



# The Presbyter

March 2026

The First Presbyterian Church of Clarks Summit



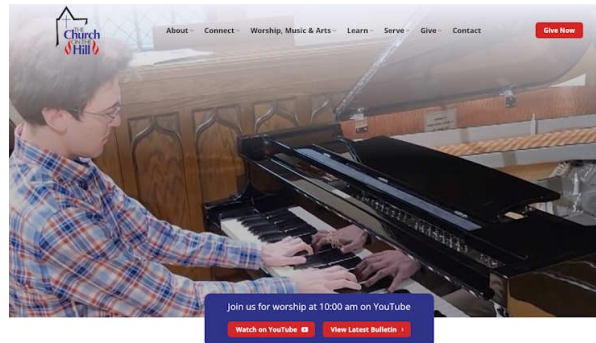
## From Ashes to Alleluia: Marking the Season of Lent

We invite everyone to pick up a **Lent Bag** filled with devotions and activities to mark the season. **Lent Bags** are available now to pick up at in the main hallway outside of the sanctuary. Join us in observing this important season.



**Daylight Savings Time begins on  
March 8.  
Turn your clocks ahead 1 hour.**

## Exciting News!



For the first time in over ten years, we have done a complete upgrade to the First Presbyterian Church website. Go to the following address to check it out: [www.fpccs.org](http://www.fpccs.org)

Comments are encouraged. Please help us improve the content by offering feedback. You can contact our webmaster Dick Cochrane at [webmaster@fpccs.org](mailto:webmaster@fpccs.org).

All church email addresses remain the same, but with the upgrade we lost some emails. If you sent a note prior to February 9, 2026 and did not receive a response, resend to [office@fpccs.org](mailto:office@fpccs.org) or any other email contact within the church.

## Table of Contents

- Page 2 - Session, Deacons, Financial
- Page 3 - From the Pastor
- Page 4 - Adult CE, Lectionary
- Page 5 - Christian Education
- Page 6 - Mission & Justice, Community Outreach
- Page 7 - Volunteer Corner
- Page 8 - The Arts at First Presbyterian Church
- Page 9 - Souper Bowl results, VBS
- Page 10 - Joys and Prayers
- Page 11—Calendar
- Page 12—Tulip order form

### From the Clerk of Session

Our year end reporting.

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation of the First Presbyterian Church of Clarks Summit took place on February 8, 2026 following worship in Fellowship Hall.

Our Annual Report, Pastor's Terms of Call, 2025 Church Statistical Report (that determines our 2027 Per Capita Apportionment) have been sent to the Mountain Laurel Presbytery.

Session would like to thank our members and friends for the support that you gave us in the 2025 year. We do appreciate all of YOU.



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

The **Presbyter** deadline for the April 2026 issue is **March 14.**

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.

<b>Church Office</b>	<b>(570) 586-6306</b>
<b>Fax</b>	<b>(570) 587-3784</b>
<b>Web Page</b>	<b>www.fpccs.org</b>
<b>Pastor</b>	William G. Carter
<b>Administrative Assistant</b>	Joy Albright
<b>Coordinator of Children &amp; Youth</b>	Jana Schillinger
<b>Treasurer</b>	Wayne Griffiths
<b>Editor</b>	Christine Lee
<b>Clerk of Session</b>	Beverly Bright
<b>Director of Music</b>	Frank Jones
<b>Director of Bells</b>	Richard Cochrane
<b>Organist</b>	Kay Ten Eyck
<b>Sexton</b>	Michael Lambert

### FROM YOUR FINANCE COMMITTEE FOR THE MONTH ENDING January 31, 2026

REVENUE		
Budget		\$34,350
Actual Received		<u>46,018</u>
Difference		\$11,668

EXPENSES		
Budget		\$34,932
Actual Expenses		<u>35,862</u>
Difference		(\$ 931)

Result of operations \$10,737

PLEDGE		
Budget		\$ 31,000
Actually received		<u>39,514</u>
Difference		\$ 8,514

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

### Board of Deacons

Care Team Ministry Coordinators are:

Moderator	Erika Adams
Deacon Meals	Diana Pope-Albright
Ushers	Bett 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.

## From the Pastor

Dear Friends—

Here's a cartoon that pops up sometimes. Two earnest missionaries have knocked on the front door of a home. They ask the owner, "Have you found Jesus?" Unknown to all three, there's somebody hiding in the living room, with toes and sandals visible beneath the drapes.

It's a lampoon on well-intentioned but simplistic evangelists. They assume they have the inside track on capturing the Christ. Either that, or they have lost him and are trying to track him down.

One of the most maddening truths about the Risen Lord is that we can't apprehend him. He comes and goes. Or in the words of a seminary professor, "He is revealed and concealed," often from one minute to the next.

This is a significant concern for the Gospel of John, where we will spend some time in Lent. John writes a handful of long stories. These tales begin simply and then unwind in revelatory ways.

For instance, there's the tale of Man Born Blind in chapter nine. After a brief squabble with his disciples about a beggar who cannot see ("Did his parents sin?"), Jesus takes initiative and heals the man without permission. Then he disappears. The man who can now see has to negotiate his new ability without any guidance. The religious leaders interrogate him and his parents. They are incredulous that the healing happened on the "wrong day of the week," that is, the Sabbath.

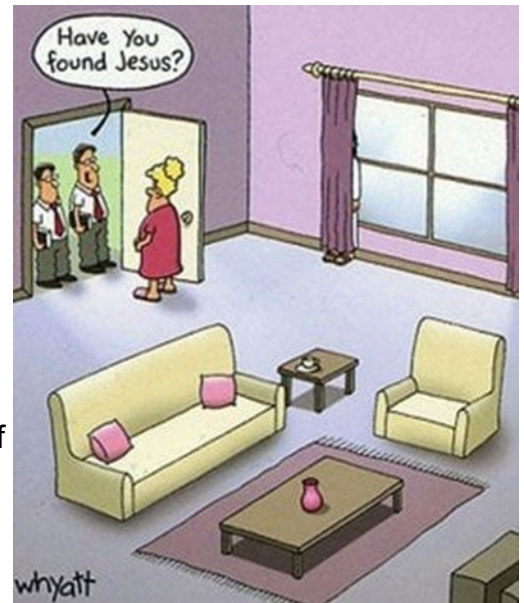
During the ensuing controversy Jesus is nowhere to be found. He does not intervene when the healed man is thrown out of his religious community. He does not interrupt the fight. It's only after the expulsion that the Lord returns to ask, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" Who is that? "It's the One speaking to you." Now we see him, now we don't. And the point of the whole tale seems to be that those who profess to see do not. Only those who are granted sight can perceive and believe.

A most unusual tale, to be sure. Like the rest of the Gospel of John, it undermines any notion that spiritual perception is a human achievement. No, it's a gift. A "birth from above." A revelation from the other side of the curtain. Like Judaism, Christianity is a revealed religion. It's something that happens from the heart of God. It spreads when unlikely believers share what they have heard and seen. And then, sometimes we catch a glimpse of the Risen Lord returning to confirm God's grace with a wink and a smile.

Should we keep praying? Of course. Prayer grounds us in the good intentions of God. Should we keep serving other people? Absolutely. Good works can be the means by which the Risen Christ shows grace to a broken world. Should we stick only to the concrete evidence that we can prove? I suppose we could, but I have a hunch we would miss what the Invisible Lord is doing all around us. Thanks to Jesus, there's more grace than we realize. Trust that.

Have a holy Lent.

*Rev. Bill*



## Additional Adult Education Opportunities

Presbyterian Women – 2025-26 Horizon Bible Study



Presbyterian Women's Bible Study

Tuesday, March 17, 10 a.m., Fellowship Hall Women's Bible Study Lesson 6, "Finding Our Joy in Christ" Philippians 4:1-23 Tuesday, March 17, 10:00 a.m.

Main idea: Christian joy emerges from a deep belief that God is good and God reigns forever.

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**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. They are working through Paul's letter to the Philippians with Rev. Bill. All men in the church family are always welcome.

### LIFT: Living In Faith Together

#### March 29: L.I.F.T. (Living In Faith Together)

We will host a L.I.F.T. program after worship on Palm Sunday, with a lesson and activities over a simple lunch for all in the Fellowship Hall. 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. If you are able to make a crockpot of soup to share, we will provide the bread, drinks and dessert.



**Presbyter and Weekly E-Mail** – Stay up to date on our weekly e-mail and the monthly Presbyter newsletter. Do you have happenings to share? Deadline for weekly newsletter 3 pm Monday. Email Joy at [office@fpccs.org](mailto:office@fpccs.org). All committees are asked to please send updates to the office for weekly announcements.

### Lectionary Readings

#### March 1: 2nd Sunday in Lent

Gen. 12:1-4a and Ps. 121; Rom. 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3:1 - 17 or Matt. 17:1-9

#### March 8: 3rd Sunday in Lent

Ex. 17:1-7 and Ps. 95; Rom. 5:1-11; John 4:5-42

#### March 15: 4th Sunday in Lent

1Sam. 16:1-13 and Ps. 23; Eph. 5:8-14; John 9:1-41

#### March 22: 5th Sunday in Lent

Ezek. 37:1-14 and Ps. 130; Rom.8:6-11; John 11:1-45

#### March 29: Palm/Passion Sunday

Palms: Matt 21:1-11 and Ps. 118:1-2, 19-29

Passion: Isa. 50:4-9a and Ps. 31:9-16; Phil. 2:5-11; Matt. 26:14-27:66 or Matt. 27:11-54

# Christian Education: Growing in Faith and Love

Christian Education announces another “Supernatural Sunday Special”



Interest in the Barmen Declaration and Charlie Brown’s Christmas in the fall has encouraged us to offer more chances for learning and discussion, beginning with a 1700<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## Three in One? – The Discovery of Trinity, and What it Means for Us Today

1700 years ago, in 325 CE, the Christian Church met to argue about God. The result was the Nicene Creed, which for the first time articulated that Christians believed God was Triune. We affirm this belief today, but what does it mean, and why does it matter, then and now?



March 1 - “Why were people arguing about God, and what was the outcome at Nicea?”

March 8 - “How does the belief that God is Trinity inform our faith today?”



**Welcome to IRELAND**

## Ireland is coming up quick!

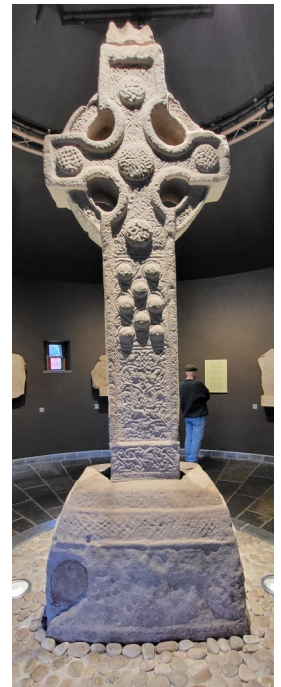
Are you ready for an amazing trip? If you are registered to go to Ireland, join us Monday, March 30 at 7:00 pm for an informational get together. We will review the details of the trip. Keith Cole from Witte Travel in Grand Rapids will join us and help to answer any questions.

## Our Wednesday Lenten Series: “The Celtic Way – When Heaven Touches Earth”

On Wednesdays in Lent, we will explore the Celtic contributions to the Christian Life.

We will meet an ancient saint or two, reflect on the “Thin Places” we have known, and discuss the high crosses and the ornate vines that decorate them.

Join us each week at 6:00 pm in Room 206 (Session Room). The six-week series runs from February 25 through Wednesday, April 1. All are welcome!



*Saint Ciarán of Clonmacnoise*



**One Great Hour of Sharing** special offering runs from February 18 - April 5.

This annual appeal reminds us of Christ's call to care for the most vulnerable. It supports the causes of disaster, hunger, poverty, climate change, immigration, migration, and refugees. Our gifts show people they are not alone, and that people they don't know see them and care enough to respond. Please give generously.

All three programs work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope.

**Please consider giving to this important offering.**

**CEO Weinberg Food Bank**



**Welcome friends**

All are welcome to join us on March 21, from 9:00 am—12:00 pm we will be packing boxes at the CEO Weinberg Food Bank in Pittston. Sign up in the Narthex, or contact Jodi Cieszkowski at [nilrac67@hotmail.com](mailto:nilrac67@hotmail.com)

**COMING SOON:**

**SPRING HIGHWAY CLEANUP**

We'll hold our first highway cleanup for PennDOT on Saturday morning, **May 2**, meeting at 9:00 am in the parking lot of Clarks Summit Methodist Church at corner of the Morgan Highway and Grove St.

All are welcome. Takes us about an hour to



divide up and pick up the trash from the roadside on the highway between Winola Road and Country Club Road. Gloves, trash bags, and safety vests are provided. Contact Jack Scheuer at 570-362-3275 or [john.scheuer123@gmail.com](mailto:john.scheuer123@gmail.com) if you can help or have any questions.

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**COMING: HICKORY STREET COMMUNITY MEAL**

On Saturday, **April 25** we will again be preparing and serving a free community meal at Hickory Street Presbyterian Church, so be watching for sign-up sheets to appear in the Narthex. We will need volunteers to prepare the entree, supply desserts, serve the meal, transport items over the day before, and to supply lots of groceries for the food bags we give away the same day. Hunger and Food Insecurity are very real here among our neighbors and this is one small thing we can do to help many of them. For more information, contact **Jack or Diane Scheuer or anyone on Mission & Justice.**



**Community Meal**

## Special Offerings

The Presbyterian General Assembly has mandated updates to Presbyterian Special Offerings. You may remember four (4) Special Offerings in 2025. In 2026 there will be three (3), One Great Hour of Sharing (Feb. 18 – April 5), World Communion Offering (Sept. 6 – Oct. 4), and Christmas Joy Offering (Nov. 29 – Dec. 16).



One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) reminds us of Christ's call to care for the most vulnerable. It supports the causes of disaster, hunger, poverty, climate change, and immigration, migration, and refugees.

This year we will keep 25% of the Offering to send locally to United Neighborhood Centers of NEPA for their work with immigrants and refugees in the Scranton area.

You can read more about the 2026 Special Offerings on a bulletin board in the narthex hallway.

## Volunteer News

**Nancy Post**



**A special thank you** to all the volunteers who made the Ice Festival a rousing success!

Many things happen behind the scenes at FPC to ensure that our worship experience is a meaningful one.

Communion is one of the parts of the worship service that requires some pre-planning...all handled by volunteers, of course.

A yearly Communion schedule is prepared and monthly responsibilities are assigned to two separate teams: a Preparation and a Serving Team. Very detailed instructions have been provided by the Worship and Music Committee. On Friday or Saturday the Preparation Team gathers all necessary supplies in the kitchen, cubes the bread, and pours the juice. On Sunday morning they move everything upstairs to the Communion table. Their work is done! You have seen the work of the Serving Team during the actual Communion service. But did you know that they are also responsible for returning everything to the kitchen, washing all the silver and stowing it away for safe keeping?

Thank you to all of our volunteers who participate in this important ministry:

Preparation Teams: Tabbi Miller-Scandle and family, Connie Weiss, Sekol family, Jodi and Chris Cieszkowski, Farrell family, Naeher family, O'Brien family, Music and Worship Committee.

Serving Team Captains: Beverly Bright, Connie Weiss, Heather Acker, Laura Moore, Chris Norton, David Naeher.

If you are an ordained Deacon or Elder and would like to join one of our serving teams, please let me know.

# The Arts

at First Presbyterian Church

## Our Next Arts Event: The Blue Note Jazztet

Sunday, March 15 at 4:00 p.m.

This is a new band - but looks remarkably familiar. Drawing from his consort of Presbybop musicians, Bill Carter has created a new sextet of remarkable musicians.

The Blue Note Jazztet specializes in the finger-snapping tunes from the venerable tradition of the Blue Note record label. This is hard-swinging and accessible music, mostly from the 1950's and '60's. Featured composers are Horace Silver, Freddie Hubbard, John Coltrane, Herbie Hancock, Lee Morgan, and Wayne Shorter. Unknown names? Not after you hear the music!

The Jazztet has played to full houses at Keystone College and in upstate New York. Their March 15 concert is in preparation of a live recording the following week, to be engineered by legendary producer George Graham, recently retired from WVIA-FM. We expect they will blow off the roof of our sanctuary.



*The Blue Note Jazztet at Keystone College, November 2025*

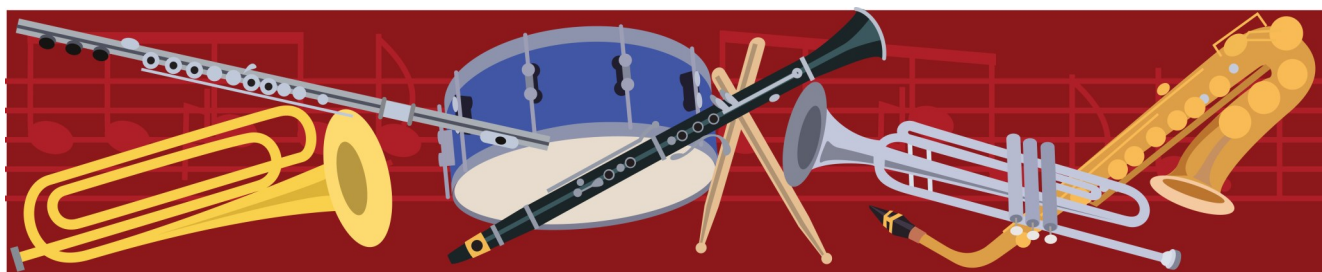
Performers will include Jeff Stockham on trumpet, Mike Carbone on tenor sax and flute, Kate Anderson on alto sax, Bill Carter on piano, Tony Marino on bass, and Tyler Dempsey on drums.

Join us for this free concert on Sunday, March 15 at 4:00 p.m. There will be a free-will offering taken to help defray the cost of the event. A reception to meet the artists will be held after the concert.

**Save the dates** for other 2026 Arts at First Presbyterian events:

- Sunday, April 26, 2025, 4:00 pm - Nate Worrell and Friends
- Friday, May 15, 2025, 7:00 pm - An Evening of Broadway with Tim Shew

All of the concerts are open to the public free of charge, with free-will offerings taken to help defray the costs of the events.



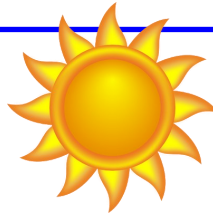
## Souper Bowl Sunday

### Thank You!

This year we collected

**\$ (580.00)**

for the AEM Food Pantry through the  
Souper Bowl of Caring.



## Save the Date!

Attention all children, families,  
and volunteers!

Mark your calendars

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

Join us this summer for an amazing Bible  
adventure filled with laughter, learning, and fun  
times with friends new and old.

Look for more information this spring.

**Are you looking for a way to honor or remember a special person?**

**... for a way to encourage others?**

**We have an opportunity for you to do both!**

The flowers that grace the pulpit most weeks make our sanctuary more beautiful, but they do so much more than that. Many people donate arrangements to remember loved ones or honor special moments, but their generosity brings beauty and joy beyond the worship service. The deacons often deliver bouquets to our local senior living facilities, nursing homes, hospitals, and individual members who cannot join us in worship. Those beautiful flowers bring joy to many.

The flower donation calendar in the hallway outside the church office has several blank spaces. Would you or your church committee be willing to sign up to beautify our sanctuary and bring light to others? The process is not complicated. You can sign up on the calendar; Karis and Rebekah Naeher will contact you close to the date to work out the details. Alternatively, you can contact Karis via email ([klnaeher@outlook.com](mailto:klnaeher@outlook.com)) or phone (570-561-5985) to ask questions or to see which dates are available. We look forward to hearing from you!



We are grateful for the many ways that people support our church's ministry to the community and world. If you wish to contribute by cell phone, **scan here**.



## Joys and Prayers

### MARCH



7	Nina Schillinger
11	Sue Sill
12	Jim Thyren
16	Candy Ferrese
20	Chuck Woolever
23	Jacob Gilbert
27	Bonnie Plantholt
29	Nancy Post Bill Davis
31	Beverly Bright

“For God’s foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God’s weakness is stronger than human strength.”

- I Corinthians 1:25

The foolishness of God!

What a daring expression this is of Paul’s!

To call God a fool is beyond the courage

of most Christians in any generation,

But then Paul certainly went beyond most Christians

in his insight and perception of the gospel.

Earlier Paul writes about the folly of “the cross” and of “Christ crucified” and, to tell the truth, from an objective viewpoint it does seem utter madness to seek to save the world by being executed as a criminal. Jesus’ repeated message about finding life through losing it, receiving life by giving it away, sounds positively suicidal when taken out of context. While the entire message of his Sermon on the Mount, with its celebration of the meek, the poor, the persecuted, can only be a recipe for failure in the kind of world I live in.

I suppose that’s where the difference lies.

For Jesus was not talking, was not seeking to describe, the kind of world I live in.

What he has in mind, what he sought to build, was the kind of world that God might want to live in – a world this is everywhere a temple for the divine, a world that will express God’s plan for us, that destiny for which God conceived and carried our creation in the first place.

From the point of view of this world – with its falseness, its failures upon failures compounded by many generations, its violence and fear, callousness and greed – the way of the cross, of self-sacrificial love is foolishness indeed.

But in the light of eternity in the radiance that shines from this old book and from the lives, that one true Life that is set forth here, I can only perceive another world: an alternative to all the sad betrayals, shoddy compromises of the past; a fairer, truer, realm where love fulfills itself in selflessness and joy is born wherever life is shared.

Teach me such foolishness, Lord God, and fit me for your world which is to be. Amen.

From *A Pilgrim’s Way*, J. Barrie Shepherd  
Westminster John Knox Press © 1989

## PRAYER list

### Prayer List: Mountain Laurel Presbytery

**Hawley Presbyterian Church**

**Inkerman Presbyterian Church**

**Church of Christ Uniting**

**Lehighton Presbyterian Church**

**Montrose Presbyterian Church**

**Nanticoke Presbyterian Church**

For information on our Presbytery,  
go to [www.mlpres.org](http://www.mlpres.org)

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

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

### Board and Committee Meetings

**Session Meeting**— Tuesday, March 10, 7 p.m., Room 206

**Board of Deacons**—Tuesday, March 24, 7:00 p.m., Room 206

**Building and Grounds**— Thursday, March 5, 7 p.m., Room 209

**Christian Education**—Thursday, March 5, 7 p.m., Room 206

**Finance**—Thursday, March 5, 4 p.m., Room 210

**Mission and Justice**—Tuesday, March 3, 7 p.m., Room 206

**Worship, Music and Arts** - Thursday, March 5, 5:30 p.m., Room 206

### Service/Study/Fellowship Gatherings

**Men's Breakfast and Bible Study** – Thursday, March 5 and 19, 8:30 a.m., Room 206

**MBK Quilters**—Tuesday, March 10 and 24, 10 a.m., Fellowship Hall

**Presbyterian Women's Bible Study**—Tuesday, March 17, 10:00 a.m., Fellowship Hall

**Deadline to purchase Easter tulips**—Sunday, March 8

**Arts at First Presbyterian: The Presbybop Blue Note Sextet**, Sunday, March 15, 4 p.m., Sanctuary

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

**Adult Education**—Each Wednesday, 5:45 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

**Bridge Club**—every Wednesday and Friday at 12:00

### 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 April 2026 Presbyterian: Saturday, March 14, 2026.**

**Anticipated mailing date is March 25.**

With Spring right around the corner keep a look out for upcoming events. Help us help each other join in the community volunteer work and many fun activities here at First Presbyterian. Stop by, give us a call 570-586-6306 or email at [office@fpccs.org](mailto:office@fpccs.org)





**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**



**6 1/2" Pots of Tulips will be ordered for Easter Morning.**

**Easter Tulip Order Form**

Price is \$9.00 per pot.      Deadline is Sunday, March 8

Please make checks payable to "First Presbyterian Church".

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of tulip pots \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$9.00 each. Total amount enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dedication: In memory/In honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

I will take my flowers.    YES      NO

*You may place your order in the offering plate or turn in at the church office.*