

The Annual Report of the Congregation of First Presbyterian Church Of Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania For the year ending December 31, 2018

First Presbyterian Church Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION AND CORPORATION February 3, 2019 11:45 a.m.

Call to Order for the Congregational Meeting

Opening Prayer

Minutes of the Congregation and Corporation Meeting of February 4, 2018

Statistical Report

Reports of Pastor, Staff, and Committees

Report of Church Treasurer for 2018

Action on Reports

Preview 2019 Budget

Adjournment of Congregational Meeting

Call to Order for Corporation Meeting

Action on the Congregational Meeting

Adjournment of Corporation Meeting

Closing Prayer and Benediction

CHURCH MEMBERS WHO HAVE DIED DURING 2018

Mary Copley
Riccardo Girello Sr.
William Keen
Velma Longcor
Carol Shamonsky
Charlotte Spory
William Thorburn

Dayle Elkins
James Justin
Donald Lewis
Kathryn Rudis
Mary Sponaugle
John Spory
Nancy Wheaton

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		2018 Statistical	Report		
Additions:	Received by Reaffirmation	p as of December 31 y Profession of Faith on of Faith			541 + 3 affiliates 8 549
Losses:	Certificate of Removed for Death				1 6 <u>14</u>
528 + 3 affiliates Total Church Membership as of December 31, 2018					
Bapti	sms - 3	Funerals - 12	Marriag	es -	5
Average Sunday Morning Attendance			2018 - 1 2017 - 1		

2019 Pastor's Report Rev. Bill Carter

The two keys to longevity are (a) doing work that gives you joy and (b) enjoying the people who join you in that work. Joy is at the heart of sticking at it. That's the theme for my report to you. I want to share about the joy that sustains my heart.

The work of the gospel is deeply fulfilling. There is something about the weekly pace of preparing and preaching sermons that consistently engages my best effort. Whether it taps the hidden scholar in my personality or calls forth the latent entertainer, I find nothing as satisfying as creating a fresh reflection on the scriptures each week. And I will tell you the secret why: if the preacher speaks of Christ to others, the preacher encounters Christ for himself. A good teacher teaches what he or she is still learning. The best way to talk about grace is if you have experienced it for yourself. All of this is true for me, and I thank you for being part of it.

Or what about the work of pastoral care? It consists of three interlocking components: being present with people, sharing in conversations with them, and holding up the moment in prayer. It can be tricky. Rookie caregivers tend to cover their awkwardness by talking too much or listening too little, while ignoring prayer with God who is present in every situation. Our congregation has called me to be a pastor and given me the opportunities to grow in the role. Sometimes I almost get it right, and that gives me joy.

What about funerals? To single them out, this year we have had quite a few. Each person is an embodied story, precious to God. The joy comes in learning these stories, reporting them honestly in all their inconsistencies and surprises, and remaining steady as the generations rise and fall. After a while, you also pick up observable clues about God. Every life is filled with milestones of mercy. There are potholes of bad judgment and plenty of pavements of clear sailing, yet by and large each life reveals what Elie Wiesel once quipped: "God created us because God loves good stories."

Sometimes I daydream of a far-off future when I will have no more Session meetings, e-mails to answer, or committees to repopulate. Yet the truth is, around here these things can be a lot of fun. This church functions well. The people work hard to overcome differences, the grumbles are worked out, and the Gospel sandpaper polishes off the hard edges. People want to be here. Do you know how rare that is? I do. I treasure it, and I can't yet imagine a day for me when I don't leap out of bed to enjoy another day among you.

So that's what I can report to you this year. We are flourishing. The staff is productive and imaginative. The leaders are leading. For those with eyes to see it, the congregation is growing and diminishing at the same time, taking on new challenges and casting off things that don't fit any more. This is how it should be for a living, breathing church.

I could say a lot more, but most of you know that you'll be sitting here a lot longer if you get me started. Suffice it to say, it's been a very good year.

Jana Schillinger Coordinator of Children and Youth Ministries

At the close of 2018, we baptized babies three Sundays in a row. Hearing the liturgy of baptism repeated through most of December, coupled with the usual Advent talk of the baby Jesus, really got me thinking about the questions asked and answered during that sacrament. In baptism, the parents answer on behalf of their child: yes, I turn from sin and renounce evil and its power in the world; Jesus Christ is my Lord and savior; yes, I will be Christ's disciple, obeying his word and showing his love. They are also asked if they will nurture their child in the life and faith of the Christian community. But they are not the only ones to make promises.

We, as a congregation, promise to love and support the children of the church both in word and deed, and encourage them to love, trust, and follow Christ. So how are we doing with that promise?

Well, this past year has been as busy as ever for the Christian Education and Growth committee. We coordinate many ongoing programs and special events year-round, helping children of all ages learn Bible stories, ask faith questions, and deepen their understanding of and relationship with God.

We welcomed our youngest children to worship with activity bags, a weekly children's message, and nursery care. We gave Bibles to both kindergarten and third grade students so that they can read God's word for themselves. All children are welcome on Wednesday nights for the WAY, where our younger children began a fantastic new curriculum in the fall and our older children dig deeper into the Bible to answer their questions. We hosted vacation Bible school for children both in our church and the community, transforming the church into ancient Babylon so we could hear messages of hope, faith, and courage from Daniel...many adults and older youth volunteered their time to help make it happen. And speaking of the youth, they participated in youth group activities year-round, from game nights to bowling to the 30 Hour Famine. Ten students in grade seven and up just began confirmation class in October. We've hosted programs during Holy Week and Advent, collected pajamas for Head Start youth, and awarded scholarships so our children could experience fun and faith at summer camp. And that's not nearly all!

I'm proud that children are an integral part of our church life and are welcome in everything we do. As you can tell, the Christian Education committee is committed to helping our children (and adults!) grow in faith, knowledge, and love...but we certainly don't do it alone. Our programs run with the gracious help of many hands. Our volunteers serve as teachers, leaders, chaperones, set-builders, organizers, mentors, and much more. If you have shared your time and talents in any of our many endeavors in the past year: thank you, thank you, thank you.

But that brings me back to our baptismal promise to the children of our congregation. It is not just an obligation but a joy to share the Bible and the saving mercy of Jesus Christ with our children. It begins with participation: bring your children and grandchildren to worship, to the WAY, to youth group, and to our special programming...and bring yourselves, too, because children need to see that faith and church are important in your life. It continues with teaching: so often, I have heard from the adults and older youth that they have learned something new or reinvigorated their own faith through their teaching. They would also say, I hope, that teaching the Bible to children is not as intimidating as they feared. I encourage everyone to consider volunteering to help with CE programs; we have wonderful volunteers and an active, hands-on

committee, but we are in great need of more adults to share their gifts. What better way to fulfill our promise and lead children to a life of faith than by having them see your own?

This past year has been filled with many opportunities for learning, teaching, and experiencing God's love. Thank you for being a part of what we do. As we enter 2019, I invite everyone to come to Wednesday classes, to participate in the Immerse reading groups and men's and women's Bible study, to volunteer at youth activities, to welcome children to vacation Bible school, and to consider teaching our children, youth, or adults. The more we know about the Bible, church teachings, and our neighbors, the better equipped we are to live for, love, and serve God. Being part of the education program helps us all as we live our Christian faith. Join us!

Building and Grounds Jay Clymer



I joined the committee in June and agreed to Chair the committee. I can report on those six months of 2018.

Actions:

- Maggie Woolever and Tim Shane joined the committee.
- New locks and keys will be issued shortly and recipients will sign for a key.
- Three security cameras will be installed at the three entrances to the church.
- A pamphlet was prepared offering directions in the event of an active-shooter intrusion.
 They will be placed in the pews. Designated members will direct the congregation to exits during such an event.
- A curb was installed by the handicapped parking area.
- New tables and chairs were purchased and assembled in the session room.
- All school taxes and bills were paid.
- A summer work party was undertaken to clean up the grounds and parking lots.
- Dave Porter was commissioned to create panel art works to be installed in the sanctuary.
- An offending tree will soon be removed by the upper parking lot.
- An emergency device will soon be purchased and installed in the handicap bathroom.
- A gift of a snowblower was received from AA.
- Sidewalk repairs were completed along the lower parking lot.
- Regular repairs and maintenance were undertaken as needed.
- The committee met regularly on the first Thursday of the month.

Fellowship Committee Karen White



The Fellowship Committee offers an opportunity for church members and visitors to spend time together and to develop friendships founded in Christ's love. We do this by providing a weekly coffee hour September through May following Sunday worship. We would like to thank everyone who helped with the fellowship time during the summer and throughout the year.

We had our annual church picnic August 26th, at Camp Lackawanna.

In September we did our Community Service Project with UCP in Clarks Summit by helping them with yardwork.

The committee helped organize two potluck lunches this year. The first was for the 2018 Annual Congregational Meeting in February. The second was in September when we watched a video of the 2018 Community Service Day Projects.



Budget and Finance Committee Report for 2018 David Naeher

The Budget and Finance Committee is grateful to God for the resources that He chooses to give to the First Presbyterian Church of Clarks Summit. We also thank you, our members and friends, for the generosity that allowed the church to meet all of its financial obligations during 2018 and for the encouraging response to the 2019 stewardship campaign.

Pledge income for 2018 totaled \$321,869, which was \$1,869 over the budgeted amount. The committees' diligence and good stewardship resulted in total expenses that were under budget by \$9,931.

For 2019, the Session approved transfers of up to \$19,309 from the Ministry Enhancement Fund, as needed, in order to fund the compensation package of the Director of Educational Ministries. In addition, transfers of up to \$5,000.00 from the Building Maintenance Fund have been approved to pay for the maintenance of our building and grounds.

The committee is grateful for the work of Treasurer Wayne Griffiths, Administrator Nancy Owens, Counter Bonnie Plantholt, and Accountant Dave Argust for their many hours of service as they maintain the church's financial records. To James McLaughlin, Wayne Griffiths, Heather Acker, William Davis, Margaret Reese, and Barbara Brown, I extend my heartfelt thanks for your help during the past year. Your experience with the church's finances and your willingness to share your gifts and talents in service to God are a great blessing to me and to this congregation.

Mission and Justice Committee Robin Pinches



The Mission and Justice Committee seeks to respond to the concerns of peace and justice locally and globally by providing church and community members opportunities to serve and support those in greatest need through volunteer and financial support, advocacy and education.

Volunteering opportunities for our congregation this year have included:

- our continued support of the St. Francis of Assisi Soup Kitchen with monthly donations and clothing collections for distribution to those in need;
- mobilizing highway cleanup teams to participate in the Department of Transportation's Adopt-A-Highway program four times a year;
- working in another successful, well attended Worship Through Service day in September with nearly 100 people completing at least 8 different projects;
- working at the NEPA Youth Shelter in Scranton;
- working at the Weinberg NE Regional Food Bank providing food for those in need by packing boxes for low income elderly people, preparing pallets of food for local food banks, and preparing grocery carts of food for families at Thanksgiving,
- assisting refugee families with settling into their new lives in a new country, and participating in Refugee Day in the summer, and
- assisting an immigrant navigate the system while trying to adjust to a new country.

We continue to financially support those in need both here and abroad. Locally, the committee supported the work of the Catherine McAuley Center, Women's Resource Center, Children's Advocacy Center, Countryside Conservancy, Lackawanna River Conservation Association, St. Francis of Assisi Soup Kitchen, Catholic Social Services Refugee Program, United Neighborhood Center Post Foster Care program and Angels Attic, NEPA Youth Shelter, Community Intervention Center, Weinberg NE Regional Food bank, Infant Care Program at Covenant Presbyterian Church, and Williamson Jacques (Yaya), our Haitian scholarship student for travel and living expenses. Our church continues to support our denomination with the four Special Presbyterian Offerings (One Great Hour of Sharing, Pentecost, Peace and Global Witness, and Christmas Joy), and with money sent to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. Internationally, money was sent to Reaching the Pygmies Ministry in Uganda, Groundswell International in Haiti and PCUSA missionaries Leith and Carol Fujii, and Burkhard Paetzold in central Europe.

First Presbyterian has again been honored as an Earth Care Congregation by PCUSA. Throughout the year, the Mission and Justice committee has offered informative table talks including Scott Bolinder on Bible reading through the Immerse book studies, Charles and Alice Busingye on the Reaching the Pygmies Ministry in Uganda, Sonya Sarner and Tim Schwartz on Catholic Social Services Refugee Program, and Kaitlin Porter on the Florence Immigration and Refugee Rights Project.

Through the annual Alternative Gift Market held in November, we educated, advocated for and supported the artisans, trades people, mission workers, and farmers of ASP, Reaching the

Pygmies, Heifer International, SERRV, Haitian artists, and the PSCUSA Coffee Project, our ongoing coffee program sponsored by the Schillinger family.

This is a congregation that takes seriously the charge to love the poor and needy. Thank you for generously helping to care for God's people in our neighborhood and in our world with your financial support, and with your gifts of time, energy and hard work. Thank you also to committee members, Melba Fialko, Meg Hatch, Jack Scheuer, Linda Woodley, Fred Lyon, Barbara Decker, Phil Muntzel, Dave Porter, Donna Porter, Brian Schillinger, and Diane Scheuer (Co-Chair) for their ongoing commitment and willingness to work for justice and peace in our world.



Worship, Music and the Arts Alan Baker

The Committee for Worship, Music, and the Arts is responsible for planning meaningful, timely, and cohesive worship and music experiences for our congregation and visitors, as well as the larger community. The Committee (Alan Baker, Dick Cochrane, Judy Cutler, Betsy Ellis, Grace Farrell, Jeff Leas, Nancy Post, Connie Weiss, and John Weiss, joined by Pastor Bill Carter, Music Director Frank Jones, and Organist/Alleluia Choir Director Kay Ten Eyck) met monthly in pursuit of that mission.

Pastor Carter, guided by the Lectionary and Presbyterian Calendar, provided inspiring and thought- (even action-) provoking sermons and a clear foundation for our service planning across the full year. When he was away, he found excellent preacher-teachers to fill the pulpit. He also provided the occasional piano accompaniment and continued to plan, prepare, and lead our annual slate of "jazz" services (September, Christmas Eve, and Mardi-Gras).

A variety of volunteer choirs rehearsed weekly September through May and provided weekly anthems and/or special music and leadership for our congregational singing. Frank Jones led our adult and teen choirs and located (or provided himself) special music across the summer. Dick Cochrane led our adult bell choir, and organist/pianist Kay Ten Eyck accompanied the adult choir, directed/accompanied our children and teen choirs, accompanied our congregational singing, and prepared us both to worship and "go-out" with weekly preludes and postludes. Kay and Frank received important help with the teen and children's choirs from a number of volunteer parents and chaperones. Gayle Hamilton generously funded a new arrangement of the Welsh favorite, DIADEM, from Michael Bedford for the adult choir, in memory of former choir members Jim and Fran Justin.

Behind the scenes, committee members also insured that a variety of weekly or monthly needs were met, including nursery workers (Dick Cochrane), liturgists and Advent wreath families (Grace Farrell), Communion servers (Alan Baker), Communion preparation (Shirley McLaughlin) and hymn and psalm selection (John and Connie Weiss). John Weiss and Dick Cochrane continued to lead a separate committee to produce a very successful (musically and financially) series of Arts at First Presbyterian Concerts and Ice-Festival events, Bill Carter organized our online series of congregation- and staff-authored Advent Reflections, Dick Cochrane maintained our web-site and provided a variety of other publicity work, and Frank Jones handled the occasional live-streaming of services. Beverly Bright and Connie Weiss, among others, also

attended to the important visual element of our worship by insuring that the sanctuary and Communion Table were beautifully decorated for the various seasons of the church year.

The Committee also worked jointly with other committees, particularly Mission and Justice and Christian Education, to plan or support meaningful projects like September's Worship through Service and our Advent Hanging of the Greens.

People in Ministry Craig H. Smith



The People in Ministry Committee is responsible for overseeing and reviewing performance reports by the Staff and dealing with all personnel issues as they occur. We are most blessed to have some of the most talented and spiritually-committed staff working for our church to guide and provide continued support and growth.

The People in Ministry Committee is also responsible for completing the selection process for church officers (elders and deacons) for this congregation. This process includes searching for the best possible, qualified and faithful people from the congregation to serve a three-year term. Also contributing to these committees are other members from the congregation who want to serve the Lord in a committed effort that benefits the whole body of Christ.

This committee is made up of Craig Smith, Grant Taylor and Heather Acker who attend meetings throughout the year.

Board of Deacons' Annual Report Ginny O'Brien



Board of Deacons – Officers from June 2018-May 2019

ModeratorGinny O'BrienVice ModeratorSteuart BaileySecretaryDrew TaylorTreasurerMarsha Parrish

Boars of Deacons – Members

Class of 2019 Class of 2020 Class of 2021 Jacob Cole Bill Farrell Steuart Bailey Hadley Gilbert Vi Dygert John Diven Gwynne Gilbert Ryan Flynn Betty Keen Virginia O'Brien Donna Kepler Peter Moore Anne Rich Jim McLaughlin Joe Waters Andrew Taylor Marsha Parrish

Steve Selige

The Deacons serve the congregation and community through a series of care teams which function year round and provide individual events throughout the year. The care teams and individual events have coordinators who oversee the activities of their committees. The Deacons usher every service, help to serve communion, and meet on the fourth Tuesday of every month.

Care Teams and Coordinators

Time of Loss: Betty Keen

This committee provides support to our congregation members during bereavement. The Deacons arrange for one or more Deacons to be present at all funerals. It also provides a large meal after the service, if the family would like one.

Journeying Through Greif: Anne Rich

Anne Rich sends a note to church members after a loss and follows up with a series of four books throughout the year dealing with grief management.

Independent/ Assisted Living: Donna Kepler

Donna Kepler and the Deacons keep in touch with members who are in nursing homes, assisted living centers, or live at home but have limited independence/mobility. These contacts are maintained throughout regular visits, calls, and cards. Donna also ordered and organized delivery of poinsettias before Christmas.

Emergency Home Independence/Maintenance: Joe Waters

Joe Waters assists church members with emergency home repair or maintenance as needed.

Deacon Meals: Donna Kepler

Donna Kepler organizes a team which provides meals and company to members of the congregation who experience hospitalization, serious illness, death in the family, etc. Various members of the congregation have helped the Deacons meet these needs as well.

Cards and Letters: Vi Dygert

Vi Dygert sends out get well cards, sympathy and thinking of you cards to those who are hospitalized, sick at home, or grieving.

Welcome Team: Drew Taylor

Drew Taylor meets with his team monthly to update and improve our welcoming and following up with our new parishioners.

POWR team (Parishes Organized to Welcome Refugees): Ginny O'Brien

The POWR team has been assigned a mother and her six children from the Congo to help them get acclimated here in our area. They help with finding housing, budgeting, getting financial aid,

doctors' appointments, English classes, and many other things. Most importantly, they have become friends. This team is a combination of Deacons and Mission and Justice Members.

Although these teams function through the Deacons, other church members are more than welcome (and do) join in their operation by suggesting names of members who need assistance or in actually helping meet the goals of the teams.

Annual Events Sponsored by the Deacons:

Crop Walk - Spring

Food Drives for AEM Food Pantry - April and October

Active Shooter Program - July

Jazz Communion - September

Worship through Service – September

Cleaned up and planted at the Depot St. Pocket Park / installed a sink at The Gathering Place

Boxes for College Students - November

Thanksgiving Dinner for Refugees and their regular volunteers – November

A few Deacons helped Abington Heights Interact Club Students use our kitchen and dining room so they could cook, serve, and clean up a meal for 100 refugees and their volunteers who drove them.

Blue Christmas Vespers Service - December

The Deacon's Treasury is supported by donations from the congregation by means of Deacon's Offering Envelopes. The Deacon's fund also receives the loose plate offering on the first Sunday of February, March, April, May, October, November, and December. Congregation members sometimes make other donations. Any distribution of the treasury funds is made by Motion and agreement of the Board Members, and such distributions can be found within the Deacons' Annual Treasury Report and meeting minutes.

Board of Deacons Treasurer's Report Marsha Parrish, treasurer

Cash balance as of 1/1/2018	<u>\$ 2510.76</u>
<u>Deposits</u>	
Donations and Offerings	\$ 3992.00
<u>Disbursements</u>	
Gift cards/donations for emergency needs	\$ 450.00
Birthday cards/stamps	89.93
Flowers	300.43
Bank service charge	6.00
Worship thru Service	95.14
College Boxes	335.04
Christmas Eve fellowship supplies	95.95
Table/chairs for session room	1819.00
<u>Contributions</u>	

Abington Ecumenical Ministerium Books for Refuge Center NEPA Youth Shelter Total Disbursements \$ 500.00 313.02 500.00 \$ 4504.51

Cash Balance as of 12/31/2018

\$ 1998.25

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN 2018 ANNUAL REPORT Lee Wirth, Moderator



Purpose: Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ we commit ourselves: to nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study, to support the mission of the church worldwide, to work for justice and peace, and to build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (USA) and witnesses to the promise of God's kingdom.

- Lee Wirth Moderator
- Jeanne DeVirgilis Vice Moderator
- Barbara Pittman Secretary
- Bonnie Plantholt Treasurer

We have two Circles that meet September through June on the third Tuesday of the month. The combined circles (Dorcas and Priscilla) meet at 10:00 AM at the church. The evening circle (Eunice) meets at 7:00 PM at the church.

The second and fourth Tuesday of the month, excluding July and August, a group of us meet in Fellowship Hall at the church to make sleeping bags for the homeless (My Brother's Keeper Quilts – MBKQ). They are distributed in New York, Philadelphia and Scranton.

On the first Tuesday in April and October, we invite about twenty-five men and women from the Clarks Summit State Hospital to join us for lunch, entertainment and fun. We provide new socks for our guests to take back with them.

On September 11th we met at the church for Relate, Relax, Renew. We had a covered dish meal, followed by a brief overview of our study for the coming year, *God's Promise: I Am with You*.

We continue to contribute to the mission of the larger church through our Thank, Least Coin and Birthday Offerings.

Happy 2019 to everyone.

2018 Presbyterian Women's Association Treasurer's Report Bonnie Plantholt, treasurer

Beginning balance Receipts	\$1,903.84 <u>1,041.66</u> \$2,945.50
Disbursements Service Charge	\$1,683.41 <u>24.00</u> \$1,707.41
Ending balance 12/31/2018	<u>\$1,238.09</u>



PAUL R DOBSON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP Janet Dobson

The Paul R. Dobson Memorial Scholarship was established in the fall of 2006 to recognize a graduating high school senior member of our church who plans to further his/her education. Monies from the Christmas Eve loose plate collection are deposited into this fund, as well as any other contributions that are so designated. Completed applications are due May 1. The application can be downloaded from the church's website and left in the church office. The winner is announced during Graduate Recognition Sunday. As there were no applicants for 2018, no scholarship was awarded.

The committee consists of the Dobson Family and 2 members of the church.



Memorial Fund Annual Report Barbara Brown

Memorial contributions were received in memory of:

Mary Copley	Riccardo Girello Sr.
James Justin	William Lees Jr
James Overgard	Kathryn Rudis
JoAnne Shepherd	Mary Sponaugle
Nancy Wheaton	Frank Winters
	James Justin James Overgard JoAnne Shepherd

Contributions for the year 2018 totaled \$4,405.

The breakdown for dedicated memorials is as follows:

Norton Fund \$ 50 Music Fund \$ 500 My Brother's Keepers Quilts \$1,615

The balance of funds which are not designated, \$2,240, are placed into the Restricted Fund Account #2017.

Support Groups

Alcoholics Anonymous

The Tradition Three Group of Alcoholics Anonymous meets seven days a week at 7:00 a.m. and is open to anyone with a desire to stop drinking. Our primary purpose is to stay sober by following the twelve steps as put forth in the book Alcoholics Anonymous and to carry this message to alcoholics who still suffer.

We are grateful to the members of The First Presbyterian Church of Clarks Summit for graciously allowing us the use of their facilities.

Alcoholics Anonymous Big Book Group meets on Tuesday nights at 7:00 p.m. and is open to anyone with a desire to stop drinking.

Al-Anon

Al-Anon has offered strength and hope for friends and families of problem drinkers. It is estimated that each alcoholic affects the lives of at least four other people. This group has been in existence for many years, and recently began meeting here on Wednesday evenings. Twenty-five to thirty-five are involved in the meeting each week.

Overeaters Anonymous

Overeaters Anonymous is a Fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience, strength and hope, are recovering from compulsive overeating. We welcome everyone who wants to stop eating compulsively. There are no dues or fees for members; we are self-supportive, through our own contributions, neither soliciting nor accepting outside donations. OA is not affiliated with any public or private organization, political movement, ideology or religious doctrine; we take no position on outside issues. Our primary purpose is to abstain from compulsive overeating and to carry the message of recovery to those who still suffer.