

The Bell Tower

First Presbyterian Church Happenings

October MMXXVI

OCTOBER Pastor Appreciation MONTH

WITH GRATEFUL HEARTS WE CELEBRATE PASTOR JANET!

We are deeply grateful for our Transitional Pastor, Rev. Dr. Janet Ann Hufford, and for the love, wisdom, spiritual guidance, and compassionate care she shares with us,

October is Pastor Appreciation Month, and it gives us special opportunity to let Pastor Janet know how much she means to us and how thankful we are for the ways she has walked alongside us during this season in the life of our church. Throughout the month, baskets will be available at both the front and rear of the sanctuary for you to share a note, card, or personal word of appreciation with Pastor Janet. A simple message of thanks can be a meaningful reminder of how deeply her ministry and presence are appreciated.

Please also sign up and join us for the Harvest & History Tour at Phil Oswald's farm on October 11th, following worship. We look forward to gathering as a church family, enjoying the beauty of the harvest season, sharing fellowship, and celebrating the blessing of Pastor Janet's work with our church family during one of her favorite seasons of the year.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Sally Fagley	10/1
Kelly Jones	10/1
Joshua Forbes	10/2
Dan Wilson	10/2
Michael Bray	10/3
Terri Deist	10/9
Megan Ohr	10/9
Josh Lentz	10/12
Sam Dailey	10/13
Charles Washington	10/13
Jonah Lentz	10/14
Mary Jane Fay	10/16
Dick Rickert	10/16
Lauren Ohr	10/18
Allyn Fischer	10/20
JD Titzel	10/20
Aaron Schreiber	10/21
Jeff Wallace	10/22
Michelle Lentz	10/23
Christine Nystrom	10/26
Todd Russell	10/26
John Dobi	10/27
Wendy McCartney	10/27
Jason Forbes	10/28
Marie Mitchell	10/28
Don Murphy	10/31

Youth

Nolan Schultz	10/4
Emma Reither	10/6
Madilynn Crompton	10/11
Molly Young	10/12
Peyton Davis	10/13

GROWing as Followers of Christ into the vision that God has in store for our future, let us go immediately after worship, October 11 to partake in '**Harvest and History Tour**' at Oswald Farms 6031 Atlantic Lake Rd, Hartstown, PA 16131 Food, tour, hayrides & games will be provided, but BYOChair!



Samaritan's Purse

Christmas Shoebox Ministry

It's Christmas Shoebox time! With the Christmas Shoeboxes due back to the church by November 15th, it is not too early to think about and begin to plan this worthwhile project. The Shoebox ministry brings the message of Jesus to hundreds of thousands of children worldwide each year. What better way to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas! Information is available through the Samaritan's Purse website: samaritanspurse.org. Operation Christmas Child - It's all about Jesus! Shoeboxes are available in the rear vestibule!





Thank you for all the support from my wonderful Sunday school teachers, preschool teachers and the rest of my church family through the years. I am now living in Erie working for a company called Clarvida . I go to school with a 7 year old and 12 year old boy who have special needs at different times of the day. I always loved working with the kids in the nursery and Bible school so it's the perfect job for me. I would enjoy any correspondence my new address is:

Savannah Johnson 646 W 8th St. Apt 2
Erie , PA 16502 Thank you!

A huge thank you to all the people who helped to make the September Soup & Salad Luncheon a success. There were 44 ladies who gathered to enjoy great food and fellowship and a wonderful program with "Mrs. Noah". Thanks for the good food, the beautiful decorations and the willing hands that helped to set up and clean up. Thanks be to God for giving us this opportunity for fellowship!



GOOD SHEPHERD REQUEST

October
Pancake Mix & Syrup
Bag of Rice #1
Canned vegetables

It is truly a blessing to have such a caring and loving church family! Many thanks to all those who sent cards, food, prayers, transportation to and from Erie, and words of hope. We love you all very much.

Mimi & Irv Milheim



1st Presbyterian Church Library Suggestions

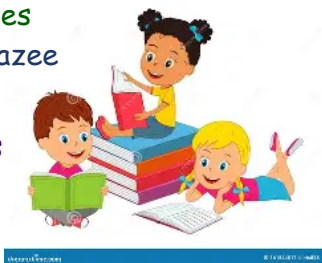
Youth Book: The Story for Little Ones

Foreword by Max Lucado and Randy Frazee

Adult Book: Age of Opportunity

A Biblical Guide to Parenting Teens

Author: Paul David Tripp



NURSERY SCHEDULE

10/11	Lucy Wheaton & Ericka Dershimer
10/18	Becky Bray & Nancy Hoffacker
10/25	Mary K. Miller & Kaye Williams
11/1	Ickes family

WARNING

THIS AREA IS UNDER
24 HOUR
VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

DAVIS SECURITY SOLUTIONS LLC
724.638.7310
WWW.DAVISSECURITY.NET

A Note from Security Technology:

As a friendly reminder, one of our layers of security is our security cameras, located both inside and outside of our building. When you are in or around our building you have the potential to be visually recorded. While the cameras have the ability to record sound, that function has been turned off.

Greeters

10/11	Terri Clark
10/18	Larry & Carole Lentz
10/25	Pat & Kaye Williams
11/1	Karen Patterson
11/8	John Russell
11/15	Jackie Grisetti

Introducing two of our newest Covenant Partners: Joe and Susan Dortin

If you want to meet some friendly, interesting, energetic, Christian people look no further than our new Covenant Partners, Joe and Susan Dortin. These two seem to have adopted the motto, "Why sit still when there's somewhere to go, someone to see, or something fun to do?"

Their story began when Joe hired Susan to work at his bowling alley, Celebrity Bowl. Joe found more than a good employee! The rest, as they say, is history. Susan agreed to marry Joe in 1998, and they have been enjoying their "happily ever after" ever since. They have three grown daughters - two in North Carolina and one in Detroit - and four grandchildren to spoil.

Joe currently works for Greenville Pharmacy as a driver, delivering medications along a dedicated route. But Joe's deliveries are about much more than just business - he visits with clients who are homebound, and for some, he may be the only person they see all day. His willingness to greet and brighten someone's day is a wonderful ministry. What a blessing he is to the people he serves.

Susan has spent much of her career in finance and currently works remotely as a registered administrative assistant for a retirement and investment company. She is also licensed to sell Life and Health insurance and holds a Notary Commission. Apparently that isn't enough to keep her busy because in her spare time she runs *Susan's Sweet Side*, a baking business specializing in sugar cookies and cupcakes. Susan loves to cook and bake and has always dreamed of having her own restaurant. For now, we suspect her friends and family are happy to be the taste-testers.

And then there's the Dortin's approach to recreation: go big or go home! They love NASCAR and have attend the Pocono Raceway event for the last 26 years, joining up with old friends. They love traveling and camping in their motor home. Chautauqua, New York is one of the favorite destinations. They are also serious sports fans and enjoy games throughout the various seasons. Joe and Susan bowl together in a league and Susan plays in a summer golf league. And apparently they don't have enough activities on their calendar, as they already have a cruise planned for 2027.

The Dortins had visited several churches in the past, but none quite felt like home. Then, on a recent Christmas Eve, they worshipped with us for the first time. Something clicked. They were excited by what they saw, heard, and experienced, and they quickly came to appreciate the warmth and beauty of the people who gather here each Sunday. Joe describes us simply as "real people". We'll take that as a wonderful compliment.



Joe and Susan believe *"it is a tough world to live in, so we need to try to make it a better place"*. We couldn't agree more. Their energy, compassion, sense of adventure, and willingness to serve are wonderful additions to our church family. Welcome, Joe and Susan! We look forward to sharing worship, fellowship, laughter, service - and perhaps a few baked goods - with you in the years ahead! We're glad you're here.



**MEET TWO OF OUR NEW COVENANT PARTNERS:
ROBB LEARY & BETH McCRACKEN-LEARY**

Robb and Beth, are a wonderful couple God has brought together. After each had experienced the loss of a first spouse following long marriages, God had plans to turn their grief into a beautiful new chapter filled with companionship, faith, and joy.

Robb grew up in Jamestown, attended Jamestown schools, and was a member of the Jamestown Presbyterian Church. In 1971 he was drafted and served our country in Vietnam. He worked for the Bessemer Railroad for 30 years, retiring at age 52 after a heart attack. When asked about people who have influenced his life Robb quickly mentioned a friend he has known since fifth grade who went on to be a minister - a friendship that has remained meaningful throughout the years.

Beth has always lived locally. She states her grandmother was a positive influence in her young life, and her daughter, a Christian storyteller, is someone she looks up to. Beth retired from the Greenville Medical Center where she worked as a receptionist. It was there that she first met Robb. Their friendship grew through walks together and visits to Fresh Grounds, and before long their relationship blossomed into something more.

Beth and Robb each have a daughter and a son, and together they count nine grandchildren. Family is a tremendous blessing to them. Also of noteworthy mention is their cat, nicknamed Buzzy, who has earned his own place in the family. Buzzy enjoys watching football with Robb while Beth heads out for lunch with the girls after church.

After Beth was invited to FPC by a Covenant Partner neighbor, she invited Robb to come with her. Before long they were worshiping together regularly and becoming part of the FPC family. In November 2025, they were married at FPC, beginning this new chapter of their lives.

The Learys have servants' hearts and willingly give their time to church projects including VBS and the Christmas Giving project, and also, they serve as Shepherds. Robb and Beth have felt warmly welcomed at FPC and now call it home. We are grateful that these faithful and caring people have chosen to join us as Covenant Partners.

No one is ever truly prepared to become a widow or widower, and the road through grief is not an easy one. Yet God, in His goodness and perfect timing, brought Robb and Beth together and transformed two stories of loss into one beautiful story of love, faith and renewed joy. We are blessed to have the Learys among us. All praise and glory to God!



OCTOBER JOTS FOR JESUS BY JANET

In October let us consider what the Spirit bestows upon us in an abundant harvest of gifts that come from God. As with all **gifts from God**, they are not only blessings for our benefit, but they **are** also to be lived out in the way of discerning and wise stewardship **in the form of talents, time, tithes, and treasures**. God gives us a helpful understanding of the gifts he provides in three biblical passages that will serve as sermon texts in the ripe month of October.

At prime harvest time on October 11th, we reap the ripe fields of **Romans chapter 12 verses 1-8**, which promises functional gifts available through grace to the body of Christ. The gifts given to us by the Spirit as described in Romans **are at our disposal for any way they are needed**. Like the young man in Matthew 19:16-24 they provide to us a great wealthy store from which to draw, not for our own sake, but for the sake of the kingdom. In other words, **these gifts are to be given away, not to be hoarded**. The functional gifts to be acted out are prophesying, serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, leading, and showing mercy. I have had the pleasure of helping a number in the congregation to explore and discern how to utilize their gifts. Please call for an appointment. Wisely using **one's God-given talents is an opportunity not only for one's personal growth, but also to contribute to the future growth of FPC and God's glorious kingdom. Don't delay. Invest now!**

The following week on October 18th, we learn **from Ephesians 4:11-12** of how **Christ** set gave leaders to equip people for service and build up His Body. **Leaders are chosen by God to give of their time to enable His Body to work maturely and in unity in the power of the Holy Spirit through love.**

On the final Sunday of October, in **1 Corinthians 13** informs us of still more gifts, in order to **out of gratitude, tithe on the treasures that God has given**. There are many different gifts manifested by the Spirit, which are available to everyone at any time that God determines. They too are **for the common good of all**, not just an individual. They include the essential gift of faith; also prophecy (in all 3 gift inventories); helpful gifts of wisdom, knowledge, discernment, and interpretation; and even healing, miracles, and tongues. Praise be to God for his abundant and generous grace! Thanks be to God!

UPPER ROOM: Delineation Between HOS, Staff & Session

...Because Clear Communication Builds Trust

FPC Vision
Seek First God's Light,
Grow as Followers of Christ,
and Share His Good News in Love.

SESSION
w/ Clerk of Session

FPC Values
Christ Centered Worship
Healthy Communications
Authority of The Word
Multigenerational Discipleship
Power of Prayer
Sense of Belonging
& Measurables

HEAD OF STAFF
& Staff Support Team
(for Personnel Functions)

STAFF
who are Team Leaders of:
Communications
w/ Office Manager;
Congregational Care;
Christian Discipleship;
Finance; Outreach;
Property w/ Custodial Services;
& **Worship**
w/ Director of Music

SESSION NOTES - SEPTEMBER, 2026

The following motions were approved at the September meeting of Session:

(msp) Motion for approval of purchase of a laptop to be used in the church for zoom meeting purposes from undesignated funds;

(msp) Motion for funds up to \$3300 for three additional screens for the sanctuary, hardware for same, and labor to Davis Security for installation, all for the purpose of enhancing worship experience, to be paid from Christian Remembrance monies;

(msp) Motion to adopt the Vision Statement, "SEEK First God's Light, GROW as Followers of Christ, and SHARE His Good News in Love"; and Values: CHRIST centered worship, HEALTHY communications, AUTHORITY of the word, MULTIGENERATIONAL discipleship, POWER of prayer, and SENSE of belonging;

(msp) Motion for change of team leadership of Christian Education Committee to Sharon Nystrom; and

Approval of the the following motions from Property Team (discerned with measurables for vision):

(msp) Motion to approve the Loutzenhiser Remembrance Service perpetually every 2nd Friday in December in the sanctuary with reception to follow in Calvin Hall, until Cris Loutzenhiser no longer wishes to hold such event.

(msp) Motion to approve Messiah performances in December including rehearsals perpetually until further action.

(msp) Motion to approve Friends of God meeting for 10/29 and 12/19 in 2026, with support to approve same into the future as dates are open.