



# The Presbyter

May 2020

The First Presbyterian Church of Clarks Summit

## When will we be together again?



That's the big question, isn't it! We have no quick answer, especially since the news reports tell us the coronavirus cases continue. Our Elders and staff miss the physical vitality of our church, but we are not inclined to rush a return if there is the chance that people could become ill. A few of our church members have contracted the disease. While they are on the way to full recovery, they confirm it is a demanding and difficult virus.

Rev. Carter has begun conversations with the Session and staff about our approach to returning to worship together. The return will happen in phases, under the guidance of wise public health authorities. It will not begin before the governor and health officials lift restrictions.

### Here is a snapshot of the developing plan:

- \* When the time is right, we would have two worship services on Sunday at 8:30 and 10:00 a.m.
- \* Initially, attendance at each service would be restricted to 50 people scattered throughout the sanctuary.
- \* The first service would be recorded and broadcast later on that Sunday morning, allowing those who can take part at home to continue doing so.
- \* First priority for the sanctuary services would be for those who haven't been able to do so at home. To this end, we would take advance reservations for the sanctuary service through the church office. Walk-ins could only be accepted if we could keep the attendance at acceptable limits.
- \* We would require face masks and restrict congregational singing. Sanitation precautions would be taken.

Any feedback on the plan? Ways to improve it? Please let us know. Our planning team includes Jay Clymer, Andy Kepler, John Conklin, Frank Jones, and Rev. Bill Carter.

## Lectionary Readings

**May 17** Acts 17:22-31; Psalm 66:8-20; 1 Peter 3:13-22; John 14:15-21

**May 24** Acts 1:6-14; Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35; 1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11; John 17:1-11

**May 31 Pentecost** Acts 2:1-21; Numbers 11:24-30; Psalm 104:24-34, 35b; 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13; John 20:19-23; John 7:37-39

**June 7** Trinity Sunday Genesis 1:1-2:4a; Psalm 8; 2 Corinthians 13:11-13; Matthew 28:16-20

**June 14** Genesis 18:1-15 (21:1-7); Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19; Romans 5:1-8; Matthew 9:35-10:8 (9-23)

**June 21** Genesis 21:8-21; Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17; Romans 6:1b-11; Matthew 10:24-39

**June 28** Genesis 22:1-14; Psalm 13; Romans 6:12-23; Matthew 10:40-42

**Joys**

**Sorrows**

**Thank You Notes**



*Birthdays*

- 2 Gary Wadsworth
- 11 Wally Longcor
- 21 Jeanne DeVirgilis  
David Naeher
- 22 Jana Schillinger
- 23 Jillian Shane
- 24 Sue Flynn
- 28 Kate O'Brien

*Anniversaries*

- 24 Nina and Brian Schillinger



*Birthdays*

- 3 Karis Naeher
- 5 Sherry Connell  
Ron Wescott
- 9 Debbie Traettino
- 10 Hadley Gilbert
- 17 Al Traettino
- 21 Gerry Conklin  
Jacob Wescott  
Caly Yankow
- 22 Jacob Cole  
Kim Rich
- 23 Jay Clymer
- 24 Ran Billiot
- 25 Jacki Bailey  
Brooklyn Yankow
- 28 Tom Decker
- 30 Janet Dobson  
Brady Kareha

*Anniversaries*

- 4 Jay and Liz Clymer
- 8 Al and Deb Traettino
- 11 Dave and Donna Porter
- 26 Wendy and Ron Wescott



Sympathy of the congregation is extended to the family of Marjorie Lloyd who entered the Church Triumphant May 7, 2020.



**WITH GRATITUDE**

We have often considered our congregation to be a wonderful, giving, and caring family. This has never been more evident over the past several weeks as we have battled COVID-19, including a week in the hospital for Diane. The outpouring of support (meals, grocery shopping, cards, phone calls, texts, and prayers) has been not only gratifying for us but has been tremendously uplifting as well during a difficult time. We are indeed thankful to be part of the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church of Clarks Summit – our church family.

Diane and Jack Scheuer

**Board of Deacons**

Care Team Ministry **Coordinators are:**

Deacon Meals	Donna Kepler 570-587-2729
Time of Loss	Anne Rich 570-587-2802
Emergency Home Repairs And Maintenance	Joe Waters 570-586-7233
Deacon Driver	Mick Wirth 570-587-3767

Please let the Board of Deacons Care Team Coordinators or the church office know if anyone is in need of care.

We're here to care for FPC members and friends and we count on all of you to let us know when help is needed. This is our ministry and our Christian privilege to care for you.

## From the Pastor

This pandemic is an **apocalyptic** moment. That's a ten cent word that the New Testament uses for "an unveiling." The word is borrowed from the dramatic stage, as the curtain opens and we see what has been hidden from us. In other words, a revelation. The big unveiling in the Bible is that God rules over all things. But what are we seeing - and learning - during this smaller apocalypse? Here is my Top Ten list:



**1. All of us are vulnerable.** Welcome to the human race. A virus does not discriminate. Should we?

**2. We need one another.** Selfishness may be intoxicating, but it has been revealed as a scam. In the wisdom of Estonian composer Arvo Part, "This tiny coronavirus has showed us in a painful way that humanity is a single organism and human existence is possible only in relation to other living beings."

**3. Magic doesn't work.** Some well-intentioned Christians quote Psalm 91 with its promise that God will protect us. They forget this is the psalm that the Devil uses to tempt Jesus ("Jump from the temple and God will catch you."). Bible-quoters can never presume they get special treatment. They should wash their hands.

**4. Creation still goes on.** The spring flowers returned without any help from us. The city smog evaporates as we drive less and the planet heals its own atmosphere. God created the world to flourish. It will if we don't get in the way. And the earth will continue, with us or without us.

**5. Yes, we really can take a Sabbath.** God ordained rest, one day out of seven. Life does not gain its value from productivity, but from resting in the grace of God. Time to breathe and be replenished is good for us.

**6. Truth is more important than optimism.** Any rush to return to "normal" will be short-sighted, if only because the pandemic is re-arranging our lives. The only experts on illnesses are those who study them, with evidence, testing, and objective data. They are worthy of our deep respect. Thank God for their good work.

**7. "You will always have the poor with you."** (Mark 14:7) To no one's surprise, the vulnerable and the disenfranchised are catching the virus and dying at a much higher rate than the privileged. We have the ability to rebuild our society in ways that affirm the value of every life. Will we have the moral courage to do so?

**8. Discipline is difficult, but it saves lives.** No further comment.

**9. The mind is meant to be nurtured and the heart is given to be enlarged.** The people who are getting through this pandemic are reading books, discussing great thoughts, and enjoying the arts. They are developing new ways to show love and be connected. They refuse to be isolated even if they stay home.

**10. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.** Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult... God will help when the morning dawns." (Psalm 46:1-3, 5)

Please know that I pray for you and your families, and I long for the day when we are together again. With you in the journey,

*Rev Bill Carter*

## News to Share

The **Upper Room Devotional Booklets for May/June** have arrived at the church. If you or someone you know routinely takes one home, please leave a message on the church voicemail (570-586-6306) and we will mail it out.

**THANK YOU for your support of One Great Hour of Sharing.** We are thrilled to announce we exceeded our \$5000 goal for the year. A significant part of this year's OGHS is providing relief for those affected by covid-19. In addition, the Mission and Justice committee has just donated \$1600 toward the food ministries of the Friends of the Poor and the Weinberg Food Bank. Your generosity as a church is helping to feed people.

**THANK YOU for your strong support of our church's ministry.** Because of your generosity, we are meeting our financial commitments and reaching out to the community in mission. Let's keep it going! Many have begun to regularly give online through our website ([www.fpccs.org](http://www.fpccs.org)), which very easy to do. Others are contributing by sending their pledges to the church office. It is making a difference and we are grateful.

**Need to talk to somebody?** Our church leaders, Stephen Ministers, and our pastor are just a phone call away. Rev. Carter would also be glad to give you a call or contact you on Skype or Zoom teleconferencing.

**Know anybody who has lost a job or needs food?** We can help, thanks to the Norton Fund, the Deacons, and the Abington Food Pantry. Please contact Rev. Bill ([pastor@fpccs.org](mailto:pastor@fpccs.org) or **570-586-6776**). All requests are confidential and should be made by those who need the assistance.

Many people in the church are willing to **make a run to the grocery store** for someone in our church family. Contact our office and we will help to make the connection. Also, the Gathering Place is creating **The Open Door Food Pantry**, an outreach to the people in our immediate neighborhood. Our church and OLS have agreed to help. Contact Dori Waters (570-586-7233) to find out how you can donate food.

**Some of our members are making masks for those who need them.** Anybody need one? Contact our office. Also, do you have any 1/4" elastic to contribute to the effort? Let us know that, too.

**Rev. Carter has rescheduled this summer's pastoral sabbatical for the summer of 2021.** The Louisville Institute has extended the sabbatical grant until September 2021. So, for this summer, he is planning a sermon series on the Psalms. See you in church - or online!

**Calling all Graduates** Ceremony or no ceremony, we want to honor all who are graduating this year, whether it's from high school, college, or higher ed. Please contact Myrna Diven at 570-586-8821 with information on you or someone you know who is graduating.



**The deadline for the next Presbyter is TBD!**

The Presbyter is a monthly newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church, 300 School Street, Clarks Summit, PA 18411.

**All worship services are currently held online on Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m.** We will gladly send out print copies of sermons to those who request them.

**Do we have your email address? Are you not "on-line" or prefer not to Zoom?** You are still very much a part of our church community and we want you to feel included. Give us a call and let us know how we can best stay connected. 570-586-6306

<b>Church Office</b>	<b>(570) 586-6306</b>
<b>Fax</b>	<b>(570) 587-3784</b>
<b>Web Page</b>	<b><a href="http://www.fpccs.org">www.fpccs.org</a></b>
<b>Pastor</b>	William G. Carter
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<b>Coordinator of Children &amp; Youth</b>	Jana Schillinger
<b>Treasurer</b>	Wayne Griffiths
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<b>Director of Chapel Choir</b>	Kay Ten Eyck
<b>Organist</b>	Kay Ten Eyck
<b>Sexton</b>	John Conklin



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

300 School Street

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