

The Vision

First Presbyterian Church
309 Lincoln Street, Johnstown, PA 15901



APRIL
2024



Therefore,

THE PROMISE COMES BY FAITH,
SO THAT IT MAY BE BY GRACE
AND MAY BE GUARANTEED
TO ALL ABRAHAM'S OFFSPRING.

ROMANS 4:16, NIV



From *the* Pastor

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

I pray that all of you are well and have enjoyed a meaningful and inspired Lenten journey.

As I write this letter, I am looking forward to Holy Week with anticipation and wonderment about the goodness of God and the freedom He has graced us with the death of his beloved Son. By the time you receive the newsletter, it is my prayer that you have celebrated Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday.

As you may already know, I spent a week away at a Presbyterian retreat in Little Rock, Arkansas. Just so I get it out of the way, while you were enjoying days in the 50s and plenty of sun, my week in Little Rock was a time of rain, cold, and believe it or not, tornadoes – enough to cancel an evening of activities so we could hide in our rooms. It seems the weather gods are following me wherever I go...I better stop complaining about Johnstown weather I suppose, but then what would I do with all my free time J

Kidding aside, the time I spent in Little Rock was very exhilarating, exciting, and full of grace and growth. Being with twenty-five of my fellow clergy from all around the country was an experience that I will never forget not stop being grateful for.

Since I have been back, I have been fortunate to have attended a couple of community meetings that just may give us opportunities to lend a hand within our community in the coming months. I will share details as plans are firmed over the next few weeks.

I have also had a wonderful meeting with Mr. Rodney Reider, the CEO of Conemaugh Hospital. He has generously and graciously agreed to join our congregation one day to share his goals for the hospital and to hear us and answer any questions and concerns we may have. Stay tuned for that.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Hyiwot





Q. I have painful sciatica. It hurts so much I can barely walk a couple of blocks. Do I need surgery?

A. Sciatica can be debilitating. The good news is that in most cases it improves without surgery. Sciatica describes a group of symptoms, such as shooting pain down the back of the leg, numbness and tingling, which occur when the large sciatic nerve gets pinched.

The sciatic nerve originates in the low back, where nerves exit the spine and come together, forming a large nerve. This nerve extends through the buttocks, down the back of the thigh and continues down to the foot. There are several possible reasons the sciatic nerve can get pinched. The most common one is a herniated disk. Spinal stenosis (the narrowing of the canal) and spondylolisthesis (when one vertebra slips out of place) also can irritate and pinch the sciatic nerve.

According to Russell DeMicco, DO, Associate Director of the Cleveland Clinic Center for Spine Health, most cases of sciatica naturally improve over time. To get temporary relief he recommends a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID), such as ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®) or naproxen (Aleve®), or acetaminophen (Tylenol®). Long periods of rest can be harmful, causing you to lose muscle strength. So keep up an exercise program, including aerobic activity such as walking, swimming or bicycling. A physical therapist can recommend exercises that decrease pain by

reducing pressure on the nerve. An exercise program can also improve flexibility and strength.

Most people will be better in about eight weeks. If symptoms persist, your doctor may try a corticosteroid injection to reduce any swelling that may be contributing to the nerve compression.



The Health Benefits of Grapes

Some people think of grapes as little globes of sugar. It's true they're one of the sweetest fruits, with 12 grams of sugar per half-cup. But the sugar in fruit is absorbed more slowly and doesn't cause the same blood sugar spikes as table sugar, says Samantha M. Coogan, RDN, program director of the didactic program in nutrition and dietetics at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Blood sugar spikes and crashes can deplete your energy and, over time, raise the risk for type 2 diabetes.

Eating grapes may actually fend off the disease. A 2013 analysis published in *BMJ* showed that having about three servings of grapes (and raisins) per week was linked to a 12 percent lower risk for type 2 diabetes. "Grapes also come packaged with fiber and vitamin K, which is important for heart and bone health," she says. Plus, they contain resveratrol, a powerful antioxidant that studies suggest may help reduce the risk of a list of chronic illnesses, including heart disease, some cancers, and Alzheimer's disease.

FROM THE


**FEBRUARY 2024
 MEETING SUMMARY**

- Doors must be locked during services per the Presbytery. Deacons would like to learn of emergency procedures we should follow.
- We are going to contact Saturday's Kitchen and Saint Francis Caring & Sharing to find out how we can help. We will also support the Backpack Program by sponsoring children. The cost is up to \$300 per child for the year. We will also schedule dates to help with the packing.
- The sweatshirt/t-shirt/baseball cap sale is continuing until February 25.
- Our soup sale produced \$264. We sold 33 quarts of soup. The proceeds will go into the Deacons Fund.
- The SOUPer Bowl offering will be split between the Caring Committee and the Deacons Fund. We will return our 50% portion to Saturday's kitchen.
- The Deacons will also pay the Sam's Club membership fee this year.
- We will be putting up an Easter tree with needs from the Children & Youth Services office.
- We discussed combining the 1st and 3rd Sunday luncheons since it is becoming burdensome for those who prepare the food. It will be brought up for discussion with the Caring Committee.

"Carry each other's burdens and so you will fulfill the law of Christ." -Galatians 6:2

-Submitted by Carla Davis



From the
Deacons

**MARCH 2024
MEETING SUMMARY**

- Gary Mapes is our liaison from Session and will attend our meetings now.
- Discussion regarding safety procedures and emergency plan since we have to keep the doors locked during services.
- We will be sponsoring four students for the year with Cambria County Backpack Program. We will also go on April 22nd to help pack the meals.
- We also plan to sponsor students for Bible to School this year but have until October to decide how many children. We need to know the price for the year.
- There was discussion regarding Saturday's Kitchen and St. Francis Caring and Sharing programs and how we might help those programs.
- We also had additional discussion regarding combining the first and third luncheons. We found out that the Caring Committee has funds available that might lessen the financial burden on the women who are asked to prepare food for them.
- We received the information for the Egg Tree and it is up in the sanctuary. The items requested will be provided to foster parents for their use.

"Carry each other's burdens and so you will fulfill the law of Christ." -Galatians 6:2

-Submitted by Carla Davis

DANDELIONS

DANDELIONS!!!! No matter how carefully I try to pull one up, I never get the whole thing. The root stays deep in the ground, threatening to grow up and blossom again.

But despite their bad reputation, dandelions are pretty little flowers with their yellow stands all tucked neatly into the center. And truly they are the most beautiful of all the flowers when presented clutched in a child's dirty little hand. No one gets yelled at for picking them. Perhaps they grow only to be used and enjoyed by children.

Dandelions are ignored or attacked, never nurtured or cared for, and yet they always bloom profusely. They demand no pampering or special attention to yield their bright blossoms; they pop up in fields, in lawns, and between cracks in the sidewalk, even in the best neighborhoods. Can you imagine trying to grow them in a garden? They sneak through the boundaries and pop their sunny yellow faces up in the surrounding lawn. They would never stay put!

Christians should be more like dandelions. Our sunny faces should be a reminder that simple faith has deep roots that are impossible to dislodge. Our vast number would show the world that even though we are not fancy or pampered, we are evident everywhere, even in the best neighborhoods.

We should be as easily accessible as dandelions. Jesus was. We need to get out of our gardens and jump across boundaries that keep us where people expect to find us. We need to show our sunny faces in all the spots that need a little brightening up - the sidewalk or the lawns of neighbors or the sidewalks or lawns of the country club.

AUTHOR- Janice Kempe

Submitted by Isabel Cruse





The Joy of...Wishing on a Dandelion

Embrace the age-old practice of pinning hopes on a dandelion's gossamer-like seed globe. To ensure "wishes" travel as far as possible, stand with the breeze at your back, bring the base of the fluffy ball close to your lips, and blow upward.



ELECTRONIC RECYCLING

First Presbyterian Church is giving you the opportunity to rid your home of old, outdated electronics. Session has approved the participation in a recycling drive that is benefiting the Windber Public Library. Items eligible for recycling are televisions, monitors, computers, laptops, cell phones, and printers. These are the only items that will be accepted. Items may be brought to the church any time prior to April 16, 2024, and placed in the Willow Room in the church basement. There will be NO pickups provided. Remember, all items must be at the church no later than Tuesday, April 16, 2024. No items will be accepted after that date.

HEARING GOD'S VOICE

Driving to work one morning, I pulled into the middle lane of traffic on the three-lane road behind a white van. I had the music off and was driving in silence, when suddenly I heard a voice.

"Move to the outside lane."

It was quiet but powerful. The voice spoke directly to my soul, and it was distinctly separate from my inner voice.

"Do it *now*," the voice said urgently.

Even though it went against my normal commuting habits, I knew I had to listen. I checked for cars, then merged into the right-hand lane.

Clang! As soon as my wheels crossed over the dotted line, a large metal ladder I hadn't noticed before fell off the top of the white van and slammed into the road-right where I had just been.

Heart pounding, I checked my rearview mirror. The cars behind me had enough time to slow and avoid the ladder.

If I hadn't changed lanes, I wouldn't have been so lucky. It would've gone through my windshield, injuring me or worse. I arrived at work safely and said a prayer of thanks for the warning that saved my life.

-Author: Carla Johnson

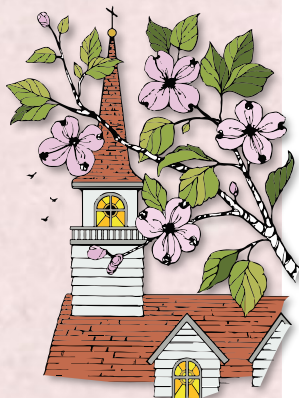
Submitted by Pat Betts

Session Highlights

February 2024

- Acknowledged successful Presbytery meeting held at First Pres in January
- Rejoiced over the baptism of Ron Noon
- Membership at 100
- Approval given for dates for 2024-2025 Johnstown Concert Series season
- Noted the submission of the Annual Statistical Report to General Assembly
- Approval given for 2024 Special Offerings
- Noted that the Congregational Care Committee will go back to the name Caring Committee

Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. (Amen) Psalms 90:2



Chicken & Biscuit **DINNER**

WED., APRIL 17th

TAKE-OUTS ONLY
starting @ 5:30

Adults \$10 • Kids \$5

Call the office to order 814-536-8141

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 6:30 pm Nar-Anon	2 Deacons 6PM Choir 7PM	3	4	5	6
7 Mission Sunday SS 9:30 Worship 10:45 Social Hour	8 6:30 pm Nar-Anon	9 Bible Study 10:30 AM Choir 7PM	10 Administration Meeting 10 AM	11	12	13
14 SS 9:30 Worship 10:45 Genevens Mission/ Stewardship after worship	15 6:30 pm Nar-Anon	16 Bible Study 10:30 AM Choir 7PM Last Day for Electronics Recycling	17 Chicken & Biscuit Dinner Take Outs ONLY beginning @ 5:30	18	19	20
21 SS 9:30 Worship 10:45 Third Sunday Program	22 Women's Assoc. 1:00 pm 6:30 pm Nar-Anon	23 Bible Study 10:30 AM Choir 7PM	24 Finance Committee 4:30 Session 6:00	25	26	27
28 SS 9:30 Worship 10:45 Johnstown Concert Series 2:30 PM	29 6:30 pm Nar-Anon	30 Bible Study 10:30 AM Choir 7PM				

6 MOVES THAT CENTER YOU

Greg Hartley, DPT, a professor of physical therapy, says these are his favorite balance exercises:



- 1. The Standing March.** Hold on to your kitchen counter and march in place for a minute. As your balance improves, try this without holding on.
- 2. Sit to Stand.** Sit in a sturdy, armless chair and push yourself up to standing. "It improves your lower extremity strength, which is important for good balance," Hartley says. Do 10 to 15 reps.
- 3. Side Steps.** Stand with your feet together and knees slightly bent. Lightly hold on to a kitchen counter if necessary. Step your left foot out to the side and move your right foot to meet it, then do the sequence in the opposite direction. Repeat this three times.
- 4. Three-Way Kick.** Lightly hold on to a kitchen counter if necessary, stand on one leg, and slowly raise the other leg in front of you. With the raised leg as straight as possible, lower it down. Do the same move with your leg out to the side and then with your leg behind you. Repeat on the other side.
- 5. Toe Raises.** Stand facing a kitchen countertop (hold on to it if necessary) and lift the toes of both feet as high as is comfortable. Then lower them. Repeat 10 to 15 times.
- 6. Heel-Toe Walk.** Standing, place the heel of your right foot just in front of the toes of your left foot. Then, take a step, placing your left heel just in front of your right foot. Repeat 10 to 15 times. Hold on to a sturdy item for stability.

OUR STEWARDSHIP

GIVING IN FEBRUARY		YTD
Member Giving	5163	12318
Major Repair Fund	125	205
Organ Fund	5	10
Loose Offering	318	874
Special Offerings	65	65
First Fruits	<u>471</u>	<u>655</u>
Total Giving	6147	14127

ATTENDANCE



Stewardship REPORT

Feb 4	-	38
Feb 11	-	35
Feb 14	-	15 Ash Weds.
Feb 18	-	40
Feb 25	-	40

They raised over \$1500 JUST FROM INK CARTRIDGES! Pine Springs is aiming for \$2,000 this year.

PINE SPRINGS CAMP has been collecting "EMPTIES" (empty printer ink cartridges) for a few years. This program, sponsored by Empties4Cash, has helped enhance the camping programs at PSC. Please consider partnering with Redstone Presbytery on this earth-friendly and valuable PSC initiative. Place your empties in the box under the bulletin board at the top of the Lincoln St. steps.

Please, ink jet cartridges only. No laser or toner-type cartridges are accepted.



MISSION SUNDAY On April 7th, our congregation will observe Mission Sunday. The Mission/ Stewardship Committee has invited Rev. Chuck MacPherson to bring the morning message, which is "Working Hard by Grace."



Tuesday Morning Bible Study will resume on April 9th at 10:30 AM. Hope to see you there!

QUESTIONNAIRE REGARDING THE CARING COMMITTEE AND THIRD SUNDAY PROGRAMS:

A questionnaire and ballot box have been placed near the bulletin board atop the stairs at the Lincoln St. side. Please take one, read the questions and prayerfully consider your answers. It will remain there until Sunday, April 21.

Women's Association

The Women's Association will hold their monthly meeting on Monday, April 22nd at 1:00 pm. Plan to join our fellowship!



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 Pastor Hyiwot, 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.

CELEBRATING OUR MEMBERS

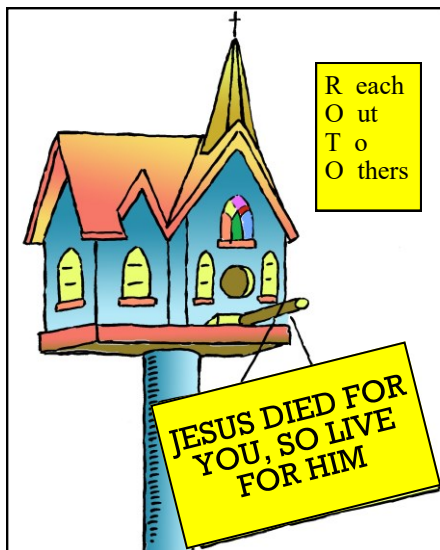
Membership Anniversaries

We would like to recognize the following active members who are celebrating membership anniversaries in the month of April:

- 81 years – Janet Clark
- 71 years – Donald Bash, James Blair
- 69 years – J. Kent Roach
- 69 years – John Reitz
- 66 years – Patricia Ripple
- 62 years – Susan Hunt, Garetta Moehler
- 61 years – Patricia Betts, Roy Shaffer
- 59 years – William Barkhimer
- 57 years – Gehardt Gustafson,
Robert Hinchman, Forrest Wassum
- 56 years – Karen Conrad, Joyce Gerlach
- 55 years – Sharon Hull, William A. Williams
- 51 years – Joyce Foster
- 48 years – Betsy Pudliner
- 47 years – Roy Gindlesperger, Raymond Porsch
and Susan Porsch
- 42 years – Leslie Freenock, Arthur Younkin
- 26 years – Gary Mapes
- 22 years – Carla Davis
- 21 years – John Foster

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





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

YOU CAN HELP



JOHNSTOWN CONCERT SERIES IUP CHORALE

SUNDAY, APRIL 28 @ 2:30PM

The IUP University Chorale, under the direction of Dr. Craig Denison, is the university's premier choral ensemble and is dedicated to the study and performance of choral literature at the highest artistic level possible. PLEASE NOTE THE DATE AND TIME CHANGE.

**The choir holds practice Tuesday
evenings at 7:00 PM**





April

BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Jordan Livingston
- 4 Dakota Wilson Boyles
- 4 Rebecca Compton
- 6 Billie Ann Murphy
- 7 Susan Hunt
- 9 Francis Eisenhuth
- 9 Roy Gindlesperger
- 11 Barbara Robinson
- 11 Bill A. Williams
- 12 Pat Betts
- 23 Eric Porsch
- 26 Robert Hinchman
- 26 Amy Jeschonek
- 27 Brenda Noon
- 30 Duffy Compton
- 30 Anthony Morales

Celebrating
-WITH-
you

SOMETHING
OLD,

Something New

Use scrap paper to fuel new growth and make a gift that keeps on giving.

What you need:

- Scrap paper
- Water
- Herb or flower seeds
- Blender
- Strainer
- Cookie sheet
- Towel
- Adult help

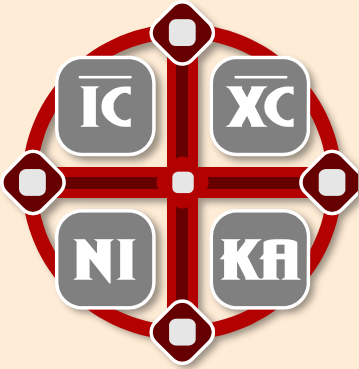


What you do:

1. Tear the scrap paper into strips and place in a bowl. Cover the paper with water and let it soak overnight.
2. Pour the mixture into a blender and blend about 10 seconds.
3. Strain and squeeze the paper pulp to remove excess water. Place in a bowl.
4. Sprinkle seeds over the pulp and mix to incorporate them into the pulp.
5. Shape the pulp into a flat layer on the cookie sheet. Use a towel to soak up excess water. Allow the paper to dry completely.
6. Tear paper into shapes or fold into a card. You can plant the paper directly into soil. Water it and then watch your plants grow!



+Christian Symbol+



VICTOR'S CROSS

Also called the conqueror's cross, the victor's cross is composed of the Greek cross, recognized by its four equal arms, adorned with Greek letters in each quadrant. The top left

letters stand for *Jesus* and the top right letters stand for *Christ* (the horizontal lines above them indicate that they are abbreviations). The four letters across the bottom spell the Greek word for *conqueror*.

Bible Quiz

What does the newly risen Jesus tell his disciples — twice — when he appears in the locked room where they are hiding?

- A. "Love one another as I have loved you."
- B. "Peace be with you."
- C. "The last shall be first and the first shall be last."
- D. "I am risen!"



PUZZLE



PLANT, WATER, GROW

Building a faith community takes work. How did the church in Corinth come to be?

Directions: Use the code to fill in the words and complete a teaching of the apostle Paul.

KEY



= God



= grow



= seed



= one



= planted



= anything



= watered



= only

I _____ the _____, Apollos _____ it,

but _____ has been making it _____.

So neither the _____ who plants nor the _____

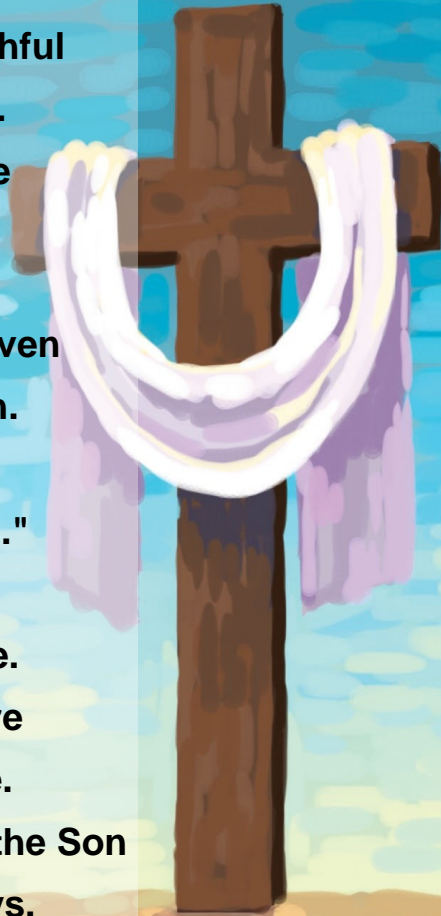
_____ who waters is _____,

but _____, who makes things _____.

1 Corinthians 3:6-7, NIV

THE SON

I've found Him faithful
Yes, faithful to me.
He proved His love
When He died
on that tree.
He came from heaven
To this sinful earth.
Shed His blood
For my "New Birth."
Lord and Master
Is what He became.
I took on His nature
I have a new name.
Now I'll walk with the Son
The rest of my days.
Growing and learning
In the light of His ways.
-Betty Washington



Thank you to Faye Huber for sharing this poem. It was written by her sister, Betty Washington, a minister and published poet.

Prayer Concerns



Family of Nancy Andrews
Carrie Thomas Aurit (Mapes)

Renee Bacon

David Barrett (B. Thiel)

Dian Bash

Don & Bonnie Bash

Dave & Dorothy Belz

Robin Bergeron (Cruse)

Debbie Bickel

Linda Billethead

Mark & Deb Bodnar

(Benson)

Linda Bolton (Williams)

Alice Bragdon

Michelle & Heith Bragg

Sylvia Bruce (Williams)

Veronica Burley & family

Linda Capp (Williams)

Christen (Williams)

Mary Cruse

George Demchak Family

(Koch)

Larry Dodson (Markley)

Marlene Eisenhauer

Francis "Ike" Eisenhuth

Alfred Eisenhuth (Ike)

Ashlee Fecko (Koch)

Family of Ruth Fisher

Carol Fyock

Dave & Marilyn Gehlman

Tom & Anne Gilligan

Roy & Agnes Gindlesperger

Jacob Gram

Don Griffith

Jean Houlik (Cruse)

Marlene James

Ava & Dylan Kresak

(Gindlesperger)

Family of Mark Kresak

Peg Lambert

Walt Leitenberger

(Gindlesperger)

Ann Long (Braude)

William Markley

Connie Meyers

Serena Miller

Blinda Morales

Denny Moyer

Ron & Brenda Noon

Tom Osterbloom

(Gindlesperger)

Jason Owens (Benson)

Sandie Owens (Benson)

Annie Pearce

Larry & Susan Pearce

Regina Poore

Sue Porsch

Stephanie Pusateri (Williams)

Pat Ripple & Family

Tina Risbon

Kent Roach

Debbie Rummel

Richard Schroeder

Family of Charles Seth

Family of Michelle Smith

J. Andrew Smith

(Gindlesperger)

Robby Sokira, Jr.

Paul Sprague (Williams)

Owen Szanto (Gindlesperger)

Ella T. & Family (Farrer)

Cindy & Trista Wagner

Jackie Weaver

Susan Weaver (B. Thiel)

Our Missionaries

The Family of Mark Adams &

Miriam Maldonado: Mexico

Josh Heikkila: West Africa

Serving in the Military

Luther Flores

Jasmine Flores

Richard Kovach

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Johnstown, PA
Permit No. 49**

GOD'S BLESSINGS TO:

**APRIL
2024**