



The Presbyter

May 2025

The First Presbyterian Church of Clarks Summit

Final Arts Series event:

Friday, May 15, 2026, 7:00 pm



The 2025-26 Arts at First Presbyterian concert series will conclude with **An Evening of Broadway with Tim Shew** on **Friday, May 15 at 7 pm.**

Tim Shew has portrayed Jean Valjean in *Les Miserables* across multiple productions, including Broadway, where he became the youngest actor to play the role in 1988. He has portrayed the iconic character more than 2,200 times in various stagings, including the original Broadway production, the 1991 national tour, the 1997 Australian 10th anniversary production, and a 1999 Broadway return.

He has also played the Wizard in *Wicked* and sung on Broadway and around the world. Tim will sing highlights from his extensive resume on the world's stage. Don't miss this incredible opportunity to hear this outstanding performer.

The concert is open to the public free of charge, with a free-will offering taken to help defray the cost of the event. Meet the artist at a reception held following the concert.

Keep in touch with us! Tell us what you would like to see in newsletters.

Visit our website at www.fpccs.org. Read Rev. Bill Carter's sermons online at <http://billcartersermons.blogspot.com>.

Time to start updating information; is your information up to date? Let's keep everyone in the loop with their current phone, email, address and a few more basics. Call or stop by the office to update.



EVERY SHEEP COUNTS!
IS YOUR INFO UP TO DATE?

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Notes from the Session Meeting

Session did not meet in April

Please see Page 10 the new (and renewed) elders and deacons who were elected at our April 26 congregational meeting.



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 **Presbyter** deadline for the June issue is **May 15, 2026.**

The Presbyter 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.fpcs.org
Pastor	William G. Carter
Administrative Assistant	Joy Albright
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**

March, 2026

REVENUE	
Budget	\$ 106,578
Actual Received	<u>114,006</u>
Difference	\$ 7,428
EXPENSES	
Budget	\$ 106,649
Actual Expenses	<u>108,193</u>
Difference	(\$1,544)
Result of operations	\$5,884
PLEDGE	
Budget	\$ 95,528
Actually received	<u>103,223</u>
	\$ 7,695

Per capita assessment for 2026 is \$48.00 per member.

From the Pastor

Spring has hit me hard this year. In the flash of an eye, the world awakened from a long winter nap. And I am stunned once by the creativity of God.

We speak of God as Creator. All the creeds and confessions begin this way. "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth." God makes the world. We didn't build the trees or construct the sky. We did not manufacture oxygen or ignite the sun. We did not invent milk or honey. God did all of this long before we ever appeared on the scene.

A proper reverence begins by affirming this is Somebody Else's world. We spend a lot of money building houses, and a lot of time cultivating gardens, but we are always squatters on Somebody Else's property. It was my third grade Sunday School teacher who taught me to keep this straight. She said, "Billy, repeat after me: Know that the Lord is God. It is God who has made us and not we ourselves."

One of my favorite Bible texts is Psalm 104, a sprawling poem where Israel celebrates the Creator who displays diversity, power, and beauty. There are seven stanzas to the psalm, one for each day of creation. The verses move from the sky (vv. 2-4), to the earth (vv. 5-9), to the water (vv. 10-13), to the vegetation (vv. 14-18), and back up to the moon and sun (vv. 19-23). One section of the Psalm takes us back down to shore and points to the Loch Ness monster who's out there frolicking around the ships. God has made all of this by sending forth his Spirit, and all creation is renewed as God's Spirit continues to hover over the earth.

At the very end, when God had every reason to stop, God scooped up a useless lump of mud and began to shape it into something beautiful. Then God blew breath into that mud creature. It began to twitch, and think, and feel, and breathe. And God called the first draft "Adam," which means "Dirt Boy" or "Dirt Person." According to the old story, that's how we began. Then God made "Eve," the mother of all.

When we were made, God put holy fingerprints all over us. In each of us, there is some resemblance to our Maker. We breathe the Breath of God. This divine resemblance is reflected in our creativity. By definition, God is creative; and in making us, God gives us the capacity for creativity. That's part of what it means for us to be made in the image of God.

We don't have to be painters or composers or poets to be creative, although more of us could be painters, composers, and poets if we gave it a try. Maybe we are good with numbers or electrical circuits or sewing machines. We also solve problems every day, whether it's repairing a shoelace to making a cake without a measuring cup. Bringing our resources to bear on the situations before us is a creative activity, and when we come up with a solution to a problem, it usually feels pretty good.

Let the church of the Creator live creatively! We don't need to always do the same old thing in the same old way, for God makes all things new. When we are surrounded by ugliness or mediocrity, we don't have to settle for that, because we have a God who takes delight in beauty, color, and excellence. Holy creativity is all around us. We flourish when we take part of it.

See you in church,

Rev. Bill

Wednesday Evening Opportunities

Adult Education meets on Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m., Room 206.

Bell Choir rehearses at 7:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.

Adult Choir rehearses at 6:15 p.m. Tuesdays in the Sanctuary.

Additional Adult Education Opportunities

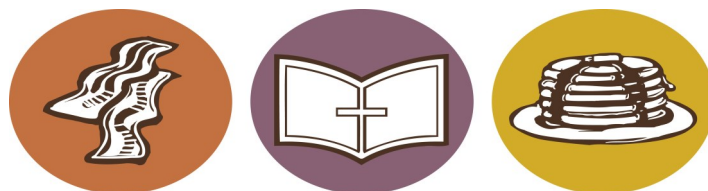


Women's Bible Study for Tuesday, May 19, 2026
10 a.m. in Fellowship Hall

Lesson 8: Remembering Jesus' Baptism

Scripture texts are Luke 3:1-22, Matthew 3:1-17,
Mark 1:1-11, John 1:19-34

In baptism we are identified as God's own children, charged to serve faithfully, justly, and lovingly. As you read the scripture texts, allow yourself to be amazed at the majesty of Jesus' baptism, and further, to remember the meaning of your baptism, as well.



MEN'S BREAKFAST

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.

Lectionary Readings

May 3 Fifth Sunday of Easter Acts 7:55-60 Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16 or Prov. 4:10-18 and Ps. 119:9-32; 1 Peter 2:2-10 John 14:1-14

May 10 Sixth Sunday of Easter, Acts 17:22-31 Psalm 66:8-20 1 Peter 3:13-22 John 14:15-21

May 14 Ascension of the Lord, Acts 1:1-11 Psalm 47 or Psalm 93 Ephesians 1:15-23 Luke 24:44-53

May 17 Seventh Sunday of Easter Acts 1:6-14 Psalm 68:1-10 32-35 1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11 John 17:1-11

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

May 31 Trinity Sunday Genesis 1:1-2:4a Psalm 8 2 Corinthians 13:11-13 Matthew 28:16-20

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 spring and beyond.

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: Confirmation continues for youth grade 7 and up. Lessons held most Sundays after worship, 11:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Confirmation Sunday will be Sunday, May 24 (Pentecost). We invite everyone to join us in celebrating our confirmands on this special day!



LIFT: Living In Faith Together



Join us after worship on **Sunday, May 17** for a meal and intergenerational program. It's our last LIFT before we break for the summer, so come explore the **Ascension** with us. Families with children as well as congregants of all ages are invited. Enjoy a meal, Bible reading and discussion, and activity. It's a great opportunity to share fellowship and faith with our friends and family.

Many thanks to those who have taught, lead, and fed us this past year, and thank you also to all who have participated — we'll see you for more LIFT in the fall!



Faith and Fun

We are a group of Young(er) Adults, or just "Young at Heart." Some of our outings are family friendly. Through the Summer, we hope to do several fun outdoor events including:

- Trail Hiking
 - Trolley to a Railriders Game
 - Pool Party
- and More!

We also have a chat group on Facebook. If you would like to join the conversation or just get out for some fun events, contact Michael at mkthompson96@gmail.com or 518-577-8691.



Dinner Night

The Church Life Committee is sponsoring a Dinner Night at Montdale Country Club, Thursday, May 21 at 6 p.m.

- Order from the menu
- Separate checks will be available

A sign-up sheet is in the Narthex or contact JoAnn Hall at jodihall@nep.net or 570-806-1591



Mission and Justice Committee

One Great Hour of Sharing

The total our church family contributed to One Great Hour of Sharing this year is \$7,220 (adjusted since first reported on April 12)!! Your generosity in support of disaster relief, hunger, poverty, climate change, and immigration/migration and refugees serves many individuals and communities in need. This offering provides us a way to share God's love with our neighbors.

Because the Mission & Justice Committee chose to retain 25% of this offering to support United Neighborhood Centers of NEPA, our gift to them will be \$1,805 for their work with immigrants and refugees in our area.

We will send \$5,415 to PCUSA to contribute to the causes supported by OGHS nationally.

Our theme this year was Micah 6:8 – “What does the Lord require of you? To do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God.” I'm proud that this congregation lives its faith in such a loving way.

Thank you!

State Hospital luncheon thank you

Many thanks go out to the volunteers who helped with our recent luncheon with our guests. Thank you also to those who baked a variety of breads and desserts. Fellowship was enjoyed by all!

Paul R. Dobson Memorial Scholarship

All graduating high school members who plan to further their education are encouraged to apply. The application can be downloaded from the church's website and can be left in the church office by May 15. The winner will be announced on Graduation Recognition Sunday.



Save the Date!

VBS 2026 will be held **July 13-17**

Calling all volunteers!

If you'd like to help children explore Rome by teaching, leading, or preparing, let us know!

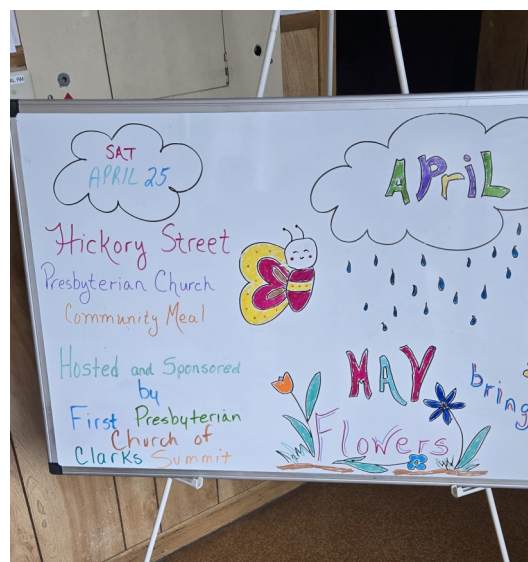
Please contact Jana Schillinger or send an email to fpccs.vbs@gmail.com

Stay tuned for more details!

HICKORY STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH MEAL PROGRAM

Once again the congregation at First Presbyterian Church of Clarks Summit has responded in a gracious and generous manner to address food insecurity in the greater Scranton community. On April 25th, 11 volunteers worked diligently to provide and serve 200 dinners and distribute 44 bags of groceries at the Hickory Street Presbyterian Church Meal Program. To accomplish this, 12 families prepared large chicken/broccoli casseroles, and numerous people provided cakes/cupcakes for dessert, and donated food for grocery bag distribution. Others donated money to support costs associated with the implementation of this program. On behalf of the Mission and Justice Committee, we thank our wonderfully supportive congregation for making this a successful and meaningful program in service to our fellow citizens.

MISSION AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE



Volunteer Corner

Office Volunteers:

We have been grateful to our members who have been volunteering in the church office. Joy has enjoyed your company and getting to know all of you. As we move into the second half of 2026 we would like to offer some flexibility to our current and prospective volunteers. Morning volunteering not for you? Like mornings, but 9 a.m. is a bit too early to start? Afternoons are better for you? Prefer to volunteer an hour or two instead of the current three-hour shift? Joy is inviting you to choose your own hours. She may have a few tasks lined up for you, or you might simply act as a back-up when Joy steps away from her desk (bring a book or some knitting!) As in the past, we will be looking for more regular shifts to keep the office staffed when our administrative assistant is on vacation.

Questions? Interested in volunteering? Already volunteering but interested in altering your hours? Call Nancy Post at 570-878-2769 or email her at npost329@gmail.com.

Food Pantry Volunteers:

We appreciate the time and energy our food pantry volunteers contribute each month. We currently have 16 faithful regulars and appreciate the added assistance of some young people from time to time. (It's a great way to fulfill school volunteering requirements). We started out over a year ago serving less than 10 families. We currently serve 47 families (95 people). The need is growing, as is our response to it.



CONGRATULATIONS, 2026 GRADUATES!!

Philippians 4:13 NIV: "I can do all this through him who gives me strength."

Caryn Thompson, wife of Michael Thompson, graduates from Marywood University, Scranton, Pennsylvania, with a bachelor's degree in Expressive Arts Education. Caryn has applied to Buffalo State University, Buffalo, New York, to get her master's degree in Creative Studies in Education.

Kate O'Brien, daughter of Joseph and Ginny O'Brien, granddaughter of Charles and Kay Copely, graduates from the University of Scranton with a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Science and hopes to find work in sustainability or public health.

Taylor Silvestri, daughter of Len Silvestri and Char-Anne Lyon, granddaughter of Char Lyon, graduates from Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey, receiving two degrees: a Master of Divinity and a Master of Arts in Christian Education and Formation.

Zachary Kusma, son of Mark and Heather Kusma, grandson of Janet Dobson, graduates from the University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware, with Bachelor of Science degrees in Finance Planning and Wealth Management.

Liam Farrell, son of William and Grace Farrell, graduates from Abington Heights High School and will attend Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana, with a major in Professional Flight.

Rylee Yankow, daughter of Greg and Tori Yankow, granddaughter of Stan and Gwynne Gilbert, graduates from Abington Heights High School and will attend the University of Virginia, Blacksburg, Virginia with a major in Public Health on an Assistant Physician's track.

Tanner Shane, son of Bryan and Cindy Shane, grandson of Tim and Debbie Shane, graduates from Abington Heights High School and will attend Penn State University, University Park, State College, Pennsylvania.



ADOPT A HIGHWAY

The schedule for the spring Morgan Highway cleanup, is set for **Saturday, May 2** and **Saturday June 27**. We will meet at the parking lot of the Clarks Summit United Methodist Church at 9 a.m. Safety vests, gloves, and garbage bags will be provided.

The scope of this highway cleanup extends along the Morgan Highway from County Club Road to Winola Road, and takes approximately one hour. PennDOT "Litter Crew Ahead" signs will be situated at appropriate intersections to aid in participant's safety. It should be noted, this activity is not appropriate for younger children.





When is going to war justified?

Is it ever right and just for a nation to go to war? In its first centuries after Jesus, Christianity disavowed war. But beginning with St. Augustine in the fifth century, it began to develop a “just war tradition.” While Augustine believed that going to war was often sinful, sometimes Christian love required it to protect the innocent. Theologians have since built on this tradition, drawing distinctions about when going to war is justified, and when it isn’t.

In two Sunday sessions during coffee hour, April 26 and May 3, we’ll explore this tradition, learning some “just war criteria” and considering how they might apply to wars raging today.

Strangers, Aliens and Refugees

This five-week Wednesday Bible Study series continues into May as we explore what the Bible teaches us about who strangers and aliens are, and how to respond to them when they come among us today in Northeastern Pennsylvania. Sessions will cover a varied collection of topics:

April 22 – “Why is the treatment of strangers and aliens so important in the Old Testament?” -- Michael Thompson

April 29 – “Who are the strangers, aliens and refugees in our Scranton region and how are they doing? What do they need?” -- Guest speaker: Julie Shumacher Cohen, AVP for Community Engagement & Government Affairs, University of Scranton.

May 6 – “A big idea from St. Paul: How Christ has reconciled us — so we are no longer strangers and aliens.” – Rev. Bill Carter

May 13 – “My life as a refugee – and how I was (sometimes) welcomed.” -- Guest speaker (with Charlie Pinches): Ushu Mukelo, president, Congolese Community of Scranton.

May 20 – Final Considerations -- Michael Thompson

Welcome to our new church officers

We welcome the new (and renewed) elders and deacons who were elected at our April 26 congregational meeting. They are:

Elder, Class of 2029

Kim Barrows (term 2)
David Naeher (term 2)
John Young (term 2)
Jodi Cieszkowski (term 1)
Heather Acker (term 1)

Deacon, Class of 2029

Judy Cutler (term 2)
Betsy Ellis (term 2)
Susan Flynn (term 2)
Gwynne Gilbert (term 2)
Chris Jeske (term 2)
Glenn Skivington (term 1)

Deacon, Class of 2027

Sandy Skivington (term 1)



We thank the members of our nominating team: Beverly Bright, Dave Brown, Chris Norton, Jack Pittman, Nancy Post, Briar Woodley, Grace Farrell (chair), and Rev Bill Carter (ex-officio) for their efforts.

—- Prayer List for soon to be united Lackawanna and Lehigh Presbyteries

FPC Allentown
Slate Belt Presbyterian Church
Dunmore Presbyterian Church
FPC East Stroudsburg
Stella Presbyterian Church



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— Sunday, April 26

Board of Deacons—Tuesday, May 26, Room 206

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

Christian Education—Thursday, May 7, 7 p.m., Room 206

Mission and Justice—Tuesday, May 5, 7 p.m., Room 206

Worship, Music and Arts - Thursday, May 7, 5:30 p.m., Room 206

Service/Study/Fellowship Gatherings

Men's Breakfast and Bible Study – Thursday, May 7 and 21, 8:30 a.m., Room 206

MBK Quilters—Tuesday, May 12 and 26, 10 a.m., Fellowship Hall

Presbyterian Women's Bible Study—Tuesday, May 19, 10 a.m., Fellowship Hall

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

Adult Education—Each Wednesday, 6:00 p.m., Room 206

Adult Choir—Each Tuesday, 6:15 p.m., in the Sanctuary

Bell Choir—Most Wednesdays, 7:00 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 June 2026 Presbyterian: Friday, May 15, 2026.

Anticipated mailing date May 27



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

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
Permit No. 30
P A I D
Clarks Summit PA

DATED MATERIAL

Return Service Requested



**HAPPY
MEMORIAL DAY**

Remember and Honor

Church office closed May 25th