



PRESBY BEACON



"Shining the Light of Christ in the Mon Valley"

May 2021

From the Pastor

Things seem to be looking up. We just might be seeing a light at the end of this tunnel of shutdown, separation, and fear. Many people have been vaccinated, and even the CDC is giving us permission to not wear masks outside. Along with the spring flowers, our hearts seem a bit lighter. And yet, the fear still lingers around us, a vague sense of foreboding that we can't seem to describe or escape. I'm reminded of Gideon. Do you remember his story? Israel had once again turned from the Lord, and the Midianites and Amalekites would come up and destroy the seed they planted and their crops. They also stole the Israelites' livestock, leaving "no sustenance in Israel" (Judges 6:4). God's people were impoverished and cried out to the Lord for help. Identify with them yet? It seems that we have been deprived of so many things because of the virus—fellowship, family, entertainment, and so much more—and we have, like them, continually called out to the Lord for protection and provision.

Gideon was beating out wheat in the winepress to hide it from their tormentors, when an angel of the Lord appeared to him saying, "The Lord is with you, warrior." Here was Gideon, hiding from his enemies to keep his food, from the weakest clan in Manasseh and the least in his family, wondering how this could be. God assured him this was the case, but Gideon needed a sign to believe it.

Stepping out of the "dark times" into openness and hope is hard when we have been held down for a so long, when we are focused on what we're missing. We want to believe God, to "know" that God is with us and will carry us through—after all, hasn't God done it before? And yet, we are hesitant to believe, to step out. You can read the rest of the story in Judges 6 and 7, but I want to emphasize that Gideon,

even though he believed what God said, continually put forth tests to be sure the angel of the Lord meant what was said. He brought a meal, which the angel burned with fire. So Gideon built an altar to the Lord, which he called "The Lord is Peace," then tore down the Asherah pole that was erected to the false god Baal. Next, he laid out a fleece twice asking for a sign that it was truly God. Finally, God sent a dream to Gideon's enemies, confirming to Gideon that he would be victorious.

We have become used to what has been taken from us this past year, and we might have resigned ourselves to where we find ourselves now. The fear of what could be, or that we aren't strong enough, limits our hope and our vision. But God is speaking to each of us, I believe, to find even greater blessings in what God has for us.

I hope you will read Gideon's story and ask in prayer what victory God is calling you to accomplish. Do you need assurance? Ask God for it, and it will come. Is the fear of what is or has been limiting what you feel you can do? Remember Jesus' words: ²⁹ *Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father.* ³⁰ *And even the hairs of your head are all counted.* ³¹ *So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows*" (Matthew 10:29-31). It's time to come back to worship, to get back to the work of the church, but most of all, to take what God says about us, that we are more than conquerors through Him who loves us (Romans 8:37).

Blessings!

Spring 2021 Membership Class

Pastor Glunt and several of our officers met with individuals last week, discussing our church, the PCUSA, and what it means to be a member of the local church and, particularly, First Presbyterian.

If you were unable to attend but wish to talk to Pastor Mary Kay about becoming a member of FPC, call the church office to schedule a time to meet with her. The names of those wishing to officially join the church will be brought to session on May 20th, and our new members will be presented to the congregation on Sunday, May 23rd.

Jesus said that He is the vine and we are the branches. Please consider being grafted into this part of Christ's body through church membership.

Ministerium News

Little Things for Little People—we will be staffing this month on May 27th. If you can help, contact Diane Boatman at 724-255-3177.

Food Bank—We need helpers at the food bank on Thursday, May 20th, to help bag food, to do registration, and to help load the cars in the parking lots. Please arrive by 8 a.m. to help with filling bags and by 10 a.m. to help with distribution. See Pastor Mary Kay or Sharon Zunic.

High School Baccalaureate— Fells United Methodist, Wednesday, May 26th. More information to come. Each church is asked to bring five dozen individually wrapped cookies for the reception, which will be held outside afterward. Also, if cookies have nuts, please wrap them differently and mark the box with that information. Contact Pastor Mary Kay if you can help.

The **Presby Beacon** is a monthly newsletter publication of the
First Presbyterian Church
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May Birthdays



- May 1- Steven Conger
May 4- John Conger
Kim Zunic
May 9- Marlene Amoroso
Alexia Jones
May 14- Ray Helster
Emily Bair
May 16- Kay Nelson
May 20- Janis Garofalo
May 22- Fred Aten
May 30- Aiden McWreath
May 31- Walter Nogoy

May Anniversaries

- May 8- Joe & Brenda Kennedy
May 16- Francis & Janet Garlits
May 28- Jim & Nicole Barak



Does your special day, or that of another member not appear here? Contact the church office to help us update our records.

Food and Fellowship

We will be trying again this month to restart our Food and Fellowship lunch program. We had scheduled to do so last month, but COVID 19 got in the way.

Plan to join us Tuesday, May 18th, for a take-out only luncheon serving our community and rebooting the program. We will need help cooking and distributing the lunches, and we may need help setting up a tent and tables for the distribution. If you are willing to help, talk to Jane Bonari, who is coordinating the program.

Food and Fellowship is one of the most successful outreaches of our congregation, and we are excited to be able to reach out once again. Please continue to pray that we will be able to invite our friends to join us in fellowship hall once again, as well.

May Communion Offering

On the first Sunday of each month, we take an additional, special missions offering. The Mission Committee schedules these offerings to support varied ministries throughout the year.



Domestic Violence
Services of
Southwestern PA

May's Communion offering goes to **Domestic Violence Services of Southwestern PA. DVSSP** providing safe housing and other domestic violence-related services.

News from the Choir

Seems like forever since the choir has been in church. If things go as planned, we will only have this month and next month of recorded anthems and the choir will be able to return "live" in September. As in the past, July and August will be vacation for the choir so if anyone wants to provide special music during the worship service in those months, you do not have to be a member of the choir, contact me so I can schedule it.

Almost all the choir members have had the COVID vaccine by now but we



still need to be cautious and careful. This is why the choir will not be returning until September and that is only providing the pandemic has subsided and we choir members feel safe gathering closely. Believe me, no one wants the choir to return more than I do but I am NOT going to have any one risk their health!

So, lets pray for a September return of the choir.

Donna Santoro

Youth Group News

Our youth group continues to meet, as we are able, on Sunday evenings at 6:30 p.m. Each week we play games, do projects, plan outreach, and learn more about our Savior.



Session has approved two projects for our group.

BLESSING BOX PROJECT

We will be building a Blessing Box on our church campus where the congregation can contribute non-perishables, books, underwear and socks for children, and in the winter gloves and scarves, etc.

COMMUNITY GARDEN

The youth group wants to plant a community garden on our property to supply vegetables for the food bank and the needy in our community. We are looking for the right place for the garden and hope you will be a part of the project.

If you have any extra supplies that we can use for the raised beds or for the blessing box—wood, etc.—that we can use, let us know. And if you would like to help us out, we won't say no! Listen for announcements in the bulletin.



Redd Up Camp Workday at Pine Springs Camp

Saturday, May 15

PSC needs your help! Come help get camp ready for hosting hundreds of campers this summer. Each year this day blesses the PSC ministry, and this year it will be a special blessing since it will be almost two years since summer campers were there!



The main course for lunch will be provided, and we ask that each group bring a potluck item, snacks, dessert, or salad. There will be jobs for the skilled and unskilled from raking leaves, to cleaning buildings, to helping build things!

If you have questions or would like to register to help, please call the office at 814.629.9834 or email Greg Davis, Executive Director at greg@pinesprings.org so they know how many people to plan for!

Protect the Earth, Recycle, and Support Camp for Kids!

Not sure what to do with those empty ink jet printer cartridges? Pine Springs Camp has the answer:

Pine Springs INKorporated!



Your empty ink cartridges can provide funds toward PSC's programming budget, including scholarships for campers. Bring your empty ink jet printer cartridges to church and place in the green recycling can in the fellowship hall. We will gather them together and deliver to the presbytery office. If you have questions, talk to Pastor Mary Kay or call the camp office at 814-629-9834.

PRESBYTERY NEWS

FPC Elders and Deacons: Leadership Training Opportunity

Elders and deacons, and those interested in church leadership, are vital to the work of the local congregation and its outreach. *All FPC elders and deacons are asked to attend the following workshop to strengthen our work together.* Pastor Mary Kay will be performing a wedding and will be unable to attend.

Shared Leadership in Ordered Ministries: Ruling Elders and Teaching Elders, and How We Lead Together

May 15, 2021, 12:30 to 3:30 p.m.
via Zoom video conferencing

This workshop is FREE and sponsored by The Inter-Presbytery Leadership Formation, a joint ministry of Redstone, Washington, Upper Ohio Valley, Kiskiminetas, and Pittsburgh Presbyteries. If you want to attend this workshop, please RSVP to Bobbie at Redstone Presbytery (724-837-6776) and let her know. She will forward you the login information.

Redstone Presbyterian Women Spring Retreat

Tuesday, May 18, 2021
9 am to 2:30 pm



**PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN**

*9:00 a.m. Registration and
Continental Breakfast*

*9:30-2:30 Program for the
day and a satisfying lunch*

Cost \$16 per person

*Forms at front of church and
presbytery website.*

Program: A Virtual Tour of the 5th Gospel with Rev. Norma Prina Murphy

Join Norma for a journey through the Holy Land. Gain new insights into our faith history as you travel with her to various places that are featured in the stories of Jesus. Learn how the four pilgrimages she co-led to the Holy Land impacted her faith!

“I Am a Church Member” All Church Study

During our recent membership class we did an overview of Thom Rainer’s book, “I Am a Church Member.” This small book, consisting of an introduction and six chapters, will be the focus of an all-church study beginning Sunday, June 6th, and continuing to Sunday, July 18th (excluding July 4th).



Each week Pastor Mary Kay will preach from the scriptures and themes in one of the chapters. After church each week we will gather, socially distanced, to discuss and explore the chapter, the sermon, and the challenges presented. Please study the chapter the week prior to the

date listed below and answer the questions for yourself. Pastor will be available throughout the week to further discuss the material and answer questions.

While we realize many of you will be traveling or camping some of these weekends, the worship services are streaming so you can still participate in the study and the discussion.

Copies of the book are available from the church office, purchased through the Pastor Initiative Fund. Donations to defray the cost are welcome, but not necessary. The cost is \$5.

Thank you for participating as we strengthen our own faith, our congregation, and our witness to the community and the world. If you have questions, call the pastor.

June 6th—Chapter 1, Functioning in the Body

June 13th—Chapter 2, Unifying the Body

June 20th—Chapter 3, Putting the Body First

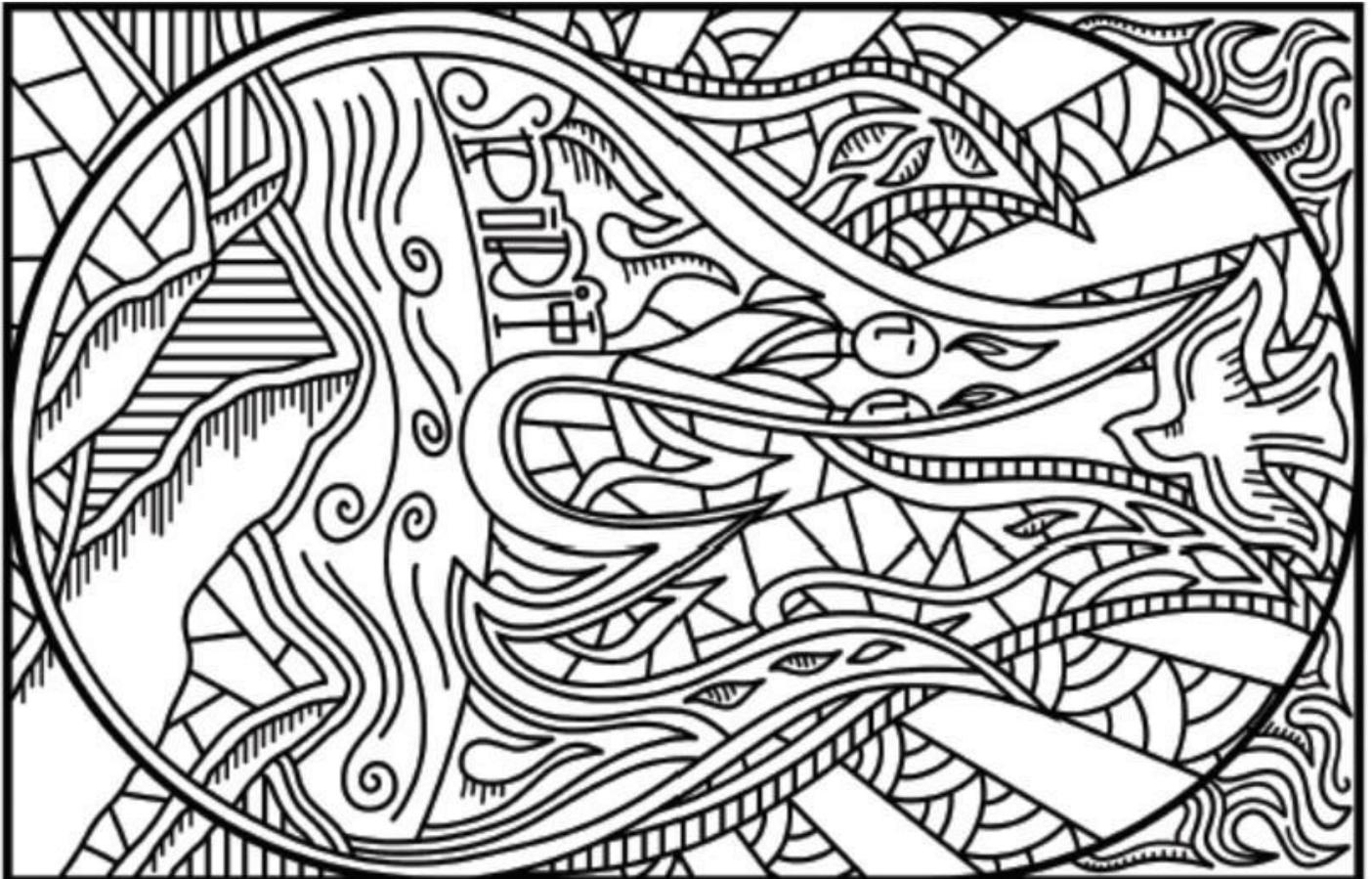
June 27th—Chapter 4, Praying for the Body

July 11th—Chapter 5, Leading Our Families

July 18th—Chapter 6, Treasuring Our Place

Pentecost Activity for Home

Color this stained-glass window for Pentecost as part of your Pentecost observance



PCUSA SPECIAL OFFERINGS

PENTECOST OFFERING

Each year the PCUSA sponsors four special offerings: One Great Hour of Sharing, Pentecost, Peace and Global Witness, and Christmas Joy. Each of these is designated for special mission projects.

On Pentecost Sunday, seven weeks after the Resurrection, we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit and the birthday of the church. The Holy Spirit remains with us still, connecting us with the church of the past, continuing to inspire the church of today, and pointing us to the church of the future. Each year, this celebration is marked by receiving the Pentecost Offering which nurtures the faith of those who are the church to come—children, youth, and young adults.

THE PENTECOST OFFERING HELPS OUR YOUTH BEGIN LIFE WITH A STRONG START—A SOLID FOUNDATION OF FAITH FORMED IN THE FIRST THIRD OF LIFE, FROM CHILDHOOD THROUGH YOUNG ADULTHOOD.

Psalm 71 testifies that a foundation of faith established during childhood helps ensure lifelong faith and service. The patterns and lessons established during these formative years continue to bear fruit throughout a person's life. By giving to the Pentecost Offering, your congregation participates in helping our children, youth, and young adults grow up to proclaim with the Psalmist, *“O God, from my youth you have taught me, and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds.”*



Of the funds received in the Pentecost Offering:

QUICK FACTS

- The first Presbyterian Youth Triennium was held in 1980.
- The Day of Pentecost is referred to as the birthday of the Church.
- Pentecost is usually represented with the color red, which symbolizes the fire of the Holy Spirit.

40%	stays in our congregation to support ministries with children and youth in our church and local community
25%	goes to Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) experience, a program to train and equip volunteers to engage in mission at more than 20 sites in the U.S. and around the world.
25%	supports ministries with youth, ages 12–18, and those called to accompany them, providing for <ul style="list-style-type: none">• youth worker training;• programs for graduating seniors exploring their next steps in faith, community, and vocation;• planning of the next <i>Presbyterian Youth Triennium</i>, a worldwide gathering of high-school-age students held every three years (next in 2022), when youth come together for a life-changing, life-giving, faith-growing gathering.
10%	supports the <i>“Educate a Child, Transform the World”</i> national initiative, the goal of which is to motivate and inspire Presbyterians to improve the quality of public education for all children.



May 2021



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Names marked with * = Birthday! ** = Anniversary!	May 23rd – New Members Received and Pentecost Offering					1 *Steven Conger
2 • Worship 10 am; • Communion • Membership Luncheon following worship • Youth Group 6:30 pm • Chimes 7:15 pm	3	4 Bible study 2 pm *John Conger *Kim Zunic	5	6	7 Chicken Pie Making Pick Up from 4-6 pm	8 **Joe & Brenda Kennedy
9 • Worship 10 am Happy Mother's Day! *Marlene Amoroso *Alexia Jones	10	11 Bible study 2 pm	12	13	14 Fellowship Hall Reserved *Ray Helster	15 Church Reserved
16 • Worship 10 am • Youth Group 6:30 pm • Chimes 7:15 pm **Francis & Janet Garlits *Kay Nelson	17 Newsletter Articles Due Deacons Meeting 7 pm	18 Take-Out Food and Fellowship Bible study 2 pm	19	20 Food Bank: Workers arrive 8 am Pick up 10:30–11:30 am Session meeting 6 pm	21	22 *Fred Aten
23 Pentecost Sunday • Worship 10 am • Youth Group 6:30 pm • Chimes 7:15 pm	24	25 Bible study 2 pm Presbytery Meeting at 6 PM	26	27	28 **Jim & Nicole Barak	29
30 Youth Sunday • 2 cents a meal *Alden McWreath	31 Memorial Day – Office Closed *Walter Nogy					

First Presbyterian Church
501 Fayette Avenue
Rostraver Twp. PA 15012

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Return Service Requested

We live and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ through worship, service, and witness. As a Christ-centered church empowered by the Holy Spirit, we seek God's plan for each of us and all of us. We welcome everyone to journey with us as we strive to grow in love, faith, trust, and discipleship.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

501 Fayette Avenue, Rostraver Twp., PA 15012

Church Offices: 511 Fayette Avenue

Office Hours: M - F: 9 am to 1 pm

Church Phone: 724- 929-7616 **Fax:** 724-929-0209

e-mail: office@fpresbv.org

Web: www.fpresbv.org



Worship with us live or in person on

Facebook: **First Presbyterian Church Belle Vernon**

You Tube: **First Pres BV**

Copy of bulletin available on our website www.fpresbv.org

Sunday

Sunday Worship: 10 am

Youth Group: 6:30 pm

Tuesday Bible Study: 2 pm