



The Vision

SEPTEMBER 2026

First Presbyterian Church • 309 Lincoln St. • Johnstown, PA 15901

Let us
HOLD FAST
the profession of
OUR FAITH
without wavering.

HEBREWS 10:23, KJV

From Pastor Danielle's Desk

Dear Church Family,

There is something about September that has always felt a little like a second New Year. The long days of summer begin to shorten. Vacations wind down. Children return to school. Calendars that were a little more relaxed suddenly begin filling up with more structure. And within the life of the church, we begin settling back into our familiar rhythms as well. But perhaps September offers us something more than simply getting back to normal. Perhaps it offers us an opportunity to begin again.



More Than Coming Back

"See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?"
— Isaiah 43:19

On September 13, we will return to our regular worship hours, Sunday School will begin again, and many of the activities that slowed down during the summer months will start finding their places on our calendars once more. Our weekly Bible Study will also return on Tuesday, September 15 at 10:30 in the Parlor. I am excited about all of it! But my hope for us this fall isn't simply that we return to our schedules. My hope is that we return intentionally to the practices that help shape us into the people God is calling us to be.

We return to worship. We return to Scripture. We return to prayer. We return to fellowship. We return to learning, serving, forgiving, and loving one another. Because church is not simply something we attend. It is a

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community in which we are continually being formed by Christ. Paul reminds us in Romans of a wonderful calling to carry with us into a new season...

“Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another” — Romans 13:8

Growing Together

One of the things I have come to appreciate deeply about our church family is that there is always room for us to grow: not simply in numbers, but in faith. Whether you have studied Scripture your entire life or you are still figuring out where Genesis is, there is a place for you here. Whether you have been part of this congregation for generations or have only recently walked through our doors, there is a place for you here.

Whether your faith feels strong right now or you are carrying questions, doubts, grief, weariness, or uncertainty, there is a place for you here. As Sunday School and Bible Study begin again, I hope you will consider joining us. These gatherings are not about having all the answers. They are opportunities to ask questions, listen to one another, laugh together, wrestle with Scripture, and discover where God might be speaking into our lives today. We grow better when we grow together.

Faith That Leaves the Building

This month, our Sunday Scriptures will lead us through several important pieces of Christian life: service, forgiveness, faithful living, and the humility of Christ. And none of those things are meant to remain inside the sanctuary. Our worship should shape the way we treat the person standing beside us. Our prayers should change the way we see our neighbors. Our study of Scripture should influence the choices we make on Monday morning. And the grace we receive from Christ should become grace that we extend to others.

As Philippians reminds us we can offer Kingdom work and it happens everywhere we go:

“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others.” — Philippians 2:3–4

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Opening Our Doors

We are also continuing to move forward with The Open Door: Johnstown Community Free Store, and I remain incredibly excited about what this ministry can become. Throughout the summer, we have talked about seeing our city differently, noticing our neighbors, and allowing compassion to move us into action. The Open Door is one tangible way we can continue putting those conversations into practice. Clothing, supplies, organization, volunteers, planning, and plenty of behind-the-scenes work are helping prepare us to welcome our neighbors with dignity and hospitality. But ultimately, this ministry isn't about clothing. It is about people. It is about creating a place where someone can walk through our doors and know that they are welcome, valued, and loved. It is one more way we can continue serving Johnstown with hope & hospitality.

Where Is God Calling You?

As we begin this new season together, I want to leave you with a question: *Where might God be inviting you to begin again?* Perhaps God is calling you back into worship after some time away. Perhaps you are being nudged toward Bible Study or Sunday School. Perhaps there is someone you need to forgive or someone from whom you need to ask forgiveness. Perhaps there is a ministry where your gifts could make a difference. Perhaps God is simply inviting you to slow down, pray again, open your Bible again, or pay closer attention to the people around you. Whatever it may be, remember that we don't walk into this new season alone. We walk together. And more importantly, Christ walks with us. So as the schedules fill, the routines return, and another season begins, may we resist the temptation simply to become busy again. Instead, may we become faithful again. May we serve generously, forgive freely, love deeply, learn continually, and follow Christ wherever He leads us.



I am grateful to continue walking this journey with you!

Grace and peace,

Rev. Danielle Kendig



September 2026 Preaching Plan

A Life Shaped by Christ: Following Jesus in the way we serve, forgive, live, and love.

Throughout September, we will explore what happens when faith moves beyond something we profess and becomes something that actually shapes us. Scripture calls us into a way of life marked by service, forgiveness, courage, humility, and love. As we begin a new season together, we are reminded that following Christ isn't simply about what we believe; it is about who we are becoming.

— Sunday, September 6th —

Communion

Sermon Title: *A Servant's Heart*

Scripture: Psalm 119:33–40; Romans 13:8–14

— Sunday, September 13th —

Regular Worship hours & programs resume

Sermon Title: *The Freedom of Forgiveness*

Scripture: Psalm 103:1–13; Genesis 50:15–21

— Sunday, September 20th —

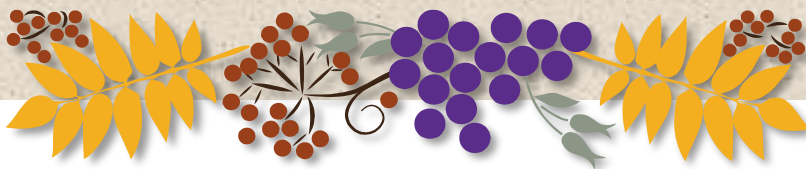
Sermon Title: *A Life Worthy of the Gospel*

Scripture: Psalm 145:1–8; Philippians 1:21–30

— Sunday, September 27th —

Sermon Title: *The Mind of Christ*

Scripture: Psalm 25:1–9; Philippians 2:1–13



Wellness Page



Q. I take a gummy multivitamin for convenience. Is this form as effective as traditional pills or capsules?

A. Gummy vitamins appeal to people for their candylike taste and texture. The chewable quality helps people who have trouble swallowing pills. Taking gummy vitamins can help you increase your intake of specific vitamins and minerals to fill nutritional gaps. Still, Mayo Clinic experts say you may not get everything you need from them.

Multivitamins are meant to support a healthy diet, not replace it. The best way to nourish your body is with a variety of foods. Your body may better absorb nutrients found naturally in foods than those in a supplement. Most vitamins, such as D and E, are available in a gummy multivitamin. But essential minerals such as copper, magnesium and calcium, which have a strong or unpleasant taste, often are not included in gummy vitamins. Or these nutrients are provided in smaller amounts. For example, many gummy vitamins don't contain enough iron for someone with anemia.

Overall, most gummy vitamins do not have a complete profile of key vitamins and minerals. So read the label to ensure that those most important to you are listed. In addition, look for a third-party certification of the product's quality and purity, such as from the U.S. Pharmacopeial Convention (USP) or NSF. Vitamin and mineral supplements are not regulated as strictly as medications. Instead, each company is trusted to ensure the effectiveness of its products.

Keep in mind that gummy vitamins usually have added sugar or artificial sweeteners. Gummy vitamins may not be the best choice if you limit your sugar intake or are sensitive to sugar alcohols. It's a good idea to brush your teeth after taking your gummy vitamin, especially if you take it at night. Talk to your healthcare team about the right supplement options for you.



THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE is seeking names for Deacons and Elders for the Class of 2029, a 3-year term of office beginning in January 2027. Boxes are located in the Narthex

and Lincoln Street entrances for your prayerful suggestions.

Briefly, according to the Book of Order (G-2.02) the ministry of Deacons is one of compassion and service. Together, the Teaching Elder (the minister) and the Ruling Elders have responsibility for the leadership of the congregation (G-2.03). Sunday, October 5th will be the last day to submit names for Elders & Deacons positions.



The Deacons will resume their meetings the first Sunday of each month, beginning September 6th, after Sunday worship.

The Genvens will resume their meetings the second Sunday of each month, beginning September 13th at 12:30 PM. Location to be determined.

NAR-ANON CORNER

Enabling or Helping

We joined Nar-Anon because we realized we had no control over the addict's behavior and actions. However, we still cared deeply about the addict. Helping and supporting the addict had become a significant part of our lives.

During our Nar-Anon meetings and through sharing our experiences, we began to understand that we were out of control and not truly helping the addict. We were the ones living in chaos, experiencing feelings of helplessness, fear, rejection, upheaval, and embarrassment.

By studying and living the Twelve Steps of Nar-Anon, we came to believe that a higher power could restore us. As we worked the Steps, we realized there were healthier and safer ways to help the addict.

Step Four, Self-Discovery, involved doing a fearless and searching moral inventory. This process helped us understand ourselves better and discover that we have both positive and negative traits. One of these traits can be enabling.

Enabling occurs when we try to solve problems for the addict that are beyond our control. We may become frustrated when our attempts to solve the addict's problems or change their behavior don't work. In some cases, our attempts to help may actually prevent the addict from experiencing the consequences of their choices and interfere with their recovery.

Before making a decision, it's important to pause and ask ourselves: Am I helping or enabling? Why am I helping? Who am I helping? Is this truly helpful? Did they request my assistance?

These questions can help us step back, examine our motives, and enable the addict to take responsibility for their own life.

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Moving Toward Healthier Living:

We've learned that we can change ourselves, but we can't change the addict.

We can, however, change:

- The way we respond
- The choices we make
- The way we care for ourselves

Through the Twelve Steps and our Higher Power, we can learn to let go of what we can't control and find a healthier way to live.

NAR-ANON meetings are held every Monday evening at 6:30 PM in the library at First Presbyterian Church.

We thank the church for their ongoing support.



THIRD SUNDAY PROGRAM



returns
**SUN., SEPT. 20 at
NOON**

Guest Speaker:
VERN HENRY
Will speak on insurance

We hope to see you there!



CARRIED ANY DONKEYS LATELY?

... we speak, not as pleasing men, but God, who tests our hearts. — 1 Thessalonians 2:4

An old fable that has been passed down for generations tells about an elderly man who was traveling with a boy and a donkey. As they walked through a village, the man was leading the donkey and the boy was walking behind. The townspeople said the old man was a fool for not riding, so to please them he climbed up on the animal's back. When they came to the next village, the people said the old man was cruel to let the child walk while he enjoyed the ride. So, to please them, he got off and set the boy on the animal's back and continued on his way. In the third village, people accused the child of being lazy for making the old man walk, and the suggestion was made that they both ride. So, the man climbed on and they set off again. In the fourth village, the townspeople were indignant at the cruelty to the donkey because he was made to carry two people. The frustrated man was last seen carrying the donkey down the road.

We smile, but this story makes a good point: We can't please everybody, and if we try, we end up carrying a heavy burden. Others may offer us advice, and much of it is valuable. But when we try to do everything everyone wants us to do, we can easily become frustrated and confused. That's why we need to remember that the One we must please above all others is Christ.

Carried any donkeys lately? You don't have to if you're trying to please Jesus.

“Let your days be Mine to order,”
Says the Lord to you and me.
“Other voices are confusing;
Only seek to follow Me.”

**When we live for the approval of God, we need not
be disturbed by the opinions of others.**

-Submitted by Joyce Gerlach



September BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Darryl Lewis
- 4 Jason Jeschonek
- 7 Lukas Davis
- 8 Dylan Kresak
- 9 Rayna Koch
- 10 Donna Kay
- 11 Shannon Benya
- 12 Gerhardt Gustafson
- 12 Laykin Schultz
- 15 Harry Muncert
- 17 Elizabeth Compton
- 17 Hayley Vickroy
- 19 Sue Porsch
- 19 Gabrielle Stuftt
- 24 Joseph M. Carthew
- 25 Jasmine Flores
- 29 Brianne Fockler

Blessings

on your
birthday



September ANNIVERSARIES

Ken & Isabel Cruse

75 Years
on September 8th



*There is no more lovely,
friendly and charming
relationship, communion
or company than a good
marriage.*

-Martin Luther

SEPTEMBER

2026 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

13

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 <i>Session 6:00 pm</i>	3	4	5
6 Worship 10:00 am <i>Communion</i> <i>Deacons offering received</i> <i>Deacons Meeting after worship</i>	7 Office Closed 	8	9	10	11 PATRIOT DAY 	12
13 REGULAR HOURS RETURN Sunday School 9:30 Worship 10:45 am <i>Caring Committee after worship</i> <i>Genevens 12:30, location TBD</i> <i>JCS 3:00 PM</i>	14 6:30 pm Nar-Anon	15 10:30 Bible Study	16	17	18	19
20 Sunday School 9:30 Worship 10:45 3rd Sunday Program & Lunch NOON	21 6:30 pm Nar-Anon	22 10:30 Bible Study <i>First Day of Autumn</i>	23	24	25	26
27 Sunday School 9:30 Worship 10:45	28 <i>Women's Assoc. 1:00 pm</i> 6:30 pm Nar-Anon	29 10:30 Bible Study	30			



+ Christian Symbol +

BREAD — One of the oldest and most familiar foods, bread carries deep meaning throughout Scripture. In the Old Testament, God provided manna, or “bread from heaven,” to sustain His people in the wilderness. In the New Testament, Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life” (John 6:35), pointing to himself as the true source of spiritual nourishment. Bread also holds a central place in the Lord’s Supper, where it represents Christ’s body, given for us. Simple and sustaining, bread has become a lasting symbol of God’s provision, Christ’s presence, and the shared fellowship of believers.



Bible Quiz



After his resurrection, Jesus asked one of his disciples the same question three times: “Do you love me?” The disciple felt hurt, wondering why Jesus kept asking. Who was this disciple?



- A. James
- B. John
- C. Philip
- D. (Simon) Peter

TUESDAY



MORNING

BIBLE STUDY

Tuesday Morning
Bible Study begins
September 15th
at 10:30am

All Are Welcome

**Regular hours resume on
Sunday, September 13th.
Sunday School at 9:30 am
and worship at 10:45.**

RETURN
to
**REGULAR
WORSHIP
TIMES**



LABOR

Day

The office will be closed on
Monday, September 7th in
recognition of Labor Day.

Special Dates

- Labor Day, *September 7, 2026*
- Patriot Day, *September 11, 2026*
- National Grandparents Day, *September 13, 2026*
- Hispanic Heritage Month, *Sept. 15-Oct. 15, 2026*

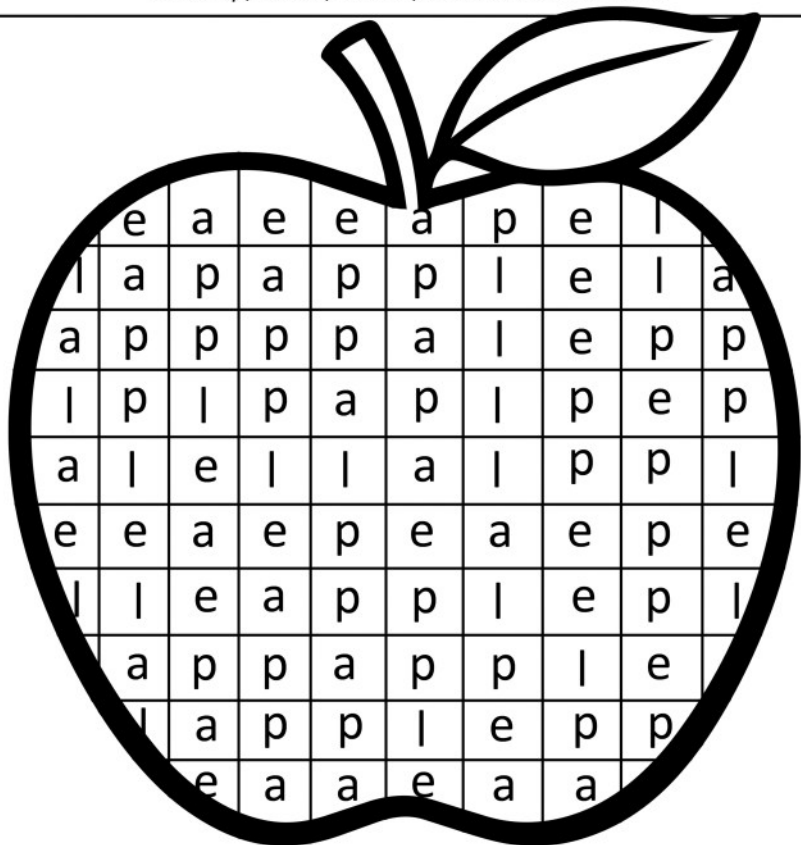




Apple of Your Eye

“Apple of your eye” means something very special that you protect. As school starts again, remember what God says in Proverbs 7:2 (NIV): “Keep my commands and you will live; guard my teachings as the apple of your eye.”

*Can you find the word “apple” 12 times in the puzzle?
Look up, down, across, and even backward!*





A sweet reminder that God is always growing something new, no matter the season. As summer winds down and a new school year begins, remember He is at work in your life, helping you grow in faith, kindness and courage. With His help, you can grow in wisdom, build friendships and shine His love wherever you go.

What you need:

- 2 cups milk
- 1 (4-serving) box chocolate instant pudding mix
- 1 (8 oz.) tub whipped topping, thawed
- 1 (16 oz.) package Oreo cookies, crushed
- 8 (9 oz.) clear plastic cups
- Gummy worms or frogs (optional)



What you do:

1. In a large bowl, whisk together milk and pudding mix for 2 minutes. Let stand for 5 minutes until thickened.
2. Gently fold in the whipped topping.
3. Add a layer of crushed cookies to the bottom of each cup.
4. Spoon pudding mixture on top, filling the cups about $\frac{3}{4}$ full.
5. Sprinkle more crushed cookies on top to look like "dirt."
6. Add gummy worms or frogs for fun.
7. Chill until ready to serve, or enjoy right away.

See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not
perceive it? — Isaiah 43:19 (NIV)



TAKE SOME
JOKES BACK
TO SCHOOL



What's the difference between a poorly dressed man on a unicycle and a well-dressed man on a bicycle? — *Attire.*

Why did Beethoven get rid of his chickens? — *All they ever said was, "Bach, Bach, Bach!"*

Why are mountains so funny? — *They're hill areas.*

How do lumberjacks know how many trees they've cut down? — *They keep a log.*

How much do rainbows weigh? — *Not much. They're actually pretty light.*

A slice of apple pie costs \$2.50 in Jamaica, \$3.75 in Bermuda, and \$3 in the Bahamas.

— *Those are the pie-rates of the Caribbean.*

What did one hat say to the other? — *You wait here, I'll go on ahead.*

Why did the crab cross the road? — *It didn't - it used the sidewalk.*

What's the difference in an alligator and a crocodile? — *You'll see one later and one in a while.*

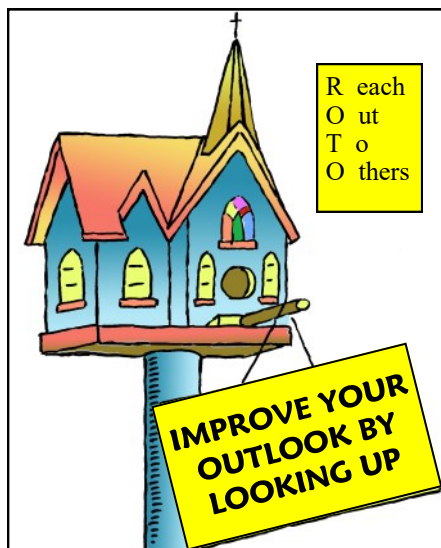


WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

The women will hold their monthly meeting on Monday, September 28th at 1:00 PM.



If you, a family member, or friend from 1st Church has been admitted to the hospital and would like a visit, be sure to contact Rev. Kendig, Pat Betts or Caroline in the church office. The lines of communication are not always open between the hospital and spiritual care visitors, and we don't want to miss anyone.



**FOOD PANTRY
ITEMS ARE
COLLECTED
EVERY SUNDAY!
THANK YOU!!**

YOU CAN HELP



CELEBRATING OUR MEMBERS

Membership Anniversary

We would like to recognize the following active member who celebrates a membership anniversary in the month of September:

21 years – Donna Kay

Happy Anniversary! We are blessed to have you in our church family.

JOHNSTOWN CONCERT SERIES



**SUNDAY,
SEPT. 13**

3:00 PM

A dynamic
piano-driven
quartet

WANDERLOST



Ken & Isabel Cruse will celebrate their 75th Wedding Anniversary on September 8, 2026. Their family held a celebration in honor of their anniversary and milestone birthdays (Ken's 95th and Isabel's 90th) earlier this summer. May God continue to bless them with many more happy years together!



OUR STEWARDSHIP

GIVING IN JULY

YTD

Member Giving	3005	28905
Major Repair Fund	100	541
Organ Fund	30	100
Loose Offering	587	3554
Special Offerings	0	400
First Fruits	55	1131
Total Giving	3777	34631

ATTENDANCE

June 07 - 27	July 05 - 38
June 14 - 29	July 12 - 30
June 21 - 28	July 19 - 35
June 28 - 33	July 26 - 37



Adult Sunday School begins September 13th

As our summer hours come to an end, it is time for Sunday School to begin once again. We will start up on September 13th at 9:30 am in the Parlor. We are continuing the video series *That the World May Know* with Ray Vander Laan. Ray shares his vast knowledge of the Bible and where it all happened. Why not join us? There's always room for more.





In Loving MEMORY

**MARGARET "PEGGY"
ANN LAMBERT**
May 8, 1937 ~ July 30, 2026

LAMBERT – Margaret Ann "Peggy", 89, of Johnstown, passed away peacefully July 30, 2026, at Windber Woods. Born May 8, 1937, in Johnstown, daughter of George and Annabelle (Palm) Singer. Preceded in death by parents, first husband Harold Fockler, second husband George Lopaze, brother Terry Singer, and daughter-in-law Jeanine Fockler. Survived by loving children: James (Patti) Fockler, Richard (Amanda) Fockler, Brian Fockler, Dr. Craig (Trudy) Fockler and stepson David (Teya) Lopaze. Also survived by fourteen grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. Peg was an active member of Maple Springs Church of the Brethren followed by First Presbyterian Church. She enjoyed crochet, traveling and spending time with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. By request, visitation and services will be private. Private interment Richland Cemetery. Arrangements by Geisel Funeral Home, Johnstown.

Rene Bacon (Gindlesperger)
David Barrett (B. Thiel)
The Don Bash Family
Bonnie Bash
Judy Bash
Dave & Dorothy Belz
Sherri Bennett (Mapes)
Chuck Benson
Robin Bergeron (Cruse)
Deb Bickel
Michelle & Heith Bragg
Friends of Janet Clark
Roy & Delores Collins (Benson)
Family of Mary Cruse
Family of John Davis
George Demchak & Family
 (Koch)
Marlene Eisenhauer
Family of "Ike" Eisenhuth
A. Scott Eisenhuth
Ashlee Fecko (Koch)
Family of Richard Feller
Diane Flemming (Gerlach)
Robert Flemming (Gerlach)
Nina Foster (Foster)
Randy & Leslie Freenock
Dave & Marilyn Gehlman
Joyce Gerlach
Roy & Agnes Gindlesperger
Jacob Gram (Gerlach)
Rod & Sonya Horner
Faye Huber
Marlene James
Bobbie Jean Klimek Family
Donna Kay
Tom Koch & Family
Tim & Ceara Kranz (Williams)
Ava & Dylan Kresak
Family of Mark Kresak
Family of Peg Lambert
Walt Leitenberger
 (Gindlesperger)

I remember you
constantly
in my prayers.
 -2 Timothy 1:3



John Markley (Markley)
Bill & Bobbi Markley (Bragg)
John McClure (Kendig)
Family of Connie Meyers
Nancy Miller (Benson)
Serena Miller (Clark)
Maryann Minahan
Family of George Moehler
Ron & Brenda Noon
Tom Osterbloom (Gindlesperger)
Annie Pearce
Sue Porsch
Pat Ripple
Tina Risbon
Kent Roach
Sheila Rogerson (B. Thiel)
Debbie Rummel
John & Judy Sierocky (Foster)
Family of Michelle Smith
J. Andrew Smith (Gindlesperger)
Josh Sokira (Sokira)
Robby Sokira, Jr. (Sokira)
Rev. Doug Stevens
Owen Szanto (Gindlesperger)
Zowalla Thiel
Trista Wagner
Susan Weaver (B. Thiel)
Cynthia Weimer (Weaver)
Lynne & Bill Williams
Sharon Yoder (Bash)
Yost Family

Serving in the Military

Luther Flores
Richard Kovach

**First Presbyterian Church
309 Lincoln Street
Johnstown, PA 15901**



GOD'S BLESSINGS TO: