

THE EVANGEL – April 2024

News and Ministry of the First Presbyterian Church



INTERIM SENIOR PASTOR—EASTER MESSAGE.



Dear members, friends and guests of First Presbyterian Church,

In the name of our Lord and God, may you be blessed with reflection and meditation in the balance of Lent. May you be encouraged and strengthened—filled with joy—as we celebrate Easter!

Rev. Professor Peter J. Gomes (1942-2011) at Harvard Divinity School and minister at Harvard Memorial Church writes: “The resurrection is God’s way of getting our attention. It is God’s way of making us listen up, God’s way of getting us to look, to listen, and to live. This first thing to remember, once God gets our attention, is that there is nothing subtle about Easter, nothing vague or ambiguous or vain or clever or cute about it at all. To make that point, God does not begin Easter day as the slow, gradual triumph of the dawn over the darkness; rather he takes a leaf from the notebook of Cecile B. DeMille himself, and God begins Easter with an earthquake.”

The preparation and celebration of Jesus’ resurrection is a wake-up call to our spiritual lives. In a miraculous way, God gets our attention, and then gives the miracle of eternal life through Jesus. He is risen! is the Easter acclamation. God gives new life. God gives eternal life. With this incredible message we must listen, love, and live. May God bless your life in Christ through the joys of Easter Faith.

In Easter joy!
Rev. Dr. Dan Corll.

Notes from the Director of Music

My last article covered our worship opportunities for Holy Week and Easter, so I won't run through those again: you'll find the schedule on our website or elsewhere in this newsletter. Instead, I'd like to use my space this month to extend an invitation to the congregation.

Did you know that handbell ringing has been a component of First Presbyterian's music ministry since the 1970s? Over the years our Liberty Bell Choir has not only rung in worship, but in various settings outside our walls as well, such as care homes and the Garden Club's "Trees of Christmas". The skill and dedication required to put such complicated pieces together is evident each time they ring. Some of our current ringers have been active since before I was born, and I'm immensely grateful for the countless hours they've put into rehearsing week by week.



*The Liberty Bells circa 1980, when gold was in vogue.
How many of these smiling faces do you recognize?*

However, it's been suggested to me that a slower-paced, lower-commitment handbell group might be more appealing to people who have never tried ringing before, or whose skills are a little rusty. To that end, I'd like to gauge how much interest there might be if we were to launch such a group. This would be open to people of all ages, with a goal of learning the technique of ringing bells and preparing some simple music to ring in church occasionally. We would need to find a rehearsal time: one possibility is Sundays from 12:00-12:30 PM, but I'm open to other suggestions as well. If you've ever thought that ringing bells might be fun, here's your opportunity to give it a try in a low-pressure setting! You'll be hearing more about this in the near future, but don't hesitate to reach out to me now if you're interested.

Until next time,

Kevin



Children's Ministry



April 2024

The month of April will see the ending of the 2023-2024 P.R.A.Y. sessions. The children will end the year learning The Beatitudes by summing up with "A Great Reward Awaits". Mrs. Foster will lead the lesson on April 3rd starting at 3:45. On April 17th we will have a "Year End Event." It will include some fun activities and, of course, food. Look for what we did on our Facebook page late in April. I would like to thank all the volunteers who helped make 2023-2024 a success. The leaders, the assistant leaders, and the cooks. Thank you to the parents who faithfully brought their children and to the great group of children that attended.



A special "thank you" goes to the Youth Group that meets 9:30-10:45 every other Sunday morning. On March 17th they created awesome Easter cards for those of our church who are homebound. They created over 30 cards for members and friends of First Presbyterian Church. We have gotten many "thank yous" from the recipients of other cards we have sent.



Youth group will continue to meet during April. On April 7th they will be discussing the books of the Bible and Sunday April 21st they will attend "Fiddler on the Roof" at the Academy Theater. In May, they will begin the preparations for Senior Recognition Sunday in June. The group will be creating posters of our college and high school graduating seniors. Be sure to contact the church office or Shelly Smith by April 30th with the name of your college or high school graduate. More details will be included in May's newsletter.

There are only 7 Sundays left in the 2023-2024 Sunday school schedule. We meet from April 7th to May 19th. April's topic is "Live the Light." This 4- week curriculum calls children to follow Jesus and walk in His light which provides love and guidance. The lessons will include key scriptures that will enable children to navigate the challenges of today by turning to the "Light."



Our Sunday school will continue to sponsor children through the work of *Compassion International* and its program, *Compassion in Jesus' Name*. Carlos, the first child we sponsored, graduated from Compassion in February. Through our sponsorship he has been given the tools needed to escape poverty. He may continue his education or secure a job. What every he chooses, he is ready. Congratulations and God's Continued Blessings, Carlos.



Compassion in Jesus' Name has provided us with a new child. His name is Darlyn. He is 10 years old and lives near Limbe in Haiti with his mother and father. Darlyn attends the Dumeuse Child Development Center. He loves God and playing games. Please add Darlyn to your prayers and remember Mimine, too.



Owen Dill – April 1

As always, **PLEASE**, keep the children of our church, our community, our country and the world in your prayers.

Vickie



THE GREAT AND GLORIOUS CELEBRATION OF THE RESURRECTION

The Book of Common Worship, 2018 edition, a handbook for worship and ministry notes that: “The

Resurrection of the Lord is the center of the Christian year, and the good news we proclaim on this day is the very heart of the gospel. Easter Sunday is something like the keystone of an arch—the top and center stone upon which all the others lean and depend—in terms of both its theological significance and its relation to other festivals and seasons. Theologically, the faith we claim and the life we live depend on the affirmation, celebration, and proclamation of Christ’s resurrection.” ...

“As with Christmas, Easter refers not only to a single day, but to a whole season of celebration in the Christian year. The season of Easter spans the fifty days between the Resurrection of the Lord and the Day of Pentecost and encompasses the Ascension of the Lord.

The seven weeks of the Easter season make up a ‘week of weeks’ (seven times seven): a symbol in time of the fullness and abundance of God’s grace. In ancient practice, fasting and kneeling were forbidden during the weeks of Easter. In this most joyful season, we celebrate the great mystery of our faith—that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead.” (Book of Common Worship, Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville. 2018. p. 316.)

The Lenten and Easter Season provide an excellent opportunity to reach out to family, neighbors, and friends to invite them to church. Our “special events” offer a good ‘non-threatening’ invitation to request people to worship with you or to meet you at the church. As you well know, it is a wonderful time to worship and praise our God. It is a great time to offer the hospitality of the church to those who worship with us.



THE PASTORAL NOMINATING COMMITTEE

had their first meeting on Tuesday, February 27. This meeting served as an orientation with General Presbyter, Anita Bernhardt, and Committee on Ministry liaison, Sue Ohrn. The committee was oriented on the lessons about serving on a pastor nominating committee. They were also given the tasks necessary for finding a new Senior Pastor. As part of this first meeting, the committee needed to select three important positions. The following committee members were selected to the noted positions:

Ryan Claspy - PNC Chair

Chris Lafferty - PNC Clerk

Joy Jordan - PNC Communication Coordinator.

The Pastoral Nominating Committee met on March 14 and March 21 where we completed the Ministry Discernment Profile. The profile has now been submitted for both session and presbytery approvals. After approval, the committee will upload the profile to the Church Leadership Connection system where we will be matched with profiles of prospective candidates. The committee thanks the congregation for their continued support and prayers.



KNIT UNTO OTHERS
Get your needles and yarn out. . . .

Knit Unto Others will meet Wednesday, April 10 at 1:00 p.m. in the church library. Anyone interested in the fellowship of knitting, crocheting or cross stitching is welcome. We make prayer shawls for those in need of the warmth of God’s love; and the comfort, prayers, and support from their friends of faith. If you have any questions, you can contact Kandy Davis at ksdavis70@zoominternet.net or 814-807-0156.



SESSION Notes

A BRIEF SUMMARY FROM SESSION MEETING OF MARCH 6. The Session met on Wednesday, March 6 at 5:30 p.m. Dr. Corll, Interim Senior Pastor, called the meeting to

order. The Session joined together in a responsive Call to Worship from Psalm 119:89-96. Dr. Corll has been using Psalm 119 as the opening Call to Worship since September. Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible. The Psalm is an acrostic poetic device, in which the eight lines of each stanza begin with the same letter. There are 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet. The Psalm has a focus on eight themes: commandments, statutes, ordinances, decrees, words, precepts, promise and law. The overall theme of the chapter is: The glories of God's law. Based upon the particular verses (176) presented in a series of eight, the Calls to Worship, consecutively moving through the chapter, would open 22 Session meetings!

Previous minutes were approved. Reports from Financial Secretary, Trustee's, Deacons, and Clerk of Session were received and approved. A summary of the Lake Erie Presbytery meeting of February 13 was distributed. Next meeting of presbytery is May 31 at Camp Lambec, Erie. The newly formed Pastor Nominations Committee gave a report. Committee reports from 10 committees of the church were received. Pastor's report was presented. Preparations for Holy Week and Easter were reviewed and discussed. Communion arrangements for Maundy Thursday, and April were made. An Interim Pastor Report was given highlighting Sunday celebrations, pastoral care, and administrative duties. A new member was received by reaffirmation of faith. New members will be recognized in worship in the near future. Recent deaths and services were noted: Jean Lundahl, William Douglass, Jr. and Rev. Corll's mother in law: Evelyn Satterlee.

Time off for church staff for vacations, continuing education, and study leave were noted.

The Teen Mission Trip for June 11-15 was discussed. The Matthew 25 Initiative was discussed and plans to further develop our church's present efforts to reach out to those in our community, to hear from other Presbyterian churches about their involvement, and to offer Bible Studies on the passage were agreed upon. The former program, Royal Family Kids was discussed and its corporate transition to a new name: For The Children. The materials stored since 2016/17 will be checked and distribution/disbursement arranged. Continuing under Old Business is the review of Membership Rolls in regard to activity and participation of those on the membership roster.

The meeting adjourned with prayer in time for Elders to attend the Soulstice Worship Service. -Rev. Dr. Daniel Corll, Session Moderator



Praying for Children (momsinprayer.org) will resume meeting every Tuesday at 1:00 p.m. starting April 16. All are invited to come together to pray for children and schools.

Prayer focus for our children this month is from Matthew 10:29-31.

Father, not one of Your sparrows will fall to the ground outside Your care. May _____ then not be afraid; may he/she know he/she is worth more than many sparrows.



Congratulation to

Andrew and Kirstie Bartoe

on the birth of their son,

Brooks Thomas on March 13.

Proud grandparents are

Mark and Mary Lynn Bartoe.



1. Owen Dill
2. Marilyn Stallard
10. Logan Luce
11. Bob Engels
12. Doris Edinger
17. Shirley Nossokoff
Annie Stoner
23. Kendra Fischer
24. Sonya Eagles-Dill
Sylvia Bridge
26. Linda Bennett
27. Vickie Fischer
28. Bob Hotchkiss
30. Bill DeArment



DR. CORLL TO BE ON CONTINUING EDUCATION:

Beginning April 29-May 4, Dan will participate in continuing education at Montreat, North Carolina. Montreat is the home

of Montreat College, and Montreat Conference Center, a retreat and conference center of the Presbyterian Church. Along with seven other ministers, and some with spouses, the group's work is partially underwritten by The Foundation for Reformed Theology. The Seminar Group prepares for the week of self-directed study by reading in advance, John Calvin's, Institutes of Christian Religion: 1541 French Edition. Translated by Elsie Anne McKee. This is the first English translation of this work. Additionally, the group will look at Calvin's, Writings on Pastoral Piety. Edited and with translations by Elsie Anne McKee, 2001. The Institutes has been an anchor for Reformed Theology since its inception. Calvin's intent was to present the text to suit lay audiences, shaping it to clearly teach, exhort, and encourage them. He wrote this edition to indicate what common Christian people should all know and practice. In preparation for the study week, Dan will be taking several days to read the more than 1,000 pages of the texts.

The Foundation for Reformed Theology's purpose is to facilitate better preaching, better teaching and better pastoral care. While the group engages in intense study, there is also opportunity for fellowship, shared meals and conversation about ministry.



THANK YOU for your generous donations to the WiNS Project!

Because of you, we were able to send peanut butter and graham crackers home with the children for their Easter break. We are done supplying peanut butter and graham crackers for this school year. But the WiNS Project will continue to collect clean, intact plastic grocery bags (but not from the Wine and Spirits store). Thank you for your continued support and prayers!



For several years.....
Presbyterian Women has supported COALITION OF HOUSING as one of our monthly mission projects.

This congregation has supported this mission with common household items and money. Unfortunately, the Coalition for Housing no longer exists in its original form and are no longer accepting donations. Common Roots has taken over many of the responsibilities from the Coalition. They provide educational services to their residents, teaching them how to budget, care for their apartment or house as well as how to work with their neighbors and give back to the community.



COMMON ROOTS has become a new mission project for PW. PW's Coordinating Team was very impressed with the Common

Roots mission, and the staff member who came to our last meeting. Their program was modeled after a similar program in Cincinnati, OH. There are brochures in the office for your review. You may also go to their website for more information (commonrootspa.org).

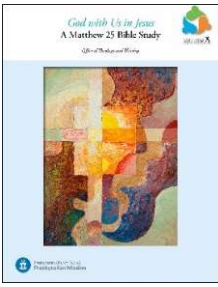
PW would like to donate the unused money we have collected for the Coalition for Housing to Common Roots. Because of IRS nonprofit restricted funds rules, we must make you, the donors, aware of this.

If anyone who donated to Coalition by check does not want their donation going to Common Roots, please talk to Kris Lubomski before April 30, 2024.



The April Congregational Lunch will be held on Sunday, April 7, after 11:00 a.m. Worship. The

Mission Committee is planning to prepare some delicious pulled pork sandwiches. They are asking the congregation to bring side dishes and desserts to share. Please plan to attend!



ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL:

On April 14, 21 and 28 we will be diving into the study, *God with Us in Jesus—A Matthew 25 Bible Study*.

Matthew 25 has become an important focus in the mission

and ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Specifically, it informs, inspires, and influences our work on three strategic priorities: eradicating systemic poverty, dismantling structural racism and building congregational vitality. The adult Sunday school class will be considering how Matthew 25: 31-46 speaks to—and leads us to pursue these areas of work. We also will look at three different ways of interpreting the biblical text: a literal/plain reading, a historical/critical reading, and a spiritual/symbolic reading. Join us as we read, reflect, and respond to how God's word speaks to us as we strive to live a life that reflects Christian love.



PASTORAL CARE:

A friendly reminder and invitation that if you have pastoral need. Want to talk

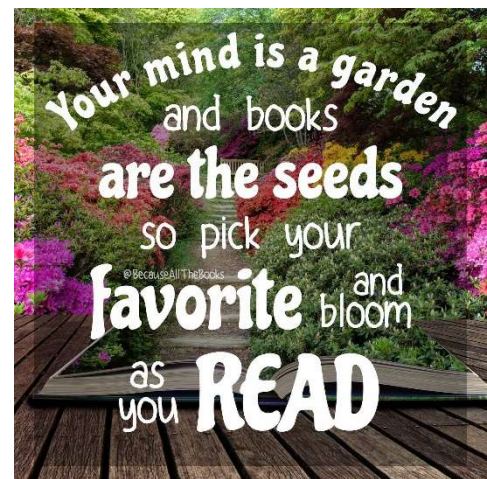
PASTORAL CARE about your faith or a spiritual need? There are many ways this can be addressed. First Presbyterian Church has several prayer groups, The Stephen Ministry, and Deacons who are glad to respond to your particular request. Prayerful support and spiritual encouragement are hallmarks of the Christian Church. Additionally, your Interim Pastor and church staff will pray with and for you in a particular need. Dr. Corll in shouldering the Interim Pastor duties and overseeing visitation will respond to your request and visit, pray, talk, and listen to you. This can be accomplished through hospital visits, in home visits, telephone conversations, and visits to Dan's study at the church. We want to extend a supporting and caring presence to all through First Presbyterian Church and there are many ways it can happen. Please call the church (814) 333-2161, or email Dr. Corll at dcorll@meadvillefpc.org. A reply will be made as quickly as possible.



STEPHEN MINISTRY

is a lay caring ministry being used by more than 13,000

congregations worldwide to increase care and outreach to hurting people. Through Stephen Ministry, congregations are able to equip and empower a team of laypeople—Stephen Ministers—who provide one-to-one, Christ-centered care to people experiencing grief, health issues, divorce, spiritual crisis, job loss, infertility, or other life difficulties. Since Stephen Ministry began in 1975, millions of people have received care from a Stephen Minister. Visit stephenministries.org to see stories about the difference Stephen Ministers are making in people's lives. If you, a friend or family member are going through a difficult time and would like to receive care from one of First Presbyterian Church's Stephen Ministers please contact Rev. Dr. Dan Corll at 814-333-2161.



The First Presbyterian Church Library has many books and DVDs for you to choose as you continue to "BLOOM"! COME IN and CHECK THEM OUT!



Our next *Soulstice* gathering will be on Wednesday, April 3 at 7:15 p.m. Join us in the downstairs chapel for a time of music, prayer, and silence.



Presbyterian Women's April Mission Focus:

The women are collecting monetary donations to make *Welcome Kits* for new residents

arriving at Fairview/Fairmont Apartments. The Welcome Kits will provide a few of the essentials needed to get an apartment started. If you choose to donate, please make checks payable to "First Presbyterian Church" and write "F/F Welcome Kits" in the memo. Donations can be mailed, dropped off at the church office or put in the Sunday offering plate. If you make a cash donation, please put it in an envelope with your name on it. Your much appreciated donations will be sent to the Fairview Fairmont Family Center where the staff will purchase items and put together the "Welcome Kits". Thank you for supporting this local mission!



Presbyterian Women are also collecting "sample size" shampoo, hand sanitizer, bath gel, lotion and toothpaste for homeless patients who visit the Free Clinic. Donations can be placed in the Church Office PW Bin.



PWCT meets on Wednesday, April 3 at 11:00 a.m. in the youth director's office. Grace Circle will meet on Thursday, April 11 at 9:30 a.m. in the chapel. Coffee and tea will be provided.

Hope Circle will meet on Thursday, April 11 at 1:30 p.m. in the library.

Joy/Peace Circle will meet on Thursday, April 9 at 1:30 p.m. in the library.



Presbyterian Women of Lake Erie Presbytery Spring Gathering is on Saturday, April 20 from 10:00 a.m. to

1:30 p.m. at Girard Presbyterian Church. Keynote speaker Katie Kretz, Executive Director of the Multi-Cultural Community Resource Center in Erie, will share with us how MCRC assists refugees in resettling in our communities. You will not want to miss this outstanding program! If you have any questions, please contact PWLEP Moderator Karen Haas at 814-397-1619 or karenhaas79@gmail.com. For more go to www.pbylakeerie.org.



Fairview Fairmont Family Center – We are truly

blessed. Thank you to the staff, Ms. Rosanne and Ms. Emily, for your dedication and love.

Thank you to all our volunteers: Ms. Miriam (Ms. Rosanne's sister) who volunteers every Wednesday; the Board who is very supportive and open to new ideas; Mr. Marty Malone who made building blocks for the children; and all the other generous people who offer their time, talents and donations. We will be forever grateful for "our village of people" who have come together in the name of Jesus.



Soup Kitchen Volunteers: If you have worked at the Meadville Area Soup Kitchen over the years and would like to attend Beverly Nutter's

Retirement Dinner on June 1, 2024, please stop in the church office, on or before April 15, for more information and a registration form.



Living Waters for the World trains volunteers to establish and lead water mission teams that partner with communities to implement and operate sustainable water purification systems and health education programs all over the world. Meadville First donates \$1,200 a year to this wonderful ministry. For more information go to www.livingwatersfortheworld.org



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 Office Closed April Fool's Day	2 5:30 Liberty Bells Rehearsal	3 10:00 Staff Meeting 11:00 PWCT 3:45 P.R.A.Y. 5:30 Session 7:15 Soulstice	4	5	6
7 8:30 Worship with Communion 9:30 Sunday School, Choir Rehearsal & Youth Group 11:00 Worship 12:00 Congregational Lunch Hosted by the Mission Committee	8 6:30 Deacon Meeting	9 1:30 Joy/Peace Circle 5:30 Liberty Bells Rehearsal	10 1:00 Knit Unto Others	11 9:30 Grace Circle 1:30 Hope Circle 6:15 PNC Meeting	12 Evangel Articles Due	13
14 8:30 Worship 9:30 Sunday School & Choir Rehearsal 11:00 Worship	15 5:30 Cornerstone Child Care Board Meeting	16 1:00 Praying for Children 5:30 Liberty Bells Rehearsal	17 10:00 Staff Meeting 3:45 P.R.A.Y. Committee Night	18 3:30 Stephen Ministry Leadership Meeting 4:00 Stephen Ministry 6:15 PNC Meeting	19	20 3:15 Allegheny College Spring Concert
21 8:30 Worship 9:30 Sunday School 11:00 Worship Youth Group - Fiddler on the Roof	22 Earth Day	23 1:00 Praying for Children 5:30 Liberty Bells Rehearsal	24 Administrative Professional Day	25 5:00 Trustee Meeting	26	27
28 8:30 Worship 9:30 Sunday School, Choir Rehearsal, Youth Group 11:00 Worship <i>Mary Zahora's 25th Anniversary as Administrative Assistant</i>	29	30 1:00 Praying for Children 5:30 Liberty Bells Rehearsal				



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Palm Sunday - March 24
8:30 & 11:00 a.m.

Soulstice - Wednesday, March 27
7:15 p.m.

Maundy Thursday - March 28
7:30 p.m.

Good Friday - March 29
Musical Reflection on the Seven Last Words
12:00 Noon

Easter Sunday - March 31
8:30 & 11:00 a.m.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

SUNDAY WORSHIP - 8:30 AM and 11:00 AM
(11:00 AM service is available on YouTube)
SUNDAY SCHOOL - 9:30 a.m.
SOULSTICE - 7:15 p.m. March 27 & April 3

CHURCH STAFF

Interim Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. Dan Corll
Minister of Music: Kevin Dill
Children's Ministry Coordinator: Vickie Fischer
Youth Leader: Shelly Smith
Administrative Assistant: Mary Zahora
Financial Secretary: Kris Lubomski
Custodian: Elijah Boyd
Evening Custodian: Chris Wade
Email: firstchurch@meadvillefpc.org
Find us at www.meadvillefpc.org and
www.facebook.com/FPCMeadville