**Pastor’s Notes**

***“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us”*** –Hebrews 12:1

A few years ago my children gave me the gift of DNA testing to trace my heritage. I have very limited knowledge of my lineage and was intrigued by the idea of being able to confirm the ancestry I embraced. My gene pool derived from the British Isles and Germany, or so I was told. My great grandmother was Jewish who married a Christian and then converted. Beyond that, my past is a blank slate to me. Even so, my sister and I have always embraced different branches of the family tree. I identify with my feisty Scottish bloodline. My sister, on the other hand, lays claim to the long suffering Jewish side. That rather sums up the two of us, so it makes sense.

The initial report of my DNA test confirmed 58% of me is from those British Isles – including SCOTLAND! I made a lot of the Scotland part of it and rather ignored the rest. Maybe its about the kilts and the bagpipes. I don’t know.

Recently I received the message that **because the science behind interpreting my Ancestry DNA® results is always evolving, had some “great, new improvements” for. To my disappointment (or something stronger) I learned that I am only 11% Scottish – and that includes IRELAND – while I am 17% European Jewish. Now don’t get me wrong, I’m not ashamed of my Jewish background, or any other background identified by my DNA, but come on, only 11%!**

**The truth is, I am what I am and what I am is a child of God, a conglomerate of people, some good, some not so good, but all who passed down something to the next generation that was more than just DNA unique to a particular pin on the global map.**

**Their struggles, their joys, their beliefs became the baseline for the next in my great-great-great grandmother never would have imagined that she would have a great-great-great granddaughter who would be the woman that I am. But I can imagine that she made decisions and raised her children as best she could giving them what they needed so that eventually I was born who I am.**

The New Testament letter to the Hebrews was written to Jewish Christians who were suffering persecution. The author reminds the reader that their ancestors endured trials and tribulations and yet were able to hold fast to their faith in the God who is steadfast. This was the “stuff” that made up their DNA – faithfulness, no mater what.

November is a special month beginning with All Saints Day and ending with Thanksgiving. In the middle, here at Forest Grove, we are in the season of our annual Stewardship campaign, when we offer our gifts – time, talent and treasure – to the service of God for the furthering of God’s kingdom in this place. It seems fitting that all three come together. Our congregation is made up of a great cloud of witnesses whose DNA has fostered faithfulness to the God who has made us – fearful and wonderful. The DNA of our ancestors make us who we are today. We wouldn’t be here, as we are, without them – Thank God! And God will use our DNA, the DNA of our faithfulness, for the generations to come.

I look at my grandchildren and wonder what of my DNA will they take and use? What will my legacy be? I hope and pray that it will be a legacy of faithfulness so that the next generation can be faithful in Forest Grove and beyond.

How about you? What DNA are you passing on?

Yours in Christ’s service,

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**The Church Has Left the Building Mission Sunday, November 3**

Once again, as a congregation, we aren’t *going* to church, we will *be* the church as we follow Jesus’ command to *go* out into the world and proclaim by living the good news of the gospel. There will be no Sunday morning worship or Sunday School in the traditional sense. We will gather briefly at 9:30 for a time to praise our God for the ability to serve God’s people using our hands, feet, hearts and minds.

Jesus told the parable of the judgement between the sheep and the goats where the sheep were the ones who tended to the sick, the hungry and the imprisoned and the goats did not. On November 3rd, we will be sheep through six different mission projects. These projects will begin following the brief worship service. Please prayerfully consider where God can use you in any of the following options:

- Make soup for Aid for Friends and Pack Sandwich Lunches: The soup will be donated to Aid for Friends who will distribute to the frail elderly in Bucks County. The lunches will be given to the Synergy Project to be distributed to the homeless in our area. We would appreciate donations of chicken, vegetables, beans, broth or rice to be put into the soup. Please DO NOT bring noodles.

- Yardwork for Seniors living in Buckingham Springs. Please bring rakes and work gloves. - Nova Thrift Store: Sorting and pricing of donated merchandise. Network of Victim Assistance (NOVA) supports, counsels and empowers victims of sexual assault and other serious crimes in Bucks County and works to prevent and eliminate violence in society through advocacy, training, community education and prevention programs. All proceeds from the thrift store support the work of Nova.

- Valley Youth House Painting: Four bedrooms at the homeless shelter for teens will be painted. Valley Youth House is located in Warminster and provides shelter, counseling, referrals and the opportunity for positive development to runaway and homeless youth. Please bring paint brushes, rollers, and drop cloths, if you have them.

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**Job Well Done – The Church Has Left the Building**

What a great day we had just a few weeks ago when our congregation “left the building” (the results of our mission efforts left the building) extending the love of Jesus to the places where people are hungry, partnering with God in mission. There were many precious moments as the Spirit was so visibly present and empowering. Working through the agency “Rise Against Hunger,” members from the congregation and the community participated in packaging meal packs to feed over 20,000 people! The overall cost for this event was approximately $7,000 for the food and distribution. Thank you to all who made a donation toward this fee.

God’s call to be a blessing by going out into the world and share the Good News of the gospel was heard here at Forest Grove. Indeed, WE were blessed!!! We can’t wait to do it again next year. Meanwhile, since the number of projects was reduced to one, we will be offering other opportunities to serve God by serving God’s people in the months ahead.

The Focus

Forest Grove Presbyterian Church November 2019

*RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED*

***Fall/Winter Worship Schedule***

begins Sunday September 8

10:00 am Worship

Church Office Hours

9am-2pm (Monday-Thursday)

Phone 215-794-8575

Pastor: Reverend Susan L. Fall

Email: pastorsu@forestgrovechurch.org

Director of Youth and Family Ministry

 and Seminary Intern: Peter Jonescu

Music Director: Leanne Yerkes

Administrative Assistant: Susan Flanagan

Email: office@forestgrovechurch.org

www.ForestGroveChurch.org

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| --- | --- |
| Benevolence Fund Balance @8/31/19 | $4,965 |
| Receipts/Transfers: Sept 19 mission Launch Church Left Bldg.Disbursements: | 2000 |
| Balance 9/30/19 | $5,165 |
| Offering & Income | $149,481 |
| Large Fund Income | 15,192 |
| **Total Income** | **164,673** |
| **Expenses** |  |
| Pastor Compensation | 69,548 |
| Staff | 37,927 |
| Office | 12,846 |
| Music & Worship | 959 |
| Christian Education | 1,995 |
| Property | 19,018 |
| Stewardship/Finance | 577 |
| Parish Life | (322) |
| Mission | 5,500 |
| **Total Expenses** | 148,047 |
| **Operating Surplus(Deficit)**  | **16,626** |
| Fund Balance 12/31/18 | 37,379 |
| Fund Balance 9/30/19 | 54,005 |
|  |  |

**Operating Fund 9/30/2019**

Page

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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  **Sunday** | **Monday** | **Tuesday** | **Wednesday** | **Thursday** | **Friday** | **Saturday**  |
|  |  |  |  |  | **1** | **2** |
|  **3 “Church has left**  **the Building” 6:30pm Youth Group**  | **4** | **5*****Election Day*****7pm Worship/ Music Mtg.**  | **610 Bible Study** | **7****11am Parish Life** | **8** | **9** |
|  **10 Baptism Sunday** **10am Worship/** **Communion**  **Followed by Coffee** **and Fellowship** **Sunday School**  **6:30pm Youth Group** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **17 Pledge Sunday** **10am Worship, Followed by Coffee and Fellowship Sunday School 6:30pm Youth Group \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 24 10am Worship, Followed by Coffee and Fellowship Sunday School 6:30pm Youth Group**  | **11**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**18\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_25** | **12 9:30 Garden Club****5:15pm Beekeepers Mtg.****7pm Stewardship Mtg.** **7pm Property Mtg.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** **199am MOMS 12pm Christian Education Mtg.6:30 Sessions Mtg.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_26** | **1310am - Bible Study\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_2010am Bible Study\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_2710am Bible Study** | **13**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**21****10:30 Deacons****\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_****28Happy Thanksgiving !!** | **15****\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_****22****6:00pm Mission and Fellowship Night****\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_****29*****Offices Closed*** | **16****\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_****23****\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_****30** |

**November Schedules Ushers**

11/10 Doug and Vini Christie 11/17 Pat Gessner, Marilyn Cook 11/24 Gerry and Louise Stemplewicz

**Greeter**

11/10 Marilyn Cook

11/17 Michael Myers

11/24 Bill Wark

**Coffee**

11/10 Beth Conti

11/17 Donna Jencks

11/24 Nancy Shvanda

**11/3 “Church has Left the Building”**

**Nursery**

11/10 Sharon Ruth 11/17 Jolie Hyndman

11/24 Kim King

Elder of the Month - Michael Myers

Deacon Missi Dell’Orefice

**Capital Campaign @9/30/2019**

Pledge $301,618 Pledge & Non Pldg. Rcpt $200,867

Disbursements $ 88,164

**November Birthdays**

Jim Hampton 11/2

John Dura Sr., 11/2

Nick Dell'Orefice 11/7

Maggie Realley 11/7

Dot Tinari 11/12

Scarlett Bradney 11/13

John Albert 11/16

Sandy Rekemeier 11/18

Bill Hyndman V 11/19

Peggy Mellinger 11/21

Judy Ferguson 11/22

Ethan Dobbins 11/26

Wes Schroeder 11/26

Page

**Confirmation**

**Retreat**

**Youth Group News**

to live in God’s way.

**MSYM *(Middle School Youth Ministry)***

!

**Prayer Team Contacts**

 Exciting things are happening at Forest Grove Church. It has been a great joy to witness so many people working on behalf of the Kingdom of God.

 In a few weeks a number of people will be gathered and trained to contact every household of our church. This is something we have never done.

 This contact the Kingdom of God” and that is exactly what these Prayer Team members will be urging all to do. The results of this for our church are immeasurable.

 Thank you to all the Prayer Team members and to our entire church family for opening yourself to God’s will in your life!.

**The Church Has Left the Building Mission Sunday, November 3**

Once again, as a congregation, we aren’t *going* to church, we will *be* the church as we follow Jesus’ command to *go* out into the world and proclaim by living the good news of the gospel. There will be no Sunday morning worship or Sunday School in the traditional sense. We will gather briefly at 9:30 for a time to praise our God for the ability to serve God’s people using our hands, feet, hearts and minds.

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**Annual Stewardship Campaign**

As Christians, we believe that God has given us the responsibility of taking care of the world. That’s a big job, but this year’s stewardship campaign theme, “All Aboard! This Train is Bound for Glory” reminds us that we do not take on that responsibility alone. We are called to “get on board,” joining with others so that together we will use our time, talents and treasures for service God that is the “Glory Train” headed toward the fulfillment of God’s kingdom here on earth.

During November we will hear stories about the exciting journey of stewardship some of the members of our congregation have experienced as they have gotten on board with God’s mission. It is God’s intention that we all join in this journey of faithful living by accepting our responsibilities as God’s stewards and support the ministries of Forest Grove Church. Christ’s “Train” is powered by your stewardship. Your financial support will help to continue our missions and outreach efforts, children’s formation programs, and musical offerings. Watch your mail for more information about how you can get on the “Train Bound for Glory” and keep it running by your stewardship commitment.

**Youth Group November**

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**November**

***November 2019***

- Valley Youth House Painting: Four bedrooms at the homeless shelter for teens will be painted. Valley Youth House is located in Warminster and provides shelter, counseling, referrals and the opportunity for positive development to runaway and homeless youth. Please bring paint brushes, rollers, and drop cloths, if you have them.

- Prepare and Serve Dinner at The Well: The Well is a homeless shelter for women in Philadelphia. It is a joint mission of the Presbyterian Church USA and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. This meal will be prepared with the women at The Well at 7:00 PM. All participants will share the meal together. \*\*Those who will be a part of this mission will leave from the church at 6:00 PM.

- Games at Solana Assisted Living: This project will include games and interactions with the residents in the memory unit of Solana. We will “play” for 1 hour and offer refreshments. Some of our own members will provide entertainment including a special dance number by the Myers girls, Andrea and Julia. There will be singing of some fun and easy songs like “Deep and Wide” and “Jesus Loves Me.” We are also going to do some “manicures” of the resident’s fingernails as a special treat. \*\*Participants are asked to meet at Solana at 1:30 PM.

**Christmas Gifts for Disabled Adults**

For several years now members of the congregation contributed gifts that were given to disabled adults living in the many group homes of Allies, Inc. These were received with tremendous gratitude by people who are often overlooked. There are many organizations that address the needs of children, but not very many who consider those with disabilities. Even simple gifts of a hat, CD, or a toy can bring not only a smile to the face of those recipients but also extend expressions of love and caring.

Once again congregation members are invited to participate in giving gifts to this population. Toward the end of November a list of individuals and their “wish list” items will be available in Fellowship Hall. The gifts are not to be expensive amounting to no more than about $25. Items should be wrapped including a gift tag with the name of the recipient. Please do not put the description of the gift on the tag. Bring your gifts to the church no later than December 9. Remember, Jesus said, “When you do to the least of these, you do also to me.”

***An Update on the Capital Campaign***

Although the site work is at a standstill, other things are happening.

Rear entrance: Bids received on Oct. 8 for the new rear entrance are higher than we had hoped. The property committee met with the contractor and our architect on Tuesday Oct. 22 to determine how we might save some money on the construction of the rear entrance.

Sanctuary windows & painting: Several detailed windows proposals were presented to the property committee on Oct.14. After discussion about prices, framing materials, and warranties, Renewal by Anderson was selected as the contractor. The contract for painting the soffits, fascia, and window frames was awarded to DPL Painting. The window installation and painting are scheduled for Spring 2020.

Underground oil tank: When the tank was removed in May 2019, it was discovered that oil had been leaking from pin holes in the tank. Although the soil sample taken at the time of removal showed oil, our well water tests do not show any petroleum contamination. The PADEP (Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection) has reviewed our tests and advised that the case will be closed without any additional work on our part. We’re just waiting for the official letter from PADEP.

Site work: We’ve been in touch on several occasions with Scott Cornell of A.H. Cornell & Son Inc. Scott advised that we are next in line after the completion of a project in Newtown. We’re looking forward to it!

If you would like more information or have questions,

contact the following people:

 Construction loan & site work - Pat Gessner

 Rear entrance - Paul Wachtendorf

 Sanctuary windows & painting - Craig Jencks

**https://www.facebook.com/ForestGrovePresbyterianChurch/**

**www.forestgrovechurch.org**

**Christmas Musical Rehearsals Have Begun**

We’re getting ready for Christmas by preparing a special musical presentation that will be a part Sunday morning worship on December 22. The musical is called *Shepherds, Sheep and a Savior.”* There are parts for singers, speaking and non-speaking actors, stage crew, stage parents, costume and scenery coordinators and helpers. Choral rehearsals are taking place following Sunday worship at 11:20 – noon led by Leanne Yerkes and Maggie Rash. All ages are welcome to participate. It is truly an intergenerational event. Pastor Su will be working with the actors. Speak with her if you can help behind the scenes. This will be a wonderful way to herald the birth of our Savior!

**Happy Anniversary Susan Flanagan!**

It has been one year since Forest Grove Church was blessed with the special gifts and talents of our office administrator, Susan.She has been the sunshine in the day of many who have stopped by, called, or needed anything.She has kept the administration of this church going in such a cheerful and organized way.Susan has been responsible for not only keeping records, preparing the newsletter, bulletin, and reports, but she has also enhanced the appearance and upkeep of our bulletin board, organized many nooks, crannies, closets and drawers.All that she does is with love in her heart – love for God and love for all God’s children – and it shows!It isn’t just a job, it’s a ministry.Thank you Susan for a wonderful year and we look forward to serving the Lord with you for many years to come!You are a blessing!

**Friday Night Fellowship**

We had a fun and Spirit-filled night on October 25th, our first Friday Night Fellowship event of this program year. There were lots of scary, silly and unique costumes that contributed to the laughter of the evening. Pastor Su had some goofy games and we all enjoyed being together for mission outreach. October’s mission project was to provide Halloween fun for children living in temporary housing provided by A Woman’s Place, the agency that provides secure housing for those who are victims of domestic violence. Vini Christie came up with some special Halloween treats that the group made and put into bags that were taken to the shelter.

Friday Night Fellowship will be held again on November 22. The time has changed from last year to accommodate both those who get home later from work and those who have young children who need to get home earlier for bedtime. Fellowship is now from 6:00 – 8:00 and begins and ends with the mission project. The meal and games are held in the middle. Arrival and dismissal time is as needed.

November’s mission project is to make cards for those serving in the military who are far from home through a program called “Holidays for Heroes” sponsored by the Red Cross. A representative from that organization will join us on the 22nd and describe how this program enables others to “Give Something That Means Something” this holiday season and other holidays year-round. We will be making holiday cards that will express our thanks and recognize members of the military, veterans and their families.

Looking ahead, there will not be a Friday Night Fellowship in December. It will resume in January when we will engage in a special project for a Valentine’s Party at the Tree of Life Church Community Cup program for families with disabled adults. That will be held on the 4th Friday in January, the 24th.

**Forest Grove Presbyterian Church**

**1856 Forest Grove Road**

**PO Box 462**

**Forest Grove, PA 18922**

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**Wednesday Morning Bible Study**

For the next few weeks adults will be gathering each Wednesday at Buckingham Springs to continue their study of the apostle Paul and the beginnings of the Christian church. Many of the issues that were challenges for the church during that first century continue to confront the church today. Each week’s lesson stands alone. Drop in and explore God’s message to us today. Class is held in the clubhouse, 10:00 – 11:30. Bring a friend!

**S’mores**

**FUN !!**

Peter Jonescu

**Our Youth and Family Ministry and Seminary Intern preaching and teaching.**

**Jason and Rachel**

**Dell’Orefice**

**Fall Clean Up Day!!**

**Thanks to the Church Clean Up Crew**

Many people came out on Saturday, October 19 to help with the church clean up. Many truckloads of branches, tree stumps and debris were removed from the grove of bamboo that was removed at the back of the parking lot. In addition to this outside work, air conditioners were removed from the windows, toys in the nursery were cleaned and sanitized, table tops were scrubbed as well as the sanctuary woodwork. Thanks so much for contributing your time, muscle and enthusiasm for this important work. The church looks much better!!!

**Keep up to date on**

**Happenings check our Website and**

**Facebook page.**

**Lunch with our Seminary Intern**

Peter Jonescu has been settling into his new role within the Forest Grove family of faith as our seminary intern. For the past year Peter has been working with our youth. Now he is expanding his scope to include the whole congregation. One of the ways to maximize both his and our experience is by the deepening of our relationships. To that end, how about hosting Peter for lunch following Sunday worship or even Sunday dinner in order to give him the opportunity to get better acquainted? A sign up is available in Fellowship Hall for lunch or dinner on the first Sunday of the month.

**New Storytelling Service to Begin in December**

Most of us love to hear a good story and the Bible is full of them! Many of us are not all that well acquainted with many of those stories. We may know bits and pieces but many times we have a hard time figuring out how they have anything to do with our life today.

In an effort to become more acquainted with the biblical story and to be drawn into its deeper meaning, a new opportunity is being offered. Beginning on December 13 and then on the second Friday of each month, 6:00 – 7:30 there will be a storytelling service at the church by Pastor Su. She will serve as the storyteller and then invite participants to retell the story through different medium. She will also share a secular story that shares a similar message as the biblical story. In addition there will be singing, another way we tell our faith-story and dinner. This will be an inter-generational alternative type of worship service, accessible to all ages, that will be more experiential and participatory but won’t have traditional liturgy.

Dinner will be served with the help of those participating. The menu will be the same each month – pasta with the options of red, cheese or butter sauce. There will also be salad, bread and dessert. Volunteers will be needed to bring different parts of the meal. Food items will be on slips of paper that can be taken and then bring the food item to the church ready to serve. Sign up for December 13th Storytelling Service will be on the church bulletin board next to the office.

**October Mission Dollars**Throughout the year Forest Grove contributes to various mission projects that are either local, national or international. There is so much need in the world. Last year we began to support a new and unique mission project at the Tree of Life Presbyterian Church Community Cup Coffee House. Meeting each Friday at the church, this is a program where all are welcome, but is specifically designed as a communal space for young adults and adults with disabilities and their families and caregivers. It’s a place to build friendships and just have a fun night out. There are few options for community and fellowship among this population. Each week there is food, fun and great live music.Doors open at 5:30. Dinner is served around 6. At 7 p.m. there is either a sing-along or an opening act. At 7:30 the headline group performs. The Community Cup is a joint program with New Avenue Foundation, a non-profit for people with disabilities and their families.

The youth group this month has a lotextra things planned this month. On November 7th we will be going to The Well, a women's shelter, to make dinner. For students interested, this is by reservation as we have limited spots. We will also be having a fellowship and invite night, when we go to a nearby trampoline park!!!