



The Presbyter

November 2025

The First Presbyterian Church of Clarks Summit

Holiday decorating after church

Help us decorate on November 23 after worship!

Before we know it, Advent will be here and Christmas will be coming! The first Sunday of Advent is November 30, which is the Sunday after Thanksgiving.

In order to have the church decorated for the first Sunday of Advent, this year we will stay after worship on Sunday, November 23, enjoy a soup luncheon, and then decorate the sanctuary. We will put up and decorate the trees, get out the nativities, decorate the window sills, and put up all those wreaths. Fun for all! We hope you can come and join in.

If you are able to make a crockpot of soup to share, please text or call Robin Pinches (570-878-3293) or Jan Thyren (570-881-4979).

Thanks for all you do. See you there!



Give Thanks for the Norton Fund

Established by our Session many years ago, our Norton Fund has provided helpful assistance to those in our church family who have experienced financial difficulties. Whether folks have lost jobs, struggled with unanticipated expenses, or found the cupboard to be bare, our church has often provided short-term assistance.

Our loose plate offering on Sunday, November 23 will benefit this fund. Please give generously! And if you know of anyone who could be helped quietly and with discretion, ask them to speak with Rev. Carter or Bill Farrell, our Norton Fund chair.

National Donor Sabbath

Annual observance set for November 16

Observed annually in November, National Donor Sabbath is honored among Presbyterians, donor families, transplant recipients, and the donation and transplantation community. During National Donor Sabbath, faith leaders come together to educate the public about the critical need for life-saving organ and tissue donations given to others through transplantation. Collectively, they encourage people within their community to register their decision to be organ, eye, and tissue donors.

As many people turn to their faith when faced with life and death, it's important to note that all major religions view donation as an act of compassion and generosity.

For more information about religious beliefs on donation, visit organdonor.gov/about/donors/religion.html.

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Notes from the Session Meeting October 14, 2025

1. Session is working with the Finance Committee, Jeff McLaughlin, chair to finalize the budget for the 2026 year.
2. Notes from the Worship, Music & Arts Committee -- Before we know it, Advent will be here and Christmas will come quickly. The first Sunday of Advent is November 30, which is the Sunday after Thanksgiving. In order to have the church decorated for the first Sunday of Advent, this year we will stay after worship on Sunday, November 23, have a soup luncheon, and then decorate the sanctuary! We will put up and decorate the trees, get out the nativities, decorate the windowsills, and put up all those wreaths. Fun for all! We hope you can come and join in! If you are able to make a crockpot of soup to share, please text or call Robin Pinches (570-878-3293) or Jan Thyren (570-881-4979)

Beverly Bright, Clerk of Session

Board of Deacons

Care Team Ministry Coordinators are:

Moderator	Erika Adams
Deacon Meals	Diana Pope-Albright
Ushers	Bette Ellis
Deacon Driver	Jack Pittman

Church phone number is 570-586-6306

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.

The Presbyterian deadline for
the December issue is
November 7, 2025 .

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

All visitors are welcome to worship with us.

Worship services are held on Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m. Child care is available. Communion is observed the first Sunday of every month.

If you do not attend a church in this area, we invite you to any and all of the events, programs, and worship services described in this newsletter. Please call the church office to arrange child care. Our sanctuary and Fellowship Hall are both handicapped accessible.

Church Office	(570) 586-6306
Fax	(570) 587-3784
Web Page	www.fpcps.org
Pastor	William G. Carter
Administrative Assistant	Nancy Owens
Coordinator of Children & Youth	Jana Schillinger
Editor	Christine Lee
Clerk of Session	Beverly Bright
Director of Music	Frank Jones
Director of Bells	Richard Cochrane
Organist	Kay Ten Eyck
Sexton	Michael Lambert

FROM YOUR FINANCE COMMITTEE FOR THE MONTH ENDING Sept. 30, 2025

REVENUE

Budget	\$315,138
Actual Received	<u>300,561</u>
Difference	(\$ 14,577)

EXPENSES

Budget	\$314,384
Actual Expenses	<u>328,069</u>
Difference	(\$ 13,685)

Result of operations (\$27,508)

PLEDGE

Budget	\$278,238
Received	<u>262,318</u>
Difference	(\$15,920)

Per capita assessment for 2025 is \$46.10 per member.

From the Pastor

What an extraordinary party you threw for me! In this month of Thanksgiving, I write to thank all of you for the grand celebration of my forty years as a pastor. It was a wonderful event and I'm deeply appreciative. Thank you! That pastoral anniversary has prompted me to reflect on my call to ministry. You've heard some of those stories. But did you ever hear how I ended up in Clarks Summit?

Clarks Summit was a spot on the map between my hometown of Owego, New York, and my seminary in Princeton, New Jersey. I passed by many times, but never stopped. My first trip through the village was a Saturday night in July 1985. It was sometime after midnight and I had just played music with a Top Forty band in Towanda. Friends in Bound Brook, New Jersey, invited me to bunk for the night, since the next morning I would preach in their Congregational church to a pastoral search committee from Catasauqua, PA.

As I zipped down Route 6 through the corner of State Street and Winola Road, I had two thoughts. First, "So, this is where my classmate Lynn Lampman will be working." She had secured the associate pastor position at First Presbyterian to work with Rev. Vernon Towne. Similarly interested, I had also applied for the job but was late in the process. As I've thought many times, I wouldn't have lasted in that particular situation.

Here was my second thought: "My, this little town rolls up the sidewalks early on a Saturday night!" It is still true. John Kay's Pub (now the State Street Grill) was dimly lit. Butler's Sunoco had turned off the lights by 10 p.m. The Miracle Mile down the hill was nowhere as built up as it is now. I zoomed under the high turnpike bridge, took the interstate ramp, and rolled into Bound Brook about two hours later.

Little did I know how life would unfold. The Catasauqua church liked what they heard, and I went there to preach for the next five years. Clarks Summit became a Big Mac stop when visiting my folks. Vernon left to serve a cowboy church in Montana and I perked up. My friend Bob London had been bragging about this congregation. "It has great potential," he said. To prove it, he and Nancy sneaked me into town for a visit.

After dinner in their home, they asked, "Want to see the building?" Why not? I remember following a tall man into the building that night. It was Dave Brown and I have never told him that. I suspect he was heading to a pastoral search committee meeting. They met every week for months. It's a big job to find a pastor.

Months later, I met that search committee in the basement of Covenant Church, Scranton. The interview went very well, but Fred Lyon was the committee chair and a stickler for "following the process." Turns out, I was the first person that the search committee interviewed – and the final one they phoned. Along the way, I visited with committee members at a Presbyterian job fair at a Newark Airport hotel. Myrna Diven stayed in our guest room for a night at the Catasauqua manse. Steuart and Sandra Bailey connected with me one afternoon at Musikfest in Bethlehem. That committee wanted to be sure it would be a good fit. So did I.

After we mutually decided this pastoral call would be a good idea, the search committee invited me to the Pond House of Spring Hill Farms for a celebration. With considerable glee, Chris Norton and others threw all the unnecessary dossiers into a blazing fireplace. I noticed the paperwork of a few competitors, good people, too – so I made certain they were incinerated quickly. Didn't want anybody to have second thoughts.

It continues to be a great run and the hand of God has been in it all. Oh, how I'm grateful!

Rev. Bill

Opportunities to Learn and Grow in Faith

New Testament Connections at Wednesday Night Study

Starting November 5, we will begin a new series on Wednesday nights on "New Testament Connections." Each week, we will use a different lens to understand how the New Testament emerges out of the Old Testament context: timelines, maps, world history, and other tools. We meet at 6 p.m. in the library (Room 206).

Special Adult Education Event

On two Sundays, November 2 and 9, during coffee hour, Christian Education is sponsoring a special study about the "Barmen Declaration," a confession the Presbyterian church confirms in its Book of Confessions. After Adolf Hitler gained political control of the Evangelical Church of Germany in 1933, his appointees pressed his agenda, prohibiting the use of the Old Testament and requiring that clergy be of Aryan descent. The "Confessing Church" formed in resistance, and its leaders, insisting the church must remain faithful to Jesus Christ, issued the Barmen Declaration in 1934. We will meet in **Room 111** (former youth room).

Other Opportunities for Study and Growth

Women's Bible Study – 2025-26 Horizon Bible Study Finding Resilience, Joy and Our Identity in Jesus Christ Tuesday, November 18, 10 a.m., Fellowship Hall. **Lesson 3:** "Jesus is Tested" **Main Idea:** "How do we find resilience, and what helps us survive difficult challenges? We are tested, and so was Jesus. When Jesus was in the wilderness, the first thing the devil said was, "'If you are the Son of God . . .'" He attacked Jesus' identity as God's child. Does this sound familiar? How many times has your identity and value been challenged? Peace can suddenly turn into peril and when challenged, you forget who you are. In contrast Jesus' testing and temptation shows who he is, God's child, and so are you.

Men's Breakfast and Bible Study meets for donuts and Bible study on the first and third Thursday of every month. They gather for conversation at 8:30 a.m. in the Session Room (206) and have their study from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. In November, the group begins a study of Paul's letter to the Philippians.

Lectionary Readings

November 2: 21st Sunday after Pentecost

Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4; Psalm 119:137-144;
Luke 19:1-10

November 9: 22nd Sunday after Pentecost

Job 19:23-27a; Psalm 17:1-9; Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17; Luke 20:27-38

November 16: 23rd Sunday after Pentecost

Isaiah 65:17-25; Isaiah 12; Psalm 98

November 23: Christ the King

Psalm 46; Colossians 1:11-20; Luke 23:33-43

November 30: 1st Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 2:1-5; Psalm 122; Romans 13:11-14;
Matthew 24:36-44

Christian Education: Growing in Faith and Love

The Christian Education and Growth committee is pleased to offer a number of opportunities for our children, youth, and adults to explore the Bible, understand our traditions, and experience ways to live in faith. We believe that faith formation is a lifelong practice, so we invite everyone to find a class, opportunity, or practice that will grow YOUR faith this fall and beyond.

Christian Education



It's for life!



Bible Time: An opportunity for our **young children** (age 4 to approx. grade 4) to hear Bible stories told in a fun and engaging way, weekly **Bible Time** will happen during worship, for about 20 minutes. Children will be invited to attend after the anthem and will return for prayers and the end of the service.

Confirmation Class is held each Sunday at 11:15am for youth grade 7 and up who are interested in affirming their faith and becoming a bigger part of church life.

Using the **Big God, Big Questions** curriculum, Rev. Carter and Jana Schillinger will lead Bible discussions and faith exploration as we look at what it means to be a Presbyterian.



LIFT (Living in Faith Together): A regularly occurring **intergenerational program and meal** held after worship. We welcome families of all sizes and ages to break bread together as we hear God's word and engage with one another in discussion and activities. Our next LIFT program will welcome and celebrate the season of Advent on **December 7**, so mark your calendars for this event and spend time in fellowship with us!

Celebrating Advent: Watching for the Light



The season of Advent is a time to reflect on our many blessings, remember God's promises, practice patience (hopefully slowing down our busy-ness), and prepare our hearts to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

We welcome our families to pick up an **Advent Bag** filled with an Advent calendar, devotions, activity suggestions, supplies for a craft, and more. All ages and everyone in the church is welcome and encouraged to participate, so bags will be available both for families with children and for those without. Advent bags will be available to **pick up at the church beginning the week before Advent (Nov. 23).**



Mission and Justice Committee

Advent begins on November 30 this year, and along with Advent comes **Give a Gift to a Stranger**. This annual event will be set up in the narthex throughout Advent. It is an opportunity to give family and friends a meaningful Christmas gift while helping others in need. Look for the tables representing Haitian students, Appalachian Service Project, the Pygmy ministry, and refugee families in our community, and help us in supporting real people with real needs.

State Hospital Luncheon

A HUGE THANKS goes out to everyone who helped with our Oct. 2 State Hospital Luncheon: set-up to clean-up, along with some food donations to complete the meal. This outreach, which we do twice a year, would not be possible without everyone's help. The collected items on their wish list was awesome!

FELLOWSHIP WAS ENJOYED BY ALL!

Janet Dobson

November Food Drive

The Deacons will be sponsoring a November Food Drive to serve the Dalton Food Pantry and The Gathering Place. During the season of Thanksgiving, please help us feed those in need within our community.

Collections will be accepted throughout the month of November. Any non-perishable items would be appreciated, such as cereal, oatmeal, pasta, pasta sauce, peanut butter, tuna, crackers, etc.

Look for updates in the Sunday bulletin.

Volunteer Corner



“Worship Through Service” is definitely not a one weekend a year occurrence at First Presbyterian Church. Worship through service is a constant. The month of October has been a good example of our continuing commitment to mission outside our church walls. From the Mobile Food Pantry to the Hickory Street Community Meal Project to the State Hospital Luncheon, we are following through on the following intention:

“We intend to serve God by identifying needs in our world and congregation and responding to those needs in ways that are faithful to the Gospel.”

If you want to get involved in our ongoing service projects, please reach out to me for details!

Nancy Post

We are Growing Our Endowment

Have you thought about our endowment fund? This may surprise you: it is actually quite exciting. Our endowment funds are the foundation for a remarkable financial energy source for our ministries. It benefits our ministry today, and it goes further for the next generation, and for all generations who follow.

Here's how:

- Any contribution to the endowment is invested to (1) achieve long-term growth of the corpus and (2) distribute funds to mission and ministry every year. This is where it gets exciting: look at what would happen over 35 years:

If \$100,000 was invested in a typical endowment portfolio in 1981, over the next 35 years the value of the endowment would have distributed to ministry a total of \$426,000, and the corpus would have grown to \$225,000. In sum, \$100,000 generated \$651,000, and it will keep going for the next 35 years... and the next.

What a wonderful legacy for those who follow us!

Have you thought about your own legacy? Here? Through your legacy gift, you can keep providing this ministry for all generations that follow us. No gift is too small, and it is often very simple to do. Most legacy gifts are bequests through a will or trust, but there are several other strategies that can have some great benefits that your professional advisors can tell you about.

We would be delighted to help you to discern your legacy here. Contact our pastor or a member of the Generosity Team if you would like to discuss ideas for your legacy gift.

By the way: **our current endowment balance is just over \$ 200,000**, having had a nice "bump" of donations from Rev. Carter's anniversary party. Did you know that these invested funds will produce an additional stream of income for the mission and ministry of our church? This year, we anticipate \$ 7000 of income from the endowment.

Just imagine what we could do if each of us created a Legacy Gift for our church!

Honor the Lord with your substance
and with the first fruits of all your produce;
then your barns will be filled with plenty,
and your vats will be bursting with wine.

- Proverbs 3:9-10

Church Clean-up / Clean-out

It is time to tidy up

The *Building & Grounds Committee* is initiating a church-wide clean-up to emphasize a need to clean out material and items that have not been used or are no longer needed. The Committee has set November 1 as a goal to initiate activity. The B&G Committee will work with the staff and the leadership of various church committees to ensure cleanout activities are organized, approved and properly executed.

The church attic is the first target of opportunity. Anyone having stored material in the attic is respectfully requested to contact our sexton Mike Lambert as soon as feasible to assist in the proper planning of the cleanout.

Mid-November: Trivia Night for Young(er) Adults

The FPC Young(er) Adult Group is planning to attend a Trivia Night at a local establishment. We will most likely go on a Tuesday or Thursday, mid-month. Let Michael know if you are interested in attending at mkthompson96@gmail.com or 518-577-8691.

Holiday Angel Tree

It's time for our annual Pajama Drive for children in local Head Start programs!

Look for tags and more information on the Christmas tree set up in the Narthex this month.



Renewal off Wedding Vows

*On October 17, 2025
surrounded by loving
family and friends,
Chris and Jodi Cieszkowski
renewed their wedding vows in
our sanctuary with
Rev. Bill officiating.
Continued blessings to you,
Jodi and Chris.*

2025 Christmas Poinsettia Order Form

Price is \$10 per pot. Deadline is Sunday, November 23.

Please make checks payable to "First Presbyterian Church".

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Number of poinsettias: _____ @ \$10 each. Total amount enclosed: _____

Dedication: In memory/In honor of: _____

I will take my poinsettias. _____.

Poinsettias can be taken Sunday, Dec. 7.



A Celebration of Nancy Owens

Nancy Owens, our church's administrative assistant, is retiring after serving our church for the past 36 years. In the September copy of the Presbyterian, Rev. Bill wrote a glowing report about Nancy describing her as our "go-to person on all church matters" and stated that "I could never have stayed so long without her partnership and help." That pretty much sums it up and we thank her for not only being there for Bill but being there for all of us.

On November 16, we will celebrate Nancy's 36 years with us. We would like to present her with a monetary gift from the congregation. If you would like to participate, please either place your gift in the offering plate in an envelope marked "Nancy's gift" or mail it to the church office to the attention of JoAnn Hall. All checks can be made out to First Presbyterian Church of Clarks Summit.

Nancy plans on staying actively involved in the life of the church so we'll all have lots of opportunities to personally thank her for a job well done!

Joys

Sorrows

Prayers

**November birthdays:**

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 4 Sally Marquardt | |
| 5 Burton Reese | 22 Leelah Farrell |
| 6 Charlie Pinches | 24 Steven Cowgill |
| Jacklyn DelPrete | 25 Chris Sekol |
| 7 Crosby Sekol | 28 Tom Campione |
| Tori Yankow | 29 Jennifer Cowgill |
| 8 Mary C Parry | Myrna Diven |
| 12 Christine Jeske | Anniversary: |
| 13 Meg Hatch | 29 Tim and Debbie |
| 14 Robin Pinches | Shane |

**Thank you!**

SO MANY volunteers were instrumental in making Rev. Carter's Oct. 5 celebration such a memorable and joyous day. Thank you to all who helped in any way. So many details; so much planning.....what a great volunteer effort!





Sympathy of the congregation is extended to the family of Richard (Dick) Maurer, who passed away on Saturday, October 25. A memorial service will be held Sunday, November 16, 1:00 p.m. here at the church.

Prayer List for soon to be united Lackawanna and Lehigh Presbyteries

Dunmore Presbyterian Church, Dunmore
 Covenant Presbyterian Church, Scranton
 First Presbyterian Church, Stroudsburg
 Waymart Presbyterian Church, Waymart



For more information on our Presbyteries, or for these individual churches, go to polackawanna.org or lehighpresbytery.org

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Worship every Sunday, 10 a.m., Sanctuary and on-line

Board and Committee Meetings

Session Meeting— November 11, 7 p.m., Room 206

Board of Deacons—Tuesday, November 25, 7:00 p.m., Room 206

Building and Grounds— Thursday, November 6, 7 p.m., Room 209

Christian Education—Thursday, November 6, 7 p.m., Room 206

Mission and Justice—Tuesday, November 4, 7 p.m., Room 206

Worship, Music and Arts - Thursday, November 6 , 5:30 p.m., Room 206

Church Office is closed November 27 and 28 for Thanksgiving Holiday.

Service/Study/Fellowship Gatherings

Men's Breakfast and Bible Study – Thursday, November 6 and 10, 8:30 a.m., Room 206

MBK Quilters—Tuesday, November 11 and 25, 10 a.m., Fellowship Hall

Mobile Food Pantry—Thursday, November 14, 4:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Presbyterian Women's Bible Study—Tuesday, November 18, 10:00 a.m., Fellowship Hall

Sr. Game Day—Thursday, November 20, 2 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Prayer and Share - Each Wednesday, 10:30 a.m., Room 209

Adult Education—Each Wednesday, 5:45 p.m., Room 206

Adult Choir—Each Wednesday, 7:00 p.m., in the Sanctuary

Bell Choir—Most Wednesdays, 8:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Support Groups

We welcome members of the following support groups to our building on a regular basis, as scheduled:

- Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meets each morning at 7 a.m. in Room 206.
- Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) also meets each Tuesday evening, 7 p.m., Room 111.
- AlAnon meets on Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. in room 206.
- Overeaters Anonymous (OA) meets in room 210: Sundays at 3 p.m., Tuesdays at 6 p.m., and Saturdays at 9:45 a.m.

Deadline for the December Presbyterian: Friday, November 7.

Anticipated mailing date is November 19.



The Nursery, located in room 208 on the sanctuary level of the building, is open Sunday mornings from 9:40—11:10 a.m. for children ages 3 and younger.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

300 School Street

Clarks Summit, PA 18411-1536

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DATED MATERIAL

Return Service Requested

