

The Focus
Forest Grove Presbyterian Church May 2023

Pastor's Notes:

“Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough places smooth”
-Isaiah 40:4

The Welcome Church is a congregation proclaiming the hope and love of a gracious God to all people and especially to people experiencing homelessness. Known as a “Church without Walls” in Philadelphia, PA, Sunday worship is held on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway – rain or shine. On the last Sunday in April, the youth group and I loaded up my car with “bags of snacks” for coffee hour as well as the “Welcome Home Kit” items and, in the rain, made our way to the service. There was no sign, no tall steeple, no cross, no pulpit, no “church stuff” that helped us to know where the service was taking place, just a small group of assorted people standing close together in a park across from Franklin Institute.

It was there that we gathered and worshipped the God of all weather, times, places and people. After the sermon, it was time for the offering. No money was collected. Instead, one of the pastors had a basket of items – mostly small pebbles and a couple of tiny twigs fashioned into the shape of the cross. We were instructed to take one of the items out of the basket and using it as a symbol, think about what we could offer to God of ourselves this next week.

Reaching into the basket I selected a small white stone that looked like it was quartz. One side was smooth, but it was the other rough side that drew my attention. It's easy to think of walking with God through the smooth stuff, when all is going well. It's another thing to walk through the rough stuff. I don't know about you, but I want to avoid the rough stuff whenever I can. But I looked around the group that had gathered there – some pastors working at the Welcome Church, youth from our rural/suburban/affluent community, some with teeth missing probably due to poor dental hygiene, some carrying all their worldly goods in two plastic bags, and others, well, it was hard to tell their circumstances. All total there were about ten or eleven of us there in the rain, gathered for no other reason than to lift our hearts up to God in worship.

I thought about those who were standing with me. All of us have been through some rough place or another, but surely some had it rougher than others. If they can face their rough places and still love God, so can I.

And so, my offering, with a small rock with one rough and one smooth side in my hand, was to say “yes” to God; I will go through and face the rough places in my life. I won’t run away because I know that every rough place will be made smooth by the God who goes with me every step of the way. May it be so with you also.

Oh, and the next time we are going to worship at The Welcome Church and provide the refreshments is September 24. Join the youth group and me, if you can.

Yours in Christ’s service,



Pastor Su



The Thursday evening Bible study has been going strong since September, but is winding down for the summer. The last meeting on Zoom will be a study of the conversion of C.S. Lewis. *The Most Reluctant Convert: The Untold Story of C.S. Lewis* depicts an elder C.S. Lewis looking back on his remarkable journey from hard-boiled atheist to the most renowned Christian writer of the past century. It begins with the tragic death of his mother when he was just nine years old and continues through his strained relationship with his father, to the nightmare of the trenches of World War I to Oxford University, where friends like J.R.R. Tolkien challenge his unbelief.

The study begins on May 4 and concludes on May 11. The video will be shown during the class on Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/127591875> at [7:00](#).



What is Per Capita?

J. Herbert Nelson, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) explains per capita in this way:

“Per capita is a set amount of money — sometimes referred to as “apportionment” — per member that congregations pay to the larger Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Said another way, it is like a Presbyterian community fund — part of the glue that holds Presbyterians together. Because Presbyterians share in the benefit of the PC(USA)’s system of government, the expenses associated with performing the functions of that system are shared by everyone.

Paying per capita is similar to

- contributing one’s dish to a potluck meal
- paying to be connected to the Internet
- paying for the benefit of utilities, such as electricity, water, and telephone
- pitching in with other passengers to pay for gasoline for a road trip
- participating in community supported agriculture (CSA) or a similar co-op

Deeply rooted in Presbyterian history — the first-known mention of per capita dates back to 1734 in a letter to ministers — per

capita makes it possible for the Office of the General Assembly to organize and manage General Assembly, as well as to staff and support special committees and commissions, provide legal counsel for churches dealing with staff issues and seek ways to minister to a growing immigrant population.

When Presbyterians participate in per capita, they’re saying, “I’m in. I’m a part of this denomination. We are connected to it. We intend to support it.”

Where the per capita system has worked best over the years, sessions have taken seriously the unity of the church and have supported their presbyteries in working out a formula by which the per capita is distributed for support of the more inclusive governing bodies. Reflecting the unity of the church from congregation to General Assembly, per capita dollars help sustain mission at the local, regional and national level.

In effect, per capita becomes the channel through which local Presbyterians can see their role in not only local mission programs but also the regional, national and worldwide mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The Presbytery sets the per capita rate based on the number of churches within its bounds. Our Presbytery, the Presbytery of Philadelphia, has set that rate at \$32 per member. All members are invited to participate in per capita giving and mark their contribution with “per capita.” This offering will be taken on May 7 but can be given at any time.



Special Mother's Day Lunch – May 10, 2023

“When the Good Lord was creating mothers, He was into His sixth day of "overtime" when the angel appeared and said. "You're doing a lot of fiddling around on this one."

And God said, "Have you read the specs on this order?" She has to be completely washable, but not plastic. Have 180 moveable parts...all replaceable. Run on black coffee and leftovers. Have a lap that disappears when she stands up. A kiss that can cure anything from a broken leg to a disappointed love affair. And six pairs of hands." -- Erma Bombeck, *When God Created Mothers*.

This is only a portion of the quote from Ms. Bombeck's writing about mothers. Not all mothers are the same, but certainly most of us can say that there has been a special woman in their life who exemplified what society would call “Motherly Love.” We are going to recognize and celebrate these wonderful ladies at a special “Mother's Day Lunch” on May 10. All are invited – men and women. Lunch is being provided by the Parish Life Committee and a free-will offering will be taken. Participants are invited to bring a photo of their mother or “special lady.” We will then try to match who goes with whom. Following the lunch, Vini Christie will demonstrate and give tips on floral arrangement. Please sign up by calling the church office or on the sheet in Fellowship Hall. Friends are very welcome.

Youth Group Happenings

Recently the group went to Philadelphia to participate in the worship service that is especially designed for those who are homeless. By design, this is an outdoor service conducted in Aviator Park adjacent to The Franklin Institute. Although it rained, throughout this unique experience, the Holy Spirit was notably present. Our youth provided the refreshments that were distributed following the service. We will do it again on September 24 (this time Pastor Su knows how to get there). Anyone from the congregation is very welcome to join the group.



Our next youth group events are as follows:

May 7: 6:30 – 8:00, Regular Youth Group Meeting

May 21: 6:30 – 8:45, Miniature Golf at Freddy Hill Farms, Lansdale.
Cost: \$10

June 4: 6:30 – 8:00, Swim Party (includes dinner)

As ever, friends are welcome to all of these activities.





Strawberry Festival

Friday, June 2, 2023



It's almost that time of year when the strawberries are plump and flavorful, so let's enjoy by getting together for food, fun and fellowship. Beginning at 6:00, there will be hot dogs, baked beans, vegetables and of course, STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE! Weather permitting, we will hold this event outside. It is open to the public so invite your friends!

If you would like to help with preparing the berries, please contact Susan in the church office. Cleaning will take place at the church on June 1 at 9:30 but they can also be cleaned at home and brought to the church.

Special Coffee Hour on May 21



There are so many who volunteer their time and talent doing the work of discipleship here at Forest Grove. We want to say "thank you" by a special coffee hour. A special note of thanks will be extended to our Sunday School Teachers and Bell Choir members as this will be their last Sunday until the fall. Well done, good and faithful servants!



**Come Join us for
Vacation Bible School**

**Sponsored by The Anchor and Forest Grove Presbyterian
Churches and will be held at The Anchor**

**June 26-30, 9:00 – Noon
for Preschool – 6th grade**

At *Rainforest Explorers*, we'll learn about Jesus, our Savior, through five Bible stories, meet new friends, do fun activities, sing great songs, make crafts, play games, eat snacks, and more! It's going to be fun, but it would be more fun with you there. Register online: <https://vbspro.events/p/events/62355b>.

Adult leaders and teen helpers are also needed. Contact Pastor Su at 215-794-8575 if you can help.



Prepping and rehearsals for Easter





E A S T E R S U N D A Y
H E I S R I S E N









**CLEAN
UP DAY
AT
FOREST
GROVE**



Elder of the Month, May

Bill Wark

Deacon of the Month, May

Missi Dell'Orefice

Sunday Morning Coffee Host:

May 7 Marilyn Cook

May 21 Beth Conti

May 14 Emilie Cullerton

May 28 Martha Greenwood

2023 Carillon Schedule

The carillon plays each day at 12 noon and at 6:00 in the evening and plays 3 different selections each time and plays at 10am Sunday.

May 7 In memory of Given Landis.

May 14 In memory of Earl T. Daniels.

May 21 In memory of Earl and Pinky Hampton.

May 28 In memory of Loved Ones.

Sunday School Teachers:

May 14 Karen Myers

May 28 Kim King

May 21 Ruth Squillace



Barnhart, John & Brenda
451 Grouse Court West
New Hope, Pa 18938



Alvin Cornell	5/3
Gerry Stemplewicz	5/8
Charlotte Lucera	5/10
Kurt Schroeder	5/11
John Barnhart	5/12
Jim Conner Sr.	5/12
Jason Hampton	5/14
Riley Lucera	5/15

Gary Davis	5/16
Kim Shvanda	5/17
Tim Ruth	5/18
Westin Raab	5/18
Linda Sanders	5/19
Jolie Hyndman	5/23
John Schroeder	5/25

FGPC FINANCIALS Ended March, 2023

FGPC Operating Fund

For the month Ended

March 2023

Offering & Misc Income	\$10,392
Large Fund Income	<u>\$5,928</u>
Total Income	\$16,320
Expenses	
Pastor Compensation	8,362
Staff	3,877
Office	\$1,627
Music & Worship	528
Christian Education	978
Property	1,681
Stewardship/Finance	61
Parish Life	988
Mission	23
PILP Loan interest payment	547
Chicken Barbeque	<u>0</u>
Total Expenses	18,672
Transfer to Memorial Fund	5,000
<u>2023 Operating Fund</u>	
<u>Surplus (Deficit)</u>	(2,352)
Fund Balance @ 2/28/23	<u>117,329</u>
Fund Balance @ 3/31/23	<u>\$ 109,977</u>

Benevolence Fund

28-February-23

Balance @ 1/31/23	\$ 7,635
Receipts & Transfers	100
Disbursements:	0
Balance @ 3/31/23	<u>\$ 7,735</u>

Forest Grove Presbyterian Church

1856 Forest Grove Road
Furlong, PA 18925-1120

M A Y
MAY

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Worship Schedule

10:00 am Worship

Church Office Hours

9am-2pm (Monday, Wednesday, Thursday)
Phone 215-794-8575

Pastor: Reverend Susan L. Fall

Email: pastorsu@forestgrovechurch.org

Music Director: Leanne Yerkes

Handbell Director: Sue Lewis

Administrative Assistant: Susan Flanagan

Frank Orzehoski, Asst. Treasurer

Email: office@forestgrovechurch.org

www.ForestGroveChurch.org

2 0 2 3