

The Vision

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



January 2024



MAY
MERCY,
PEACE,
AND
LOVE
BE
MULTIPLIED
TO YOU.

JUDE 1:2, ESV



EPIPHANY

Our Source of Light

January 6 marks the day of Epiphany, when the wise men (who were Gentiles) came to worship Jesus and bring him gifts. During the church-year season of Epiphany, we remember that God's Son is the Light of the whole world.

Ponder the gifts of Epiphany with these two reflections, written centuries apart:

Your light, dear God, surpasses all other light, because all light comes from you. Your fire surpasses all fire, because your fire alone burns without destroying. The flames of your fire reach into the soul, consuming the sin and selfishness that lie there. But far from damaging the soul, your fire sets it ablaze with love. What moved you to enlighten me with your truth? The fire of your love was the reason. You loved me so much that you could not bear to see me confused and perplexed. Can I ever repay the burning love which you have given me? No, because I have nothing of my own to give. Yet you assure me that the love which you put into my soul is repayment enough. You desire only the joy of seeing me receiving your gift. What more perfect Father could there be!

—Catherine of Siena (c. 1347-1380)

Epiphany beckons us to come to the light of Jesus Christ. Epiphany calls us to stare into that light until our inner darkness is fully expunged. Epiphany then sends us out into a dark and weary world as women and men with shining faces, until we say with the apostle Paul, "It is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" [see 2 Corinthians 4:6].

—Jason Gaboury, campus minister in New York City




CELEBRATING OUR MEMBERS

Membership Anniversaries

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

- 43 Years - Timothy Conrad**
- 40 Years - Bernice Risbon**
- 40 Years - Robert Tiffany**
- 27 Years - Corrine Helman**
- 23 Years - Ray Vickroy**
- 15 Years - Roberta Markley**
- 15 Years - William Markley**
- 12 Years - Blinda Morales**

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



Wellness Page

GIVE YOUR BRAIN A WORKOUT!

5 Fun Activities To Give Your Brain A Workout



Despite a lack of conclusive evidence, many experts believe mental activity can help slow or prevent Alzheimer's disease (AD).

The importance of mental stimulation in preventing or delaying age-related cognitive decline is still a matter of debate. A number of studies have suggested that mental activity can help keep the brain sharp, while others have found no evidence that exercising the brain improves cognition. Since there isn't yet a magic bullet that can cure diseases like AD, delaying the possible onset of mental decline by keeping the mind stimulated seems to be an excellent idea. Other measures, such as eating a healthy, low-fat diet with plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, exercising regularly, managing cardiovascular conditions such as high blood pressure, and seeking help for mood disorders, are also important in maintaining optimal brain function.

The beneficial effects of mental stimulation appear to be related to its association with increases in neurogenesis (the production and survival of new nerve cells) and brain plasticity (the growth of new connections among brain cells) in areas of the brain responsible for learning and memory.

The stimulating mental exercises that follow are intended to give your gray cells a workout:

Challenge 1: Find the three *consecutive* letters of the alphabet that can be added as a unit to the letters AME to form a six-letter word. Do the same with letters ATE and ACK. Can you think of other, similar combinations?

Challenge 2: Draw a large square and divide it into 36 equal squares. Distribute 12 buttons on this “game board” so that there is only one button to a square, and a total of two buttons to each diagonal, column, and row. There are multiple solutions to this puzzle – how many can you find?

Challenge 3: Name three animals beginning with each letter of your full name, using different animals each time. Repeat the exercise with objects, geographical locations, plants, and so forth. For a bigger challenge, try to find four or five items for each letter.

Challenge 4: Memorize the 50 states in the Union. Once you’ve mastered the list, memorize their capitals and locations on a map of the United States. Now recite the 50 states in alphabetical order. Then recite them in reverse alphabetical order.

Challenge 5: While you are waiting for an appointment, look around you and, giving yourself one minute, try to find five black objects that will fit into your pocket or your purse, and five blue objects that are too big to fit.

~Pat Betts



HAPPY NEW YOU!

Changing the calendar each January is a reminder that God makes all things new.

Directions: Use the clues and the calendar code to complete 2 Corinthians 5:17, ESV.

JANUARY 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	God	night	word	in	love	Jesus
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
glory	therefore	speak	give	light	Christ	a
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
saw	beginning	anyone	waters	help	is	many
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
he	again	through	earth	made	while	back
28	29	30	31			
new	if	and	creation			



- The second Monday _ _ _ _ _
- The last Monday _ _
- The 16th _ _ _ _ _
- One day before the 20th _ _
- The day before the first Friday _ _
- The last weekday of the second week _ _ _ _ _
- The day after the 20th _ _
- The day after 18th _ _
- The first day of the second weekend _
- The last Sunday _ _ _
- The last day of the month _ _ _ _ _

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, 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.



"In the depth of winter, I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer."
—Albert Camus



Special Dates

- **New Year's Day**, *January 1, 2024*
- **Epiphany**, *January 6, 2024*
- **Baptism of the Lord**, *January 7, 2024*
- **Martin Luther King Jr. Day**, *January 15, 2024*
- **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**,
January 18-25, 2024





ATTENTION COMMITTEE and GROUP CHAIRS: Please turn in your Annual Reports to the office as soon as possible. Thank you!

Predictions for the new year

Author Ronald Wilson, in *Stretching the Soul*, describes being certain that four things will occur in the days ahead.

- Trouble will come. Life is difficult. I must mourn as well as dance.
- In this long journey [of life], I'm not in control. God has reminded us of this.
- Many times I will fail.
- I will find forgiveness and get up and go on. God will wipe up the mess I've made of things, take me by the hand and set me back on the right path.

Praise God for his sure presence during the joys and challenges the new year brings!

Fresh Starts

I suppose when we wake on January 1 the world will look the same. But there is a reminder of the Resurrection at the start of each new year, each new decade. That's why I also like sunrises, Mondays and new seasons. God seems to be saying, "With me you can always start afresh."

—Ada Lu



Chancel Flowers

FLOWER CHARTS

The flower charts will soon be up in the hallway to the Parlor and ready to fill in for 2024. As in past years, there is a flower chart for each quarter of the year. Please fill in your name as you wish it to appear in the bulletin and also the presentation for the person or persons the flowers are for, also as you want it to appear.

If you wish to present chancel flowers in honor of or in memory of someone, please choose your Sunday and fill it in. Flower money is payable to the church the week before your scheduled Sunday. Silk flowers are \$15 (which goes to Saturday's Kitchen) and the cost for real flowers is \$43. Please take the time to fill in the Flower Charts for 2024. Thanks!



Stocking Gifts Delivered in Mid-December



The Mission Committee thanks all those who contributed to this year's Christmas Stocking Tree. We again had an overwhelming response!



JANUARY

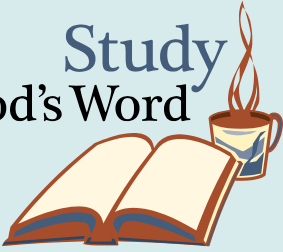
Sun	Mon	Tue	W
	1 6:30 pm Nar-Anon	2 Choir 7:00 pm	3
7 SS 9:30 Worship 10:45	8 6:30 pm Nar-Anon	9 Bible Study 10:30 My Life Choir 7:00 pm	10
14 Sunday Sch. 9:30 Worship 10:45	15 6:30 pm Nar-Anon	16 Bible Study 10:30 Choir 7:00 pm	17
21 Sunday Sch. 9:30 Worship 10:45	22 6:30 pm Nar-Anon	23 Bible Study 10:30 Choir 7:00 pm	24
28 Sunday Sch. 9:30 Worship 10:45	29 6:30 pm Nar-Anon	30 Bible Study 10:30 Choir 7:00 pm	31

2024 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

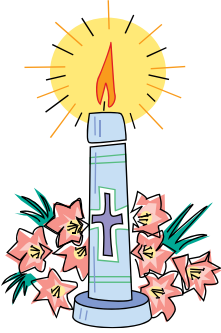
ed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	4	5	6
	11	12	13
	18	19	20
	25	26	27



Study God's Word



**THE TUESDAY MORNING
BIBLE STUDY** will resume
on January 9th at 10:30 AM.



From the Deacons:
If you would like to dedicate the lighting of the Christ Candle in memory or in honor of a loved one, the signup chart for 2024 will soon be in the hallway near the flower charts. There is no cost.



COMMUNION
Service

**We will receive the Sacrament
of Communion on Sunday,
January 7th. All who trust in
Jesus Christ as Lord and
Savior are invited to partake.**



R each
O ut
T o
O thers

"LET YOUR
RESOLUTION BE
HIS SOLUTION"

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



2024 Per Capita - Our Per Capita offering, which supports the work of the presbytery, synod and general assembly, has been set at **\$44** per active member.

The Session has called a Congregational Meeting for Sunday, January 21st immediately following worship. The purpose is to receive 2023 reports and the 2024 budget, as well as to vote on members of the 2024 Nominating Committee.



OUR STEWARDSHIP

GIVING IN NOVEMBER		YTD
Member Giving	5441	70490
Major Repair Fund	120	2476
Organ Fund	5	170
Loose Offering	138	3128
Special Offerings	140	978
First Fruits	7	1030
YTD	5851	78269



ATTENDANCE

November 05 - 39
 November 12 - 34
 November 19 - 31
 November 26 - 37

Three Powerful Prayers

Amy Carmichael (1867-1951), an Irish Protestant missionary, served in India for 55 years. Much of her work was with children, especially rescuing them from sexual slavery. Carmichael wrote 35 books and many articles about her mission work. The Church of England remembers her on January 18, the anniversary of her death.

The following brief but powerful prayers are attributed to Carmichael:

- May thy grace, O Lord, make that possible to me which seems impossible to me by nature.
- Holy Spirit, think through me, till your ideas are my ideas.
- God, hold us to that which drew us first, when the cross was the attraction, and we wanted nothing else.



Another year for God

Another year is dawning; dear Father, let it be,
in working or in waiting, another year with thee....

Another year of progress, another year of praise,
another year of proving thy presence all the days.

Another year of service, of witness for thy love;
another year of training for holier work above.

Another year is dawning! Dear Father, let it be,
on earth, or else in heaven, another year for thee.

—Frances Ridley Havergal

ATTENTION! ATTENTION!



“FIRST PRESBY HAS TALENT” will be coming up on January 21st. Please put your thinking caps on and decide what your talents are and start practicing!! Please call Pat Betts if you would like to perform for the talent show!



PINE SPRINGS INK CARTRIDGE PROGRAM

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.





Christianity affirms that at the heart of reality is a Heart, a loving Father who works through history for the salvation of his children. Man cannot save himself, for man is not the measure of all things and humanity is not God. Bound by the chains of his own sin and finiteness, man needs a Savior.

—Martin Luther King Jr.

Happy New Year Happy New Year Happy New Year



"Lord, Whether we're leaving behind a year of joy and blessing or trials and difficulties, we pause to give

thanks. We thank you that you are always with us, every single day of every single year. Please remind us of your presence in the year ahead, even when life is busy. We are so thankful that we serve a God who makes things new and gives us the grace of fresh starts and new beginnings. Be glorified in our lives this year. In Jesus' name,



+Christian Symbol+

LATIN CROSS — The Latin cross is the simplest and most common form of the Christian cross, possibly dating from the second or third century. Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christians typically display a crucifix — an image of Jesus hanging on the cross — to remember his death for the sake of the world. Protestant churches often favor the empty cross, commemorating Jesus' resurrection.



ARTICLES FOR THE FEBRUARY VISION ARE
DUE JANUARY 15th. Thank You!!



Bible Quiz



In the book of Judges, the warrior Barak would go to battle only if a certain female leader went with him. Who was she?

- A. Rebekah
- B. Jael
- C. Michal
- D. Deborah



January

BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Jennifer Hindman**
- 3 Owen Tressler**
- 4 Brian McLeary**
- 4 Grant Cruse**
- 4 Gary Menett**
- 6 Wyatt McFarland**
- 12 Joselyn Shawley**
- 14 Ava Hindman**
- 21 Pam Lauterbaugh**
- 27 Cayla Cramer**
- 31 Jillian Foster**
- 31 Nina Foster**

Celebrating
-WITH-
you



Geodes look plain on the outside but contain beautiful crystals. Create these “rocks” to show how God makes us new on the inside.

What you need:

- Clean cardboard egg carton
- Scissors (and adult help)
- Epsom salt
- Plastic zippered bags (one per color of dye)
- Food coloring
- Glue
- Paintbrush



What you do:

1. Cut out the tops and bottoms of all the egg compartments so you can make 6 ball shapes.
2. In each bag, put 3 tablespoons of Epsom salt and a drop or two of food coloring. Seal and shake to mix.
3. With the paintbrush, spread glue inside two egg-carton halves. Sprinkle a spoonful of Epsom salt into those halves. Then close and shake.
4. Open your homemade geode and shake out excess salt.
5. Optional: Preserve the crystals with a coat of clear-drying glue.



Prayer Concerns



Nancy Andrews
 Carrie Thomas Aurit (Mapes)
 David Barrett (B. Thiel)
 Dian Bash
 Don & Bonnie Bash
 Sandy Basile (Heltzel)
 Dave & Dorothy Belz
 Sherri Bennett
 Robin Bergeron (Cruse)
 Debbie Bickel
 Linda Billetdeaux
 Debbie Bodnar (Benson)
 Linda Bolton (Williams)
 Alice Bragdon
 Michelle & Heith Bragg
 Donna Cauffiel
 Christen (Williams)
 Isabel Cruse
 Mary Cruse
 BJ Ebersole (Seth)
 Marlene Eisenhauer
 Francis "Ike" Eisenhuth
 Alfred Eisenhuth (Ike)
 Ashlee Fecko (Koch)
 Family of Ruth Fisher
 Carol Fyock
 Mrs. Gamble (Benson)
 Dave & Marilyn Gehlman
 Tom Gilligan
 Roy & Agnes Gindlesperger
 Jacob Gram
 Family of Agnes Hall
 Deana Heltzel
 Jean Houlik (Cruse)
 Marlene James
 Family of Donna Kimmel
 Mary Koestler
 Ava & Dylan Kresak
 (Gindlesperger)
 Family of Mark Kresak
 Peg Lambert
 Walt Leitenberger
 (Gindlesperger)

Connie Meyers
 Blinda Morales
 Ron & Brenda Noon
 Tom Osterbloom
 (Gindlesperger)
 Jason Owens (Benson)
 Sandie Owens (Benson)
 Larry & Susan Pearce
 Regina Poore
 Sue Porsch
 Family of Janet Pudliner
 Pat Ripple & Family
 Tina Risbon
 Kent Roach
 Debbie Rummel
 Richard Schroeder
 Family of Charles Seth
 Jeremy & Estelle Sivillo
 (Thiel)
 Family of Michelle Smith
 J. Andrew Smith
 (Gindlesperger)
 Owen Szanto (Gindlesperger)
 Ella T. & Family (Farrer)
 Zachary Turner
 Cindy & Trista Wagner
 Family of Twila Wassum
 Jackie Weaver
 Susan Weaver (B. Thiel)
 Matt & Taila Williams

Our Missionaries

The Family of Mark Adams &
 Miriam Maldonado: Mexico
 Josh Heikkila: West Africa

Serving in the Military

Luther Flores
 Jasmine Flores

First Presbyterian Church
309 Lincoln Street
Johnstown, PA 15901

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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GOD'S BLESSINGS TO:

