

# The Bell Tower

## First Presbyterian Church Happenings

November MMXXV

### Communication from the Congregational Life Committee

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Covenant Partners, Erin Warren and Matt Slagle! We rejoice with them as they were united in marriage at FPC on October 10, 2025, in a beautiful ceremony officiated by Pastor Claypool. May the Lord bless the union of Erin and Matt with love, faith, and lifelong joy together.

There is a plan to offer a **THANKSGIVING** meal on November 27th at noon. This event is sponsored by the Congregational Life and Fellowship Committee. Details will be published in our Sunday bulletin announcements. You may also contact the church office or by calling/texting 724-456-1989.

**PASTOR APPRECIATION** was celebrated during the month of October. Pastor Ben was honored during worship on October 19th with cards and letters from Covenant Partners. We are grateful for Pastor Ben and his family! Let us continue to support them with prayer.

#### Christmas Giving Trees 2025

The Christmas Giving Trees will be available in the Church Narthex and Rear Vestibule beginning Sunday, November 9. This is an opportunity to purchase a Christmas gift for others who may have limited resources. Tags on the trees describe specific gifts for children, youth, and nursing home residents. The gifts are to be returned in gift bags, with the tags securely attached on the outside, to the church no later than **Noon on Sunday, December 7, 2025.**

#### Mitten and Hat Tree 2025

The Mitten and Hat Tree offers the opportunity to provide some warmth to children, youth, and infants in the Greenville Area. Please bring winter hats, mittens and gloves of all sizes, unwrapped, and hang them on the tree in the primary Sunday School area anytime between November 16, 2025 and Christmas.

#### DEACONS PANCAKE BRUNCH

Everyone is invited to Calvin Hall on Sunday, November 9, 2025 following worship service. The Deacons will serve pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage, and beverages. The gathering is in recognition and thankfulness for the veterans who have served in the military.



#### Save the Date

*The Presbyterian Women's Christmas Dinner will be held on December 2, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. in Calvin Hall. The meal will be provided by the Daytime and Evening Circle's. Each person is asked to bring their own table service. A business meeting will be held. Come and enjoy gathering for fellowship and food during the Christmas Season. Additional information will be included in the November church bulletins.*

#### ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS

Once again Mission Committee invites you to choose meaningful gifts for your family and friends at the Alternative Christmas Gift Market December 7. Plan to stay after church for a soup and sundae lunch served by the youth. Then browse the choices available this year. You will have the opportunity to purchase items to wrap from Creative Learning

Christian School in Mercer to support their work and Shared Hope for Orphans Worldwide. You also have a chance to give financial gifts to those two and also to Downtown Ministries, Good Shepherd Center, and Heifer International. You will receive gift cards to give to your loved ones, announcing the gifts that have been given in their name to celebrate the birth of Christ. This event has become a valued tradition for our church. Please come and fellowship and celebrate the Advent season.





Meet our new covenant partners, Dan and Ally Barr. Ally grew up in the Greenville Area and attended Greenville High School, she went on to study Education at Clarion University, 2009. Currently she is a First grade teacher at Greenville Elementary School. Dan attended Grove City College and graduated in 2011 with a BS in Business. Dan is currently a software engineer at Alderant.

Dan and Ally are married. Together they are raising 2 dogs, Sulley (Sheepadoodle) and Coco (mini golden doodle). Take notice of the names of the dogs and it shows what kind of movies Ally likes. They are also currently going through the adoption process, so pray for them as they travel this new adventure. They came to FPC because Ally grew up going to church here and has great memories. When they moved back to the area, they wanted to be somewhere where they can serve others in the Greenville community. When they are not working or coming to church, Dan and Ally like reading,

walking their dogs, local sporting events, and discovering new restaurants or breweries. Dan's favorite movie is Gladiator and Ally's is Wonder. When they aren't watching those movies you could find Dan listening to Mess is Mine by Vance Joy and Ally—Out of the Woods by Taylor Swift.

Dan cites his mom as the most influential person in his life. She taught him to live each day with joy and to see God's goodness in the little moments. Ally said Mrs. Christiansen, her 8th grade English Teacher, as her most influential person in her life. She is her most influential person because she battled an illness that year, and she was such a light even during that time.

Make sure to welcome Dan and Ally the next time you see them, and maybe you will have something in common with them besides being covenant partners at First Presbyterian Church.

Dan and Ally were asked for their favorite Bible verse, quote, and when they felt closest to God:

Bible Verse: Dan—Jeremiah 29:13 You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.

Ally—Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare[a] and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Quote: Ally—We read to know we are not alone—CS Lewis

Closest to God: Through music—singing a hymn or more contemporary worship and after going through trials and being able to see God's providence.



Gail Gongaware	11/5
Helen Ohle	11/5
Diane Curtis	11/6
James Wilson	11/8
Mary K. Miller	11/9
Kelly Minner	11/12
Margie Hull	11/14
Wynne Eckhardt	11/16
Carolyn Forbes	11/18
Ron Lasch	11/18
Asher Bray	11/19
Cherri Artman	11/21
Jessica Crompton	11/21
Ann Petrarca	11/23
Eric Hart	11/24
Marilyn McClimans	11/24
Nancy Palmer	11/24
Sue Wilson	11/26
Linda Alcorn	11/30
Susan Anderson	11/30

#### Youth

Riley Russo	11/3
Jack Dershimer	11/16

#### November Sunday Eve Youth Gatherings

November 2 - 24/7 @ 4:00 p.m.  
612 @ 6:00 p.m.  
November 9 - 24/7 Bowling @ 4:00 p.m.  
November 16 - 24/7 @ 4:00 p.m.  
612 @ 6:00 p.m.



Reminder - Shoeboxes are due Monday, November 17!

There will not be Men's Breakfast in November. The next gathering will be December 13 at 8:00 a.m. All men are welcome!

#### NOVEMBER NURSERY SCHEDULE

11/2 Nancy Hoffacker & Carol Houck  
11/9 Terri Clark & Sue Blum  
11/16 Molly Davis & Peyton Davis  
11/23 Lucy Wheaton & Dakota Draa  
11/30 Kelly & Matt Minner

#### Greeters Schedule

11/2 Pat & Kaye Williams  
11/9 Larry & Carole Lentz  
11/16 Tom Harpst  
11/23 Chris & Carol Houck  
11/30 Karen Patterson  
12/7 Terri Clark  
12/14 Becky Bray

**PW Evening Circle** will meet Tuesday, November 11, at 6:00 p.m. in the church parlor. Lesson will be lead by Barbara Deist. Any and all ladies are welcome!

**PW Daytime Circle** will meet Tuesday, November 4, 2025 at 1:00 p.m. in the Conference Room. The Bible Study will be on Mary, The Mother of Jesus, pg. 158. Nancy Stevenson will share devotions. All women are welcome to join us!

#### 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

##### Facts from the Past

Juan Carlos Ortiz

March 27-30, 1983 Juan Carlos Ortiz spoke during the week at First Presbyterian Church, Greenville, Pa. He was sponsored by the Discipleship Equipping Center of FPC. According to the foreward in his book, Disciple, Juan believed that equipping and training of individual men and women for service is what the Church is all about. He shared and taught on New Testament love and discipleship.

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First Presbyterian Church Anniversary Celebrations  
The FPC Sesquicentennial Banquet (150 years) was celebrated on December 19, 1975. The event was held at Thiel College. The 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary gathering was held October 22, 2000 in Calvin Hall.

Start your Sunday with JESUS & COFFEE! Hot coffee and snacks are available during Sunday School hour outside of the church office. Come and join in some FPC fellowship!



-Sponsored by Congregational Life & Fellowship Committee.

Dear First Presbyterian Church,  
Thank you for all your prayers, cards, visits  
and food during my recovery from hip surgery.  
Your kindness and support has meant so much  
to me and my family and I can't thank you  
enough.

God Bless You! Janice Harbison



What a blessing to have been able to worship and visit  
with First Presbyterian Church family Sunday!  
We've been away for 22 years but we are always  
lovingly welcomed when we return to visit. Thank  
you! The 30 some years we were there had a profound  
impact on our lives! Blessings to you as you continue  
to preach and live out the Gospel!

Sincerely yours, Carolyn and Ben Raber



*THANK YOU* to the three (3) shifts of Good Shepherd volunteers! A total of twenty-two (22) FPC Covenant Partners assisted with the hot meal provided for the clients of the Good Shepherd Center on October 13th. Together we prepared, served, and delivered 216 meals of chicken & biscuits, mixed vegetables, coleslaw, and baked apples. The time, effort, and care put into this outreach shared more than food - it shared the love of Christ. We're so thankful for you!

Congregational Life Committee



### **CTP TEAM – Mark your calendars**

**Join us in welcoming Bill Enns and Dorington Little to First Presbyterian Church the weekend of November 14-16.**

Dr. Bill Enns and Dr. Dorington Little (ECO Flourish Navigators) are delighted to work with First Presbyterian Church as you process and move through this important time of transition. Thank you for the privilege! One important facet of this time is to hear *your* voices. To that end, we will conduct seven focus groups. These will be on Friday evening, November 14th (1 group), Saturday, November 15th (5 groups), and Sunday afternoon, November 16th (1 group). The purpose of these groups is to allow you to answer and discuss the following questions:

- What brought you to First Presbyterian Church and what ministry has been most encouraging to you?
- What areas do you think need to be addressed?
- What opportunities for ministry do you think the church is neglecting?
- What impediments exist to the church's long term health?

Please sign up through the church office for a designated time slot. If you cannot attend a group please feel free to email your responses to the questions directly to [info@knotnavigators.com](mailto:info@knotnavigators.com).

We look forward to meeting you in person, worshipping with you on Sunday, November 16th, and hearing your thoughts as together we seek God's future for First Presbyterian Church!

Many blessings to you all,  
Bill & Dori



## **HIGHLIGHTS OF THE STATED MEETING OF SESSION**

The regular meeting of Session gathered on Monday, October 13, 2025 6:00 PM. The Moderator Pastor Ben Claypool called us to order and offered prayer.

A Devotional Moment was led by Pastor Ben starting with scriptures from the Old Testament Books of Isaiah 43: 1 – 19 and Lamentations 3: 19 – 23 along with the New Testament Book of Revelation 3: 1 – 5. Pastor Ben reminded us that God's new work begins when we let go and that God is ultimately in charge of everything. Information:

### **Upcoming Dates**

- \*Congregational Meeting directly after Morning Worship, November 2<sup>nd</sup>

- \*Veteran's Day Recognition and the Deacon Brunch following Morning Worship  
November 9<sup>th</sup>

- \*Stewardship messages will be given in worship on Nov. 2, Nov. 9, with Faith-Promise Pledges received on Nov. 16<sup>th</sup>. Committees should have their budget request to the Treasurer no later than November 30<sup>th</sup>

- \*Thanksgiving Dinner – Calvin Hall November 27<sup>th</sup>

- \*Next services of The Lord's Supper - First Sunday in Advent 11/30-10:45 AM in the sanctuary, New Year's Eve 12/31/25 – 5:00 PM in the Chapel.

- \*Bicentennial Sunday December 28<sup>th</sup>.

### **October/November Preaching Schedule**

October 26—Brian Devereux (Hope Ministries' Recovery Pastor)

Pastor Ben on vacation

November 2—Ben Claypool

November 9—Ben Claypool

November 16—Ben Claypool

November 23—Tim Rausch

Pastor Ben on vacation

November 30—Ben Claypool

**Certified Transitional Pastor Search Team:** (Gail Fay and Jill Jones) the following motion was approved: the proposal and consulting agreement for Transitional Ministry from Knot Navigators to assist First Presbyterian Church in transitional work beginning January, 2026, the total fee and costs for the same estimated to be approximately \$50,000.00 and to approve the signature of the Clerk of Session on said consulting agreement, binding upon both parties fully executed.

**Personnel Committee:** (Gail Fay/Sam Dailey)

**(msp)** The following motion was approved: on the recommendation of ECO MPT and PSAT, to change Rev. Claypool's job description from Associate Pastor to Bridge Pastor at the salary of \$75,000.00 beginning November 3, 2025 until a permanent pastor is called. A discussion ensued.

**(msp)** to approve the following amendment to the motion; to clarify that the salary is \$64,500 and living allowance is \$10,500, as to be shown on Budget line items 503 and 537 respectively.

**(msp)** approve the following motion - to call a Congregational Meeting to be held on November 2, 2025, after the regular worship service where a vote will be held by the congregation to agree to this change in role. Announcement to be made to the Congregation on October 19 and October 26.

**Property Committee** – (Phil Oswald, David Fay and Fred Hofing) Thursday 10/16 Penn Power is scheduled to hook up our new electric.

### Thanksgiving Prayer

Father, we thank Thee for the night  
And for the pleasant morning light,  
For rest and food and loving care  
And all that makes the day so fair.

Help us to do the things we should;  
To be to others kind and good;  
In all we do in work or play,  
To grow more loving every day.