

The Focus



Forest Grove Presbyterian Church March 2021

Pastor's Notes

"See, I am making all things new." -- Revelation 21:5

For many years each Christmas I have given an amaryllis bulb to my daughters as well as a few others. To me, it is a gift of life and color for a season that seems to lack much of both. My girls enjoy the wintertime blooms but eventually the pedals drop off and then eventually the leaves lose their vitality as well. To my horror the once thriving plant is tossed into the trash until a few years ago when I rescued the sleeping bulb. Cutting away leaves and stem to within an inch of their lives, the bulb is then allowed to rest for months in darkness then replanted in my summer garden to glorious results.

In January I took one of the bulbs that had been pulled from my garden this past fall and potted it. It sat on my window sill soaking up the sun for weeks looking as if all was lost, but I waited. Just a few days ago I saw it, a new bud starting to form. It's barely visible emerging from the seemingly lifeless orb – but there is life!

In just two weeks we will hit the anniversary of our lock-down from the pandemic. I've been thinking a lot about that lately. In many ways it feels as if it has been longer than a year! I remember well that first week when in-person worship was suspended and no one was permitted in the church building. It was as if all the life had gotten sucked out of me. Yes, I had quickly sent home some materials that would allow for at-home private worship including material for children, but it certainly wasn't the same.

The church at the onset of the pandemic seemed like my amaryllis, once blooming and beautiful but then seemingly lifeless. Our building seemed so empty. We didn't have our usual bustling activity on Sundays and during the week groups were unable to make use of the space.

When an amaryllis bulb is pulled from its soil and has its foliage cut away, it isn't dead. The Creator is at work forming new life that will develop when it is once again replaced in its natural state or home, the earth. So it is with the church. The Creator has been forming new life, providing new technology, new ways of being, and even new priorities.

Slowly we have begun to bud again. Life is evident as we engage in the ministries of Jesus Christ through our mission, worship and study. Also, the building is starting to bloom again with our Hispanic brothers and sisters in Christ using the space for their worship as well as our Boy Scout troop holding meetings here on Monday evenings. Before long the weather will be conducive to outdoor worship and lunch gatherings.

An Easter hymn reads, "In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree... in our end is our beginning... unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see." The pandemic may have meant the end for somethings in our life together, but God is creating a new beginning and the new life is starting to grow as the light to this dark tunnel we have been in for a year now is becoming more visible. What will we look like when we finally bloom again, only God knows. Whatever it is, it will certainly be glorious! I can hardly wait!

Yours in Christ's service,

Pastor Su

PASTOR SU ON STUDY LEAVE MARCH 8-14

Pastor Su will be on Study leave during the week of the 8th. She is taking this time to prepare for Holy Week. If you have any pastoral needs, please contact Susan Flanagan in the church office.





THANK YOU FOR SYNERGY DONATIONS

Wow! The Confirmation Class had a fantastic response to their request for donations to the Synergy Project. Thanks to the generosity of our congregation and residents of Buckingham Springs (thanks Linda Bowers for putting it out there to that population) the Confirmation Class was able to put together over forty hygiene kits as well as donate tents, sleeping bags and other bedding, snacks, canned food, warm socks, hats, gloves, hand and foot warmers as well as other miscellaneous items and financial contributions.

The Synergy Project is a street outreach program designed to help runaway, homeless, nomadic and street youth, age 21 and under, in Bucks County, Philadelphia, Allentown, and Dauphin County.

The program offers survival supplies (food, clothes, hygienic products, sleeping bags, tents, tarps, etc.), peer support, informal counseling (individual, family, or group), information and referral services and assistance to get off the streets, if desired. Street Outreach coordinators spend most of their time in a Jeep, van, on a mountain bike, canoe or kayak, or walking to remote areas or an city streets reaching out to youth who tend to settle in places that are not easily accessible, assisting them to find permanent housing or making it safer for them to be on the streets.

The mission of the program is to meet the youth where they are – to go to them. Street outreach coordinators visit freight train yards, transportation stations, tent-cities and homeless camps offering assistance to the many youth who refuse to go to shelters.

According to Robert “Woody” Wood, the number of homeless youth is on the rise from previous years so the need for assistance is greater than ever. Please keep all who are a part of this program in your prayers and thanks again for your help!

EARLY MORNING COMMUNION DURING LENT

We continue to offer a Wednesday morning Communion service throughout Lent. This brief half-hour service begins at 8:30 AM on Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/127591875> Meeting ID: 127 591 875 or by phone: 301-715-8592 or 253-215-8782. Please provide your own communion elements of bread and juice.

Following the service, all are invited to join in a time of fellowship. Bring your breakfast or a cup of coffee. This is a way to take a mid-week pause to remember and share in God's steadfast love.



PER CAPITA APPORTIONMENT SUNDAY MARCH 21, 2021

PER CAPITA OF THE PRESBYTERY OF PHILADELPHIA

*We invite you to participate in Christ's work
as we sustain our shared witness*

\$30.00

2021 ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION PER MEMBER



\$18.65 ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION
to support infrastructure
necessary for ministry in
Philadelphia, Delaware, Bucks,
and Montgomery Counties



\$2.40 ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION
to the Synod, which consists
of 16 Presbyteries across
Pennsylvania and parts of
West Virginia and Ohio



\$8.95 ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION
to the Office of General
Assembly, which supports
our Synods, Presbyteries, and
over 10,000 congregations

Here's what your per capita apportionment dollars achieve:

WALK ALONGSIDE OUR CONGREGATIONS

in joys, struggles, transitions, seasons of discernment, conflict management, and missional aspirations. This has been especially critical in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. Per Capita dollars make possible the ministry of the Presbytery Leadership Collegium and Commission on Ministry.

EQUIP AND EMPOWER CHURCH LEADERS

to serve our congregations and communities with intentionality, generosity, and creativity. Per Capita dollars make possible the Commission on Preparation for Ministry and Membership as we walk alongside candidates for ordination, receive new Ministers of Word and Sacrament, and equip Elders for service in our churches.

FACILITATE A NETWORK OF TRUST AND ACCOUNTABILITY

through the ecclesiastical Offices of the Stated Clerk, treasurers, and accountants at all levels of our denomination. Per Capita dollars enable our leadership to maintain records and assure responsibility and compliance alongside the broader Body of Christ and Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

LAUNCH AND LEVERAGE NEW POSSIBILITIES

as we engage our neighbors and communities with the good news of Jesus Christ. Per Capita dollars pay for essential leadership catalysts, managed by staff who oversee grant programs; support creative ministry initiatives through the work of Commission on Resources and Creative Ministries; and sustain the Ministry and Leadership Incubator - our equipping program that partners with seminarians in church revitalization. Per Capita also leverages equipping events like Fall Fest, Clerks Round Tables, and Ecumenical Equipping Events.

TELL THE STORY AND GATHER THE FAITHFUL

through the hosting of various meetings of Presbytery leadership commissions, committees, and mission groups. Per Capita dollars also make possible various publications, website and social media management, podcast hosting, critical record keeping of our churches, and the work of the Presbyterian Historical Society located in Center City, Philadelphia.

LET'S GET READY FOR EASTER FELLOWSHIP ACTIVITY

On Sunday, March 28 at 3:00 we will gather on Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/127591875> Meeting ID: 127 591 875 or by phone: 301-



715-8592 or 253-215-8782 to dye Easter Eggs and/or hats as well as learn how to make Ukrainian Easter Eggs. Even if you haven't dyed eggs in years, why not hard boil up a few and get creative with us.? Please provide your own supplies. It will be a fun time of sharing.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING OFFERING TO BE RECEIVED ON APRIL 4



In a world of disaster, hunger, and oppression, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering works in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, this offering helps to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope. Each gift to OGHS helps to improve the lives of people in challenging situations. The Offering provides us a way to share God's love with our neighbors in need. In fact, OGHS is the single, largest way that Presbyterians come together every year to work for a better world.



YOU SHALL BE CALLED REPAIRERS OF THE BREACH

Providing relief from natural disasters, food for the hungry, and support for the poor and oppressed.

— Isaiah 61

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
2020 THE OFFERING

In the first half of 2020 (1/1/20-6/30/20) OGHS granted \$4.1 million as 487 grants in the United States and 57 countries. Of that, \$2.5 million was for COVID-19 response.

OGHS works to alleviate hunger and eliminate root causes. In 2019, 94 grants were rewarded totaling over \$1 million, impacting 20 countries, including the United States. With sufficient money, people were able to purchase seeds, land, water, equipment and training to feed themselves and their family. Better food also means everyone in the food production process is treated fairly. OGHS provided:

- Over 1,388 chicken, pigs, rabbits, goats shared with families
- 453 beehives in communities around the world
- 63,500 seedlings and over 63,000 kilograms of seeds distributed
- More than 42 farms created around the world
- Planted over 51,000 trees across multiple countries
- Provided 40 water pumps, one well and seven water tanks
- Presbyterians purchased more than 63,000 pounds of fair-trade coffee
- 1,097 Presbyterian congregations purchased eco-palms for sustainable forestry and livelihoods

OGHS works with low-income communities to overcome oppression and injustice. In 2020 projects focused on advocacy, youth-led initiatives, skills development, farming, worker rights, immigration/refugee issues and capacity building. Through your gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing, projects in economically poor communities around the world have had an opportunity to develop solutions to their own challenges.

Please prayerfully consider how you can be a part of this important ministry. The special offering will be received on Easter, April 4 during our outdoor in-person worship or mail or give online your donation at any time. Please indicate that it is for One Great Hour of Sharing.



Silver linings and Epiphany stars

I would say God speaks to us in many various ways. This pandemic has been difficult for all of us, at the office, at home, at school or working from home and teaching from home. Life is simply stressful! We have had a few family members pass away if not Covid or illness then cancer. Life is tough and unpredictable. Finding these "silver linings" helps me get through the days, weeks and months. What has recently helped me was a new song by TobyMac "Help Is On The Way". I have listened to like 15 or 20 times :-). The lyrics are so perfect. "Maybe midnight or mid-day, Never early, Never late, He will stand by what He claimed"... to me this says God will always answer your prayer(s) "On Time". It might not be the time we thought or planned on, but His help is on the way and that is something you can rely on.

Thank you Brad

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Lent is passing by quickly. Soon we will celebrate the most important event of our faith, Easter, and all that led up to that life-altering event and supreme expression of love. Services will be available on Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/127591875> Meeting ID: 127 591 875 or by phone: 301-715-8592 or 253-215-8782. As well as the following:



March 28, Palm Sunday – 10:00 AM worship either outdoors in-person (weather permitting) and/or on Zoom. If poor weather, palms will be available at the rear entrance of the church beginning on Friday, March 26.

March 31, Midweek Communion – 8:30 AM on Zoom. Please provide your own elements.

April 1, Maundy Thursday – 7:00 PM on Zoom. Communion will be observed. Please provide your own elements.

April 2, Good Friday – 7:00 PM on Zoom. We will join with The Anchor Presbyterian Church as we did on Ash Wednesday. You will need your broken clay pot and candle. Additional pots and candles are available in a container outside the rear church entrance door.

April 4, Easter Sunday – 10:00 AM worship will be either on Zoom or under the pavilion at George M. Bush Park: 3868 Burnt House Hill Rd, Doylestown, PA 18902, rain or shine. Some seating will be available at picnic tables. Feel free to bring a cushion or your own seating, if you prefer. There will be an Easter Egg Hunt for the children following the service.





SAVE THE DATE FOR VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

On our current trajectory, we have every reason to believe we will hold in-person Vacation Bible School this summer during the week of July 19-23, 9:00 – noon. The program is for all children ages 4 year olds through 6th graders. Church or community members, grandchildren and friends, come on down and join the fun!

Once again Kim King is our VBS coordinator. She is looking for volunteers to serve as group leaders, snack helpers, recreation leaders, and story tellers. Contact Kim, Su Fall, or the church office if you are interested in helping. Remember, we supply the resources; you supply the love for God and children! Registration will be available soon including online.

CALLING ALL MIDDLE SCHOOLERS

This summer we are going to try again to have a new one week program for those entering 5th grade through 9th graders. We are having “Creation Camp.” For the week of July 12 - 16 we will offer a full day program (8:30 – 4:00) that will allow participants to participate in environmental projects. For example, one day we will go to Delaware Valley University to learn about cows and even get to milk cows! Another day we will travel to Island Beach State Park for a nature program and swimming in the ocean. Each day will be another adventure! Enrollment is limited but also open to the community. Call the church office for more information or talk with Pastor Su.

PRAYER WALL

Comfort for Cheryl on the death of her mother and Jane on the death of her husbands; healing for Dani, Dee and Elijah; peace, compromise and reconciliation: these are the prayers that have been placed on our church and community Prayer Wall.

The origins of Christian prayer walls are unknown. But we do know that prayer is a significant part of the active Christian life-style. A Christian prayer wall is a designated place for people to post their prayer needs, usually in written form. In response, a surrounding community of believers will pray for the posted requests.

We do not walk through this life alone. God created us to be in community, to “Love one another” and to “Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication... making supplication for *all* the saints.” As a follower of Jesus Christ, we are called to pray and to specifically pray for others. A prayer wall is not necessary to pray, however, a prayer wall is beneficial to pray. It will draw us together into the community of saints, who are all at the prayer wall for the same reason. You will come to see the needs of others, and others will see your needs, which is a bonding experience for all. To love those around you is a Christian ideal, and partnering with others in prayer is a great way to show that love.

Having a Prayer Wall at the church allows not only church members to request and pray for each other, but also brings in the community who might not know how or where to pray but appreciate the prayers of others. All are invited to write out their prayer on a strip of fabric that is found in a plastic bin next to the “wall” and tie it to the chicken wire. All are also invited to stop by, read the prayers and offer them up to the Lord.



A Caring Congregation - Bible Study and Fellowship Every Thursday 7pm on Zoom

Led by Ryon Herin, Princeton Seminary Intern

It is my hope that we will learn how to care for others in our congregation during this difficult time and in the future when we can visit others in person. We will learn how to pray for others, how to reach out and visit those of our congregation in need, how to listen to others, and how to care for our fellow members through grief and hard times. As members of the body of Christ, we all bring different gifts which shape how we care for others. For some, their gift is listening. For others, their gift could be cooking meals for those in need. Through this study, you will get a glimpse into the life of pastoral care that both the deacons and the pastor share in caring for members of the congregation, in good times and in bad. We will learn that pastoral care is not only the work of the deacons and the pastor but also the work of the congregation as we are all called to be ministers to one another and our community. Guided by the Holy Spirit and Scripture, we will journey together in exploring how to use each of our unique gifts in caring for each other and our wider community. I hope to see you soon!!

Blessings, Ryon Herin, Princeton Seminary Intern

March 11th- Prayer

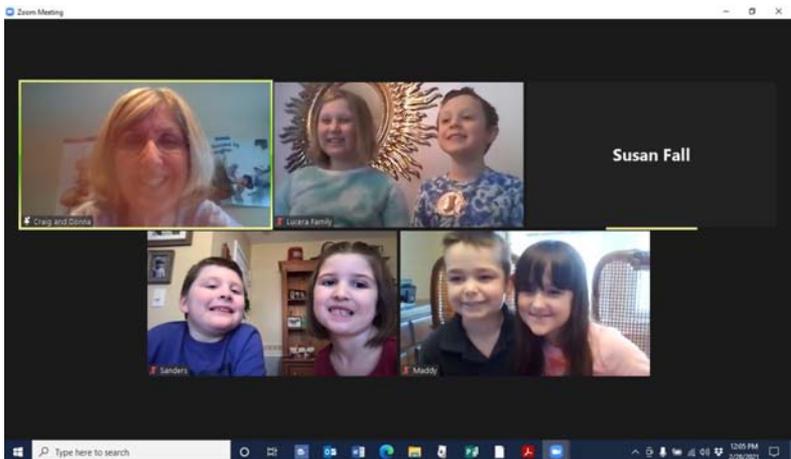
March 18th- Listening and Boundaries

March 25th- Visitation and Volunteering

April 1st- Leading through Times of Grief

April 8th- Being a Caring Congregation: Wrapping it all up

SUNDAY SCHOOL ON ZOOM

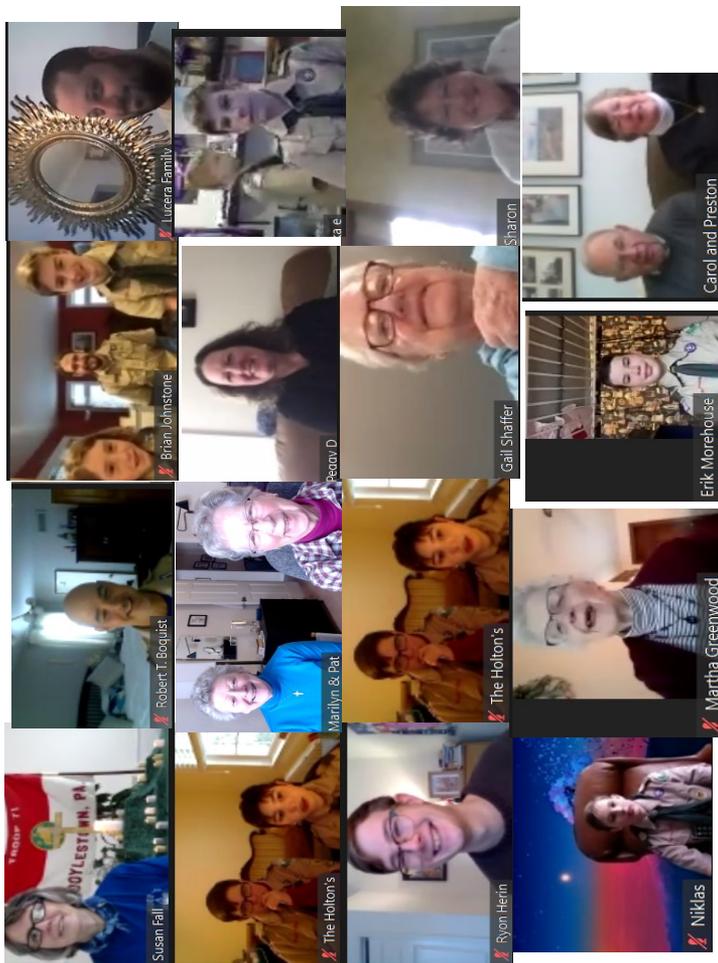




Boy Scouts of America— Troop # 71

Worshipping at

Forest Grove Presbyterian Church





SUNDAY WORSHIP WITH THE BOY SCOUTS



Janice & Bob Propsner



monika e



Craig and Donna



Mitav Mehta



Oxford Walt



Phyllis



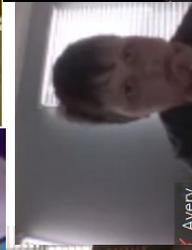
Kian Wilson



Nate Dempsey



Lucas Faunce



Avery



7th



Brothea Tinar



Paul Wachtendorf



Linda Bowers



Christian

FGPC FINANCIALS Ended January 31, 2021

Operating Fund

One month ended
January 31, 2021

Offering & Misc Income	\$	35,431
Large Fund Income		<u>1,834</u>
Total Income		\$37,265

Expenses

Pastor Compensation		7,949
Staff		3,366
Office		1,101
Music & Worship		119
Christian Education		0
Property		1,992
Stewardship/Finance		46
Parish Life		0
Mission		0
Other		<u>0</u>
Total Expenses		\$14,572

2021 Operating Fund

<u>Surplus (Deficit)</u>		22,692
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Fund Balance @ 12/31/20		<u>66,731</u>
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Fund Balance @ 1/31/21	\$	<u>89,423</u>
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Capital Campaign @1/31/21

Pledge Receipts		<u>\$ 304,618</u>
Pledge & Non-Pledge		\$ 368,664
Construction Loan		<u>190,000</u>
Total		<u>\$ 558,664</u>
Disbursements		<u>\$ 504,249</u>

Benevolence Fund

31-January-21

Balance @ 12/31/20		\$4,696
Receipts & Transfers		
Disbursements:		
Balance @ 1/31/21		<u>\$4,696</u>

March Birthdays:



Dolores Albert	3/1	Sally Thiessen	3/15
Mary Bode	3/1	Terry Holton	3/20
Ripp, Duke	3/2	Craig Jencks	3/22
Hailey Guarracino	3/6	Eloise Hyndman	3/27
Brad Sanders	3/10	Shane Ledyard	3/27
Richard Wright	3/11	Rick Wiggins	3/28
James Conner III	3/12	Regina Guarracino	3/30
		Gail Shaffer 1	3/30
		Evin Kimbel V	3/31

We stand to face the future:



*God behind us in the past;
Christ before us, the way ahead;
Christ beside us in this moment;
Christ beneath us in our weakness;
Christ above us to shield us,-
beneath the shadow of his wings we are safe;
Christ between us to bind us in the unity of his love;
Christ in us, equippig us with his all-sufficient grace.*

*Thus armed, guided and protected we face the new year.
now we arise and go forth on the journey before us,
knowing that, where Christ leads life is a journey home.
Therefore we travel in faith, in hope, and in love,
in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

*May the blessing of God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be upon us
and upon all this year*

Pastor Se

Forest Grove Presbyterian Church

1856 Forest Grove Road

PO Box 462

Forest Grove, PA 18922



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Worship Schedule

10:00 am Worship

Church Office Hours

9am-2pm (Monday-Thursday)

Phone 215-794-8575

Pastor: Reverend Susan L. Fall

Email: pastorsu@forestgrovechurch.org

Seminary Intern: Ryon Herin

Music Director: Leanne Yerkes

Administrative Assistant: Susan Flanagan

Email: office@forestgrovechurch.org

www.ForestGroveChurch.org