones, Don Kemerer, Marge Machesney, George Maser, Joanne McIlhattan, John Noel, Dan P., Nancy Pallitta, Kathleen Piekut, Victoria Piekut, Gerry Pricer, Judy Rugh, Marnie Abraham Russell, Nancy Skrot, Mary Smith, Jerry Sohick, Nancy Stahl, Eileen Stefl, Crystal Stone, Brooke Stutzman, Sonny & Jo Thomas, Lynda Turin, Linda & Tom

Turin, Doug Wessling, Don Whipkey.

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. September birthdays are:

Isabelle Taylor, 8 Garden Center Drive, Apt. 113, Gbg (10)
Mary Mills, 8 Garden Center Dr., Apt. 102, Gbg (14)
Linda Wineman, P O Box 211, Delmont (22)
Eleanor Mitinger, 4953 Cline Hollow Road, Apt. 142, Murrysville, 15668 (24)
Jean Bunting, 219 Washington St., Locust Grove, VA 22508 (25)

IN MEMORIAM: Arthur Caramella, August 9, 2024
Shirley Rozik, August 12, 2024
Eleanor McCamant, August 15, 2024

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS since July 24, 2024 - Robin S. Jennings, Scott L. and Gretchen K. Brown, Lowell K. Harman

Stewardship Report

Total Disbursements through July 31, 2024	\$432,262.94
Total Receipts through July 31, 2024	\$342,231.39
Total Income over/under Expense	(\$90,031.55)

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 at 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 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!

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.

Do you wish to give online?



To set up your own recurring donations, either visit the church website or scan the QR code with your smart phone, or contact the church office for help. *Starting August 31, 2024, the church will accrue a monthly fee for those who give by credit or debit card. The church currently also incurs a 2.84% fee plus 45 cents on every credit or debit card donation. These fees are not incurred for the church for donations routed through Vanco from a checking account.* Your support of Christ's church in this place is greatly appreciated!



STEWARDSHIP

Managing God's Gifts To Us

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

You have heard from the lectern some of the thoughts of our Stewardship committee about these verses and you've read some thoughts about this as well in the monthly newsletter. All of which have come from the perspective of dedicated, devoted and gifted members of our church. Now, I wish to share with you my thoughts on stewardship in general – from the perspective of a pastor.

A pastor is not a fundraiser or a development officer, though amongst the many things that pastors are called upon to do is to interpret the gospel of God's grace and love in terms of sharing resources, giving, and gratitude. I have attempted to do such in many forums including preaching, teaching, and common conversations. It is possibly a bit different perspective from others in the congregation, but the thoughts of the pastor on such an important subject certainly have a place in our discourse about good stewardship of our resources.

I like very much what Craig Barnes, retired President of Princeton Seminary, wrote about such things: **[When] the church board becomes anxious about the budget that's in the red, the pastor cannot react anxiously by taking on the role of a fund-raiser who fixes the problem. What is called for are the strange poetic statements to the congregation, that it needs to give its money not because the church has needs, but because we need to be givers. 'Fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be, which you have provided?' (Luke 12:20)**

It is my honor and privilege to deliver such 'strange poetic statements' that would hopefully cause us all to see more clearly the need that we have to give, rather than any perceived needs that the church budget might evoke in us. If we get that we need to be givers, then we comprehend something that is truly at the heart of the gospel. That is really what is at the heart of what a pastor does in terms of budgets, deficits, stewardship campaigns and efforts to more fully fund the ministry of the people of God. That is really where our treasure should be, in the giving that we are able to do by the grace of God.

-Rev. Dr. Martin R. Ankrum



Deacon Ministry

Fellowship Hour: Sundays, September 1 & 15

The Deacons cordially invite the congregation to gather for Fellowship Hour! 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.

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.

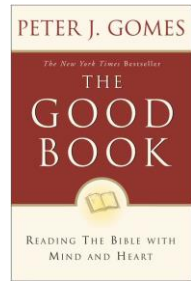
PHOTO DIRECTORY - It has been a while since we, as a church, have done an updated photo directory. The deacons have considered a few options and *Instantchurchdirectory.com* will be our new resource for the directory. As technology has made membership from a distance a reality over the past few years, this will allow everyone to participate in the new directory. Families will have the option to upload and change their own photos and the deacons can help those that need assistance with the platform. The church's website will provide a link to the app and is *only available to our members and is password protected*. There will be an option to have a printed directory for those who prefer one in hand. We are working to get the directory set up and ready and will keep everybody updated when it becomes available.

ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY CLEAN UP Volunteers are wanted for the deacons' fall highway clean-up initiative in early October, either the first or second Saturday of the month, along Route 119 from near Lynch Field north for about 1.9 miles. The date will be determined at the deacon's Sept. 10 meeting. Further information will be announced in the October newsletter and church bulletins. For additional information, contact Joe Napsha at 724-454-3517 or jnapsha@triblive.com.

faith Formation



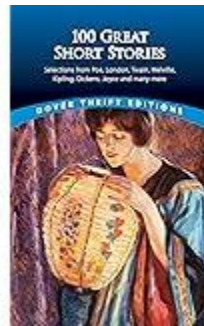
MEN'S BREAKFAST BIBLE STUDY - EVERY WEDNESDAY MORNING AT 7:30 A.M.: This Bible study has many wonderful ingredients: warm fellowship, good friendships, open discussions, great breakfasts AND the opportunity to grow in faith together. We gather every Wednesday morning at 7:30 a.m. at Eat n' Park across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



ADULT FORUM ON SUNDAY MORNING will resume on September 15! We meet **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.

THE LAST TUESDAY BOOK CLUB will meet **September 24 at 7 p.m.** in the PW Lounge on the first floor of the CE Wing. We will be reading short stories from *100 Great Short Stories: Dover Thrift Edition*, which can be obtained through Amazon. In September, we will be discussing:

Daniel Defoe's 'The Apparition of Mrs. Veal'; Washington Irving's 'The Devil and Tom Walker' and Charlotte Bronte, 'Napoleon and the Spectre.'



THRU THE BIBLE CLASS will meet **Monday, September 30 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 the Letter to the Hebrews. The class lasts just an hour and is led by Dr. Ankrum. Please join us for a lively discussion!

Sunday School

Rally Day Breakfast: September 8 – 9 a.m. – Fletcher Room

You are invited to this Christian Education Committee sponsored Fellowship Event! Mark your calendar with updated Sunday school times and changes. See the curriculum. Meet the teachers. Learn about musical opportunities for children and youth. Enjoy a continental breakfast. See you there!

Grow With Us! – Sunday School Starting September 15



friends.

New Time! Children (PreK-Grade 5): Classes held during worship service. The 2024/2025 children's Sunday school curriculum follows the Spark lectionary Children's Church series. Sunday school lessons will connect children with bible stories heard in worship and build a better understanding through age-appropriate activities with their

Youth (Grade 6-Grade 12): 9 - 9:45 a.m. – 1st Floor Youth Room.

The 2024/2025 youth curriculum is Feasting on the Word which follows the revised common lectionary. Feasting on the Word introduces biblical stories in new and creative ways, builds community through age-appropriate learning activities, challenges learners to put their faith in action and grow in their self-understanding as Christians, and prepares learners for the worship of God.

NEW SCHEDULE FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL STARTING SEPTEMBER 15 The Christian Education Committee is excited to announce a change in time for Sunday School classes this fall. All Sunday School classes from kindergarten to fifth grade will take place during the church service. (Classes for grades 6-12 will remain at 9:00 a.m.) Children will be taken to the Sunday School room following the children's sermon. We will conclude at the end of the service. Parents will collect their children following the service and before going to Fellowship Hour. The committee hopes that this change will increase opportunities to share and discuss God's word with our children. The new schedule is as follows:

9:00 a.m. – Adult Forum

9:00 a.m. – Youth Sunday School

10:15 a.m. Kindergarten – Fifth Grade Sunday School*

11:15 a.m. – Music for Children and Youth – 3rd Floor Music Room

*The children will start in worship in the sanctuary and then be dismissed to their class following a Children's Sermon



OLD-FASHIONED POTLUCK: SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29 - AFTER WORSHIP- Help our Stewardship Committee bring back a bit of nostalgia with our first all-church after worship potluck in some time! 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, September 29 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!!!!**

THE CORNERSTONE GROUP INVITES YOU TO JOIN THEM ... Saturday, September 14 at 5 p.m. We will be dining at Juniper Grill on Route 22 in Murrysville. This restaurant is a favorite of our group and we hope to see you there. Please sign-up by September 11 by calling Sandy Beauregard (724-834-2247 or 724-331-3457), emailing her at sandbeau1@verizon.net or during Fellowship Hour, to reserve your spot.

HOMEcoming 2024 – SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15 - During the 10 a.m. worship service we will honor the members of our church who have been a part of the congregation for fifty or more years! Please join us that Sunday morning for the celebration!! Afterwards, please join us in the Dining Room for fellowship hour.

THE GATHERING – TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10: 11:30 A.M. – 1 P.M. THE BOULEVARD RESTAURANT – 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. Karen Cole, co-author of A History of Pittsburgh Jazz, will be our speaker. Please call the church office by Monday, September 9 at 12 noon to reserve your spot!!

NEW NURSERY HOURS! – Starting September 8 - 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. – Drop off care is available in the FPC nursery each Sunday morning for children Birth through Pre/K. Gali Clark is excited to welcome FPC's youngest members and friends for a time of play, music, fun, or a nap! For safety reasons, caregivers are asked to provide their own drinks and snacks for their child. Registration forms can be found in the nursery. See you there!

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING SET FOR SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

THE SESSION OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH of Greensburg, Pa., of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), in accord with its Bylaws, hereby calls a Congregational Meeting for Sunday, September 29, 2024, following a service of worship held at 10:00 a.m., in the Sanctuary of the Church, for the purpose of receiving the report of the Church Officers Nominating Committee and electing a new slate of officers. The following are the current nominees:

Ruling Elder - Trustee - Class of 2028: Doug Stone, Rick Terrill

Ruling Elder - Class of 2028: Sarah Hines, Shelley Fazi, Jeff Hite, Chris Terrill, Dr. Jim Kellam

Deacons - Class of 2028: Linda Dickson, Matt Dudik, Matt Cohen, Gretchen Lowry, Shannan Kellam, Marquis Smith III, Peggy Taylor

The Session wishes to thank the member of the Church Officer Nominating Committee: Ray Tietsworth, Ruling Elder-Trustee, chair; Cynthia Myrge, Ruling Elder; Deacons: Linda Dickson, Peggy Taylor; At-Large Members: Jerry Cumer, Nick Fazi, Jan McNerny, Julia Schaming, Christian Slater.

Circle Meetings for Presbyterian Women



ABIGAIL CIRCLE MEETS WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11 @ 10:00 A.M. ... in the Refectory off the church dining room., The 2024-25 Horizons Bible Study is: **Let Justice Roll Down: God's Call to Care for Neighbors and All Creation** by Patricia K. Tull. Anyone wanting to order the study guide, please call Gretchen Lowry, 724-838-9726 or Karol Elmore, 724-771-6558. For more information about this study visit the PW website: <https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/product/sacred-encounters-english-edition>. All women are welcome.

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. We will start meeting again on September 9. 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.



WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY, SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6 - It's not about the table, whether it's square or round. It's not about the chairs—plastic or wooden. It's not about the food, although it helps if it has been prepared with love. A good meal is enjoyed when we turn off the TV and our cell phones and concentrate on those we're with.

We have been invited to such a meal when we come together as Christians to celebrate the Lord's Supper. It's not about the church, if it's big or small. It's not about the type of bread. It's about turning off our thoughts from our worries and concerns and focusing on Jesus.

When was the last time you enjoyed being at the Lord's Table? Come join us Sunday, October 6 as we celebrate World Communion Sunday, first in the Sanctuary during worship and afterward at Fellowship Hour where we will reprise the Breads and Spreads celebration with breads of the world and accompanying toppings. This event is hosted by the Worship Committee, and all items served will be gluten free, as is our Communion bread. Taste and see that the Lord Is Good.

MUSIC MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

With vacations wrapping up and school beginning again it's time to settle into the rhythm of fall. Programming is gearing up at church and there are ample opportunities for you to join in the music ministry here at FPC. Perhaps you'd like to try singing or playing handbells? Maybe you want to dust off the band instrument in your closet and start playing again? Perhaps you want to expose your children to the joys of instruments and music? Take a look at the programming opportunities and see if there is a place you'd like to explore. Feel free to contact Jeff if you have any questions.

Chancel Choir is open to adults and youth. Reading music is helpful but not necessary for those willing to learn. Rehearsals begin on Thursday, September 5 at 7:30 p.m. in the choir room. The choir sings in worship on a regular basis September - May.

Kirk Ringers Handbell Choir for adults and older youth who read music. Kirk ringers meet on Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. and the first rehearsal is September 12

FPC Wind Ensemble begins its season with their first rehearsal on Thursday, September 5 at 5:30 in the Sanctuary.

Music for Children and Youth meet Sundays at 11:15 a.m. after worship beginning September 15

Please reach out if you have questions or interest in participating in any of these opportunities.

Jeff Jones, Minister of Music

CHILDREN AND YOUTH MUSIC OPPORTUNITIES

Do you play an instrument in the school band or orchestra or study privately? Why not consider participating in the Gathering Music that occurs prior to each Sunday's worship service? There are opportunities for playing percussion, learning hand-chimes and singing. Come make music with your friends. We rehearse at 11:15 a.m. in the third floor Music Room. The schedule is:

September 15, 22 and 29 – Rehearse

October 6 – Participate in Worship; October 13, 20 and 27 – Rehearse

November 3 – Participate in Worship; Nove 10, 17 and 24 – Rehearse

December 1 – Rehearse; December 8 – Participate in Worship AND Rehearse;

December 15 - Participate in Worship AND Rehearse; December 24 – Participate in Worship