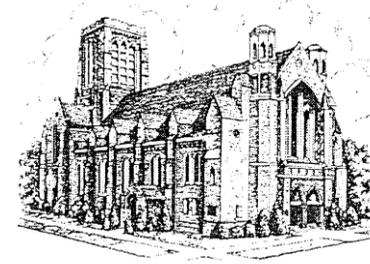


First Presbyterian Church
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August 2021

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

We Do It All the Time

I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.

-From Paul's Epistle to the Galatians

Paul wrote to the churches in Galatia in order to correct some misunderstandings of the gospel that have crept into that congregation in his absence. From what I've read in a brilliant commentary by Charles B. Cousar, the misunderstanding prevalent in Galatia may still be with us:

[Paul] perceives how completely his readers have misunderstood the heart of the Christian faith. They are working at the wrong end of the relationship with God – what *they* can do to assure inclusion in God's family; what *they* can do to cope with the power of flesh; what *they* can do to fulfill the law. The answer lies at the other end – what *God* has done in Christ and how he has done it. 'Grace,' a word occurring at six points in the letter, is not a 'thing,' even a 'thing' God gives. Rather it describes the manner in which God gives himself, the personal relationship he establishes with his people.

I think that Dr. Cousar has it exactly right: the problem comes when we become convinced that faith is really all about us and what we can do in order to be right with God or be at peace with God or find some kind of comfort in this life or 'safe-landing' in the life to come. The Christian faith, the faith that Paul taught the Galatians, emphasizes instead what GOD has DONE in Jesus Christ FOR us and for the world. Again, Dr. Cousar:

A piety which turns into anxiety about one's own (or another's) spiritual health and searches for unforgiven sins has forgotten what God has done in Christ and how he has done it. It is an example of starting at the wrong end of the relationship.

And yet, we, like the poor Galatians, do it all the time! Something to think about ...

Grace and peace,
-Martin

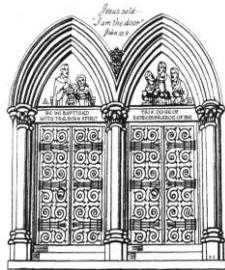
DEADLINE FOR AUGUST ISSUE: MONDAY, JULY 19, 2021
Email submissions to fpcgreensburg@comcast.net or mail to church office.

*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
Dr. John B. Salvesson, Minister of Music / Organist
Wendy McCann, Interim Sunday School Coordinator
Lu Ann Peters, Financial Secretary
Kimberly A. Stoner, Executive Secretary
Keith L. Huey, Sexton
Shannon Reid, FPC Preschool Teacher & Director
Blythe Graft, Allisa Zorn, FPC Preschool Teachers
Richard P. Fabery & Matthew Cohen, Assistant Sextons
Mr. Edgar B. Highberger, Minister of Music, Emeritus

OUR CHURCH FAMILY NEWS



PRAYER LIST: Amy, Andrew, Autumn, Ann & Jack Bagley, Becky, Alicia & Felipe Booher, Angelo Bianco, Bill, Jean Blice, David Bolton, Ernie Brown, Lisa Bulger, Sandy Cole, Edna Mary Cox, Kaitlyn Daniels, John Depretto, Lou DeRose, Chris Dieck, Kelly Schweikert Doman, Donna, Joanne & Dennis Doyle, Eric, Irene Evans, David Fath, Michael Felice, Fran Folino, Cheri (Turin) Gail, George, Gloria, Richard Gracik, Ellen Grubb, Betty Hammer, Ted Hammer, Cidney Hawk, Joseph Hawk, Edgar and Joanne Highberger, Gretchen Highberger, Frank Hodges, Charles

Hunter, Lee Jamison, Janet, Sofoor Javid, Jean, Nancy Jobe, Nik K., Kelly, Ken and family, Anna Kostrick, Ray Kuyat, Jill Linsz, Paige Lucas, Maralynn, Marlene, Mary, George Maser, Carol Mateer, the McMillin family, Chuck McNerny, Misty, Dorothy Moore, Jim Nash, Peg & Doug Newman, Nick, Nicole, Barb Nivus, Bill Ofcansky, Denise Ohr, Mark Orris, Rose Osterberg, Joe and Nancy Pallitta, Pat Panza, Patti, the Peterson family, Chuck Phillips, Kathleen Piekut, John Pollins IV, Lynne Rain, Colton Reid, Deana & Judy Rugh, Ron Russell, Nico & Stacey Salvio, Joan Scales, Richard Schall, Oliver Schultz, Gene & Liz Sember, Barbara Sill and family, Nancy Skrot, the Ken Smith family, the Snyier family, Sharon Stoner, Janet Sutherland, Isabelle Taylor, Janet Tinkey & family, Colleen Triffanoff, Lynda Turin, Tyler, Elsie Vanetta, Ron Vorel, Sally Warmnius, Bill Washburn, Tristan Watson, Nancy Jane Whipkey, Jay and Sue Woodward, and Marsha & Mike 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. August birthdays are:

Richard Morford, 759 College Ave., Gbg (1)
Don White, 404 Shogan Drive, Gbg (3)
Betty Hammer, 302 Redmont Place, Gbg (12)
Judith Perkins, 4811 Tara View Dr., Leesburg, FL 34748 (17)
Frank Hodges, 605 Pennsylvania Blvd., Jeannette, PA 15644 (18)
Carolyn Falcon, 220 W. 4th St., Gbg (21)

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS since June 29, 2021 – Thomas and Hilda Cunningham, Carolyn Falcon, Dr. and Mrs. Juan B. Mari, Don and Becky Patterson, A. Thomas and Betty Quindlen, Pauline and Larry Freedberg, Kathy and Danny Moore, Donna Quinney Hindel, Anita Lavin Manoli



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/oh-no-i-missed-worship.

If you cannot connect via other means and would like a weekly CD recording of each Sunday's service mailed to you, please contact the office at 724-832-0150.

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.

SESSION HAS ACTED TO LIFT SOME PANDEMIC RESTRICTIONS – The Session, at its June meeting, has decided unanimously to begin to lift the pandemic restrictions that have been imposed since March 2020. Masks are no longer required in the sanctuary or other areas of the church building. **However, we encourage all persons who wish to remain masked to do so.** As well, the congregation can resume some of the traditional actions of worship, such as standing for hymn singing or hearing the benediction. **However, we encourage those who are uncomfortable standing to remain seated.** The bulletins will no longer designate areas for seating in the sanctuary, instead please feel free to sit wherever you wish and pick up a bulletin upon arriving in the sanctuary. **However, we ask you to respect the right of those who wish to maintain social distancing to do so.** Finally, changes will continue throughout the summer, such as the reappearance of the hymnals and the addition of the third hymn to the liturgy. If you have any questions, please ask a ruling-elder or Dr. Ankrum.

For Such a Time as This A Daily Devotional Rev. Dr. Martin R. Ankrum

**Join in the practice of daily devotion by
visiting the website each day.**

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 ...



Job Opportunities at FPC

If you know someone who 'fits the bill' let us know!

Position Opening: First Presbyterian Church, Greensburg PA

Youth Director – Part Time (approximately 12 hrs. per week)

The qualified candidate for this position will demonstrate a strong personal faith, substantial relational skills, organizational ability and maturity. We expect our Part-Time Youth Director to create, develop, coordinate, and administer all Youth Ministry activities for a unified Middle & High School group which meets on a weekly basis. The Youth Director will be under the general supervision of the Pastor and Christian Education Committee. All State and Federal clearances are required. Annual salary is approximately \$18,000. Please apply by sending a resume to First Presbyterian Church, PO Box #1038, Greensburg, PA 15601 or by emailing it to revankrum@hotmail.com.

NOW HIRING – NURSERY CARE ATTENDANT: The CE Committee is seeking to hire a Sunday morning Nursery Care Attendant beginning September 12, 2021.

Attendant will care for feeding, diapering and general needs of children, birth through age 5, during the Sunday school and worship hours, 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. Sundays. Duties also include maintaining a safe and healthy Christian environment and engaging in energetic positive interactions with children and their parents. Excellent pay. Applicants must *possess a* personal faith and *be* trustworthy; 16 years of age or older; *have* all required state and federal background clearances; *and* experience working with young children. Completion of, or enrollment in, early learning education programs preferred.

Stewardship Report

Total Disbursements through 6/30/21	\$302,888.48
Total Receipts through 6/30/21	\$258,782.58
Total Income over/under Expense	(\$44,105.90)

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

Adult Education Opportunities (Ongoing & Upcoming)

Men's Breakfast Bible Study Returns to Eat n' Park!! Every Wednesday Morning at 7:30



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 Paul's Epistle to the Galatians.

Last Tuesday Book Club Resumes in September!

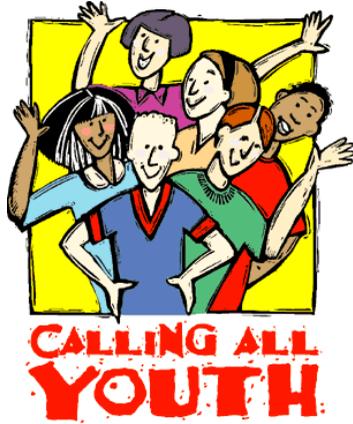
For twenty years, our church's book club has meet late in each month to join together for good discussion about good literature and faith. We meet on the last Tuesday of most month's either in the Dining Room or the PW Lounge at 7 p.m.. For this coming year, we will not be reading book-length works, but rather two or three short stories by American authors each month comparing and contrasting the works. It should be a lot of fun and provide for interesting discussion. Consider joining us starting in September! More information in coming communications.

Thru the Bible Class Picks Up Where We Left Off!



On the last Monday of every month, Dr. Ankrum holds a progressive Bible study working our way through the entire canon of scripture. We meet at 7 p.m. in the Dining Room and discuss usually a whole book of the Bible each month. In September we will be reading and discussing the Old Testament prophecy of Hosea. No biblical expertise required!

FPC YOUTH GROUP NEWS – August 2021



Mission Sunday! - August 8: 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.
Second Sunday Supper
****Special Date & Time****

We will go off our regular schedule again this month and hold youth group on the second Sunday of the month ... Why? Because we are going to help out at Second Sunday Supper! We will not be doing any of the cooking, but will help with the serving and distribution of this monthly meal. Usually, the Mission Committee produces about 230 meals each month. Come out and help others along with the rest of the youth group! If you have questions you can contact Martin at 724-787-9188

Come Join Us!!!

Games with Rick!!! - Summer Edition
Sunday, August 15: 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.
YOUTH ROOM

We've been running a D&D 5e campaign. The kids play characters and interact with the Eberron game world guided by me. The kids 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.

NOTES FROM THE LOFT

I'm exhausted. You would think that since I've had others playing the organ for two months I'd be spry and ready to go. I also want to make sure you know that's really not meant to be a complaint. It's just honesty, and as I sit to write, I'm reminded of the line "write what you know."

As most (or all of you) know, I broke my humerus bone towards the end of May. I truly thought this was a short glitch. Visions of elementary school casts that lasted four weeks or so (though I never had one) filled my mind. I'd never had a broken bone, so I didn't understand the pain, or the disorientation. Each task took re-thinking. Simple sitting and standing (let alone showering or trying to sleep) took (and still takes) a thought process. Other than noticing that I owed a whole lot of people a lot of sympathy – including some of you, I found myself scared, feeling sorry for myself, and wondering what this meant.

I'm guessing most of you, or at least some of you, have felt this way. When will the pain end? What if it doesn't? Will I get better? What should I be doing?

In all our questions, it's so easy to get caught up in the fears that sometimes we wonder where God is. Certainly the Psalmist was not shy about asking that very question. "O Lord, show forth your power." In fact, David (who is credited with the Psalms) held no punches when arguing with God about what God was doing.

Last night a friend texted me disturbed by the red moon (caused by the wildfires out west). It frightened him. Could this mean something beyond just a red moon and fires? Where is there safety.

I bet most of you have felt that way, when politics didn't go our way, or someone we loved was desperately ill, or even when we were in a dangerous situation that nobody else may have known about. It was in that friend's question that a little light went on in my head. It was just enough to remind me of a quote by St. Augustine of Hippo which translated reads "our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you." In faith I knew the answer to my questions, and my friend's question, only in Christ is there rest, only in Christ is there safety.

Will the pain of a broken arm (and the other odd body aches that show up) go away? Probably. But that's not the point – Christ has promised to be a resting place, a focal point, the one to look to no matter what, for a broken arm and a red moon are not the end of the story – the end of our story is captured so well in Romans 8:38 – 39: "³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

So, in faith, I sing the amazing text: "Jesus still lead on, till our rest be won; heavenly leader, still direct us, still support, console, protect us, till we safely stand in the promised land." – Nicolaus Zinzendorf

Peace be with you, and may you know daily the rest given by Christ Jesus our Lord.
John Salvesson, Minister of Music



The Stewardship Committee is pleased to share with the congregation the next generation of Shared Hearts statements from the members of our church. The committee contacted folks within the congregation and asked them to share with the membership what stirs their hearts to respond to God here at First Presbyterian. Here are a few of those we have already received:

In the recent months I've dealt with the surgery and pain of a broken elbow. I didn't share this info with Martin. I then heard God talking to me: Jill, no one loves you more than the church you've been a member of for more than 40 years. Martin shared the word and your prayers have worked. I was released by PT two weeks ago. It's a Great Day in the Kingdom. -Jill Linsz

It stirs my heart to see children and adult church members working together to serve. Whether it be a choir performance or an instrumental ensemble during the service, preparing and serving Second Sunday Supper, or working together on VBS, all allow for growth both in or kids' spiritual lives as well as the lives of the adults who work with them. -Heather Crowe

I feel truly blessed to be part of this congregation. The worship service gives me a connection to the community seeking Christ and guidance in life that I would not otherwise have. The beauty of the sanctuary gives me the feeling that this is a holy place where the word of God is spoken. While I live the life of a sinner, I can see a pathway to living a more Christ-centered life. The missions of this church reach out to the broader world in showing we can live out our faith in more than just words. -Joe Napsha

Yay! The Church Picnic is Back! Sunday, August 29 (11:30 start) Heather Lund Pavilion Mt. Odin Park



Please join your church family and friends on **Sunday, August 29** following the morning worship service for our annual Church Picnic at the Heather Lund Pavilion in Mt. Odin Park, Greensburg, just off Route 30. The Church will provide hamburgers, hot dogs, buns, condiments, and paper products. Please bring a side dish, salad or dessert to share. If you are not a cook, no worries!! We always have plenty of food and your presence will make the event a memorable one! Come meet and socialize with family and friends from the congregation. Events for the kids are being planned. If you can bring along food to share, please call the church office to indicate your contribution. We are following CDC and local guidelines in all our planning for the gathering and safe distancing of our church family and friends. This event will be held rain or shine! Please join us!!

Come Join Us! (you'll be glad you did!)

UPCOMING CHURCH EVENTS

CORNERSTONE - The Cornerstone dinners have always been an opportunity for members of the congregation to get together for fellowship away from our kitchens and dining rooms. Dinner will be August 14 at 6 p.m. at Rodney's, Irwin. If you would be interested in reserving a spot, please contact Sandy Beauregard at 724-834-2247 or sandbeau1@verizon.net. Reservations must be made by August 10 in order to ensure a spot.

LUNCH BUNCH - Come and join us at 11:30 a.m. on August 10 at the Boulevard Restaurant located at Town Square Drive off of Mt. Pleasant Road. Please email Sally Rager (sallyrager@gmail.com) by August 5, if you are interested.

Children and Youth Christian Education



Back to [Sunday]School Edition

Sunday school classes for children and youth will run September 19 – May 22. We are looking forward to greeting new faces and old in this new season!

Back to [Sunday]School Breakfast and Parent Orientation Meeting

Join us on Rally Day, September 12, at 9am for a continental breakfast and activities. Review Sunday School curriculum, fill out registration forms and permission slips, and enjoy back to school fellowship with one another.

[Sunday]School Teacher Orientation Meeting

Bring your talents to the classroom! Sunday school teachers are needed for both children (Preschool – 5th grade) and youth (6th – 12th grade) classes. Join us August 22 at 9am for a teacher orientation meeting. Meet new volunteers and get reacquainted with seasoned ones, get a sneak peek at curriculum, review the calendar, get first dibs at sign-ups, and obtain required clearance information.

For Such a Time as This A Daily Devotional Wednesday, June 23, 2021

As I continue to re-read some of my favorite portions of Barth's *Church Dogmatics*, I came across this:

For the word 'Gospel' in the New Testament has the concrete meaning of witness to the Jesus of history. There was no need for uniformity in this testimony. The Early Church never felt the need for a uniform, complete and consistent 'life of Jesus.' It was possible and even necessary, as Luke 1:1 suggests, for many 'to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us.'

There are some Christians who seem mildly annoyed that we do not have a consistent and completely exhaustive representation of Jesus Christ's life. If we can have biographies of presidents, celebrities, scholars, and personalities of all types that are thorough and cover most of the details, why are the gospels so inconsistent and incomplete?

I think Karl Barth's answer is brilliant and, better than that, honest to the situation. The early church was not as concerned with the details like our generation or the generations just before us. Just because we do not have all the details of Christ's life or because some of the gospels do not necessarily agree over some of those details, does not mean that the gospels are not worthy of our study nor authoritative to the witness that Jesus is the Christ.

Barth adds this:

Any idea of a harmony of the Gospels is quite foreign to the Early Church. That we should have Gospels 'according to St. Matthew,' 'according to St. Mark,' etc., with all their parallels, their overlappings, and contradictions, is supremely in keeping with the theme recorded, with the figure of the past who in forty days [following his resurrection] appeared to so many different people in so many different ways.

There is but one God who inspired the writers of the scriptures, but there is not but one writer. The inspiration of the Holy Spirit does not obliterate the personalities and the experiences of the writers involved. Matthew sees things his way in his gospel and John sees the same things from a differing perspective in his gospel. Yet, all voices are needed so that the full gospel might be heard!