



The Celtic Cross

April 2016

Letter from the Co-Pastors

“Jesus Christ is risen today! Alleluia!” (1708)
“The strife is o’er, the victory won, Alleluia!” (1695)
“Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim!” (1887)
“Thine is the glory, risen, conquering Son!” (1884)

Dear Easter People,

Once again we have emerged from the quiet, introspective Lenten season with bursting “Alleluias!” and joyous song as we try to express our profound gladness for what God has done in Christ. God has emptied the tomb! Over the centuries, Easter people have not been able to convey the fullness of their joy in mere words, so they have set their words to music. What a blessing that they have! Using their words and music, we have sung our own joy for centuries, as you can see by the dates of each hymn text’s composition. And of course, we shall keep on singing these majestic, glorious hymns as we did on Easter Day: how could we not?

But Easter is more than a day; it is an entire season in the church year. It continues in bright joy for as long as the church was cast in somber Lenten reflection, 40 days. This year, during the season of Easter, we’d like to share with you some of the more recent attempts Easter people have made to express the glad mystery and wonder of God’s raising Jesus from the dead. The writing of lovely hymns did not stop with the 19th century.

Here is the text of a hymn written in 1988 by members of the Iona Community in Scotland. Since it has been set to an old Welsh folk tune, it is very ‘singable.’

CHRIST HAS RISEN WHILE EARTH SLUMBERS

Christ has risen while earth slumbers; Christ has risen where hope died,
As he said and as he promised, as we doubted and denied.

Let the moon embrace the blessing; let the sun sustain the cheer;
Let the world confirm the rumor: Christ has risen, God is here!

Christ has risen for the people whom he died to love and save;
Christ has risen for the women bringing flowers to grace his grave.
Christ has risen for disciples huddled in an upstairs room.
He whose word inspired creation can’t be silenced by the tomb.

Christ has risen and for ever lives to challenge and to change
All whose lives are messed or mangled, all who find religion strange.
Christ is risen, Christ is present making us what he has been:
Evidence of transformation in which God is known and seen.

John L Bell and Graham Maule, 1988

Join us for worship during the season of Easter, and sing the ancient Easter faith in

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Worship Matters

Sunday, April 3	Service of the Lord's Day, 10:30 a.m. Celebration of the Lord's Supper
Sunday, April 10	Service of the Lord's Day, 10:30 a.m. Cherub Choir sings
Sunday, April 17	Service of the Lord's Day, 10:30 a.m.
Sunday, April 24	Service of the Lord's Day 10:30 a.m. Ordination and Installation of New Officers Commissioning of Mission Trip Participants

Music Notes

Spring has sprung! We begin the month of April with a piano duet prelude, played by Deb and Cindy, "The God of Abraham Praise." We were scheduled to play this the Sunday we got 30" of snow and have finally found the opportunity to bring it to the Lord in praise! The Chancel Choir will sing Handel's "This Is the Day the Lord Hath Made" as the anthem during this 2nd Sunday of Easter and Deb will offer "O Sacred Head" and "Near the Cross" during communion.

Sondra K. Tucker's handbell arrangement of "All Things Bright and Beautiful" will open our service on April 10th. The Chancel Choir's anthem, during the 3rd Sunday of Easter service, will be Joel Raney's "Amazing Grace" while the Cherubs offer "Go Tell About Jesus."

The Chancel Choir will finish the month with fabulous choral arrangements of "My Shepherd Will Supply My Every Need" by Johnson and "To The Lamb on the Throne" by Forrest. The Celtic Singers will perform "Seek and You Will Find" by Sleeth. Piano arrangements of "For the Beauty of the Earth" and "All Creatures of Our God and King" will also be offered this month along with the organ postludes: a Gasparini Sonata, a Handel Fugue and a Bach Allegro, and an organ arrangement of "Promised Land."

The Music Ministry
Cindy, Deb and JoAnn

Letter from the Co-Pastors, cont.

new ways. (And no worries -- we'll continue to sing the old favorites, too. "The day of resurrection! Earth tell it out abroad!" (8th century) ""Come ye faithful, raise the strain" (8th century))

Gladly,
Carter and Kerry

P.S. Peggy, who has served this congregation so well for 29 years as secretary, has decided the time is right for her to retire, effective May 1 (she will work for a few weeks in May part-time to help us with the transition). Although Peggy does not want a lot of fanfare, we want to recognize and thank her for her faithful service, and more details will follow. The Personnel Committee will soon be posting the job which is full-time and has excellent benefits. For a number of reasons, qualified non-church members will be preferred. Please share this position opening with others and keep Peggy, the staff, and the Personnel Committee in your prayers during this time of transition.

Upcoming Events

Opportunities to Serve: Adult Mission Trip, April 24-29 to Bayville, N.J.



TAKE HOLD OF THE LIFE THAT REALLY IS LIFE

1 TIMOTHY 6:18-19

It is time for our **ANNUAL DOMESTIC ADULT MISSION TRIP, April 24-29.**

We will be returning to Bayville, NJ this year. Last year was a great experience shared by all, and this year promises to be no less. Good rewarding work, wandering Holy Spirit, and good fellowship, not to mention tasty cuisine.

Interested? Want more information? Join those who have already committed for this year's trip! Whether you are on the "definite," "maybe," or "need more information," list, let us know so we can finalize our list and know what our potential numbers and skill sets are.

Let's hear from you.: Tom Zeigler 610-327-3805 tomz@tlzpe.com ; Rev Carter Lester 610-326-0620 clester@fpcpottstown.org ; Rev Kerry Pidcock-Lester 610-326-0620 kplester@fpcpottstown.org

Opportunities to Serve: Camp Kirkwood Work Days April 23 and May 14, 9 a.m.—4 p.m.

Can't give up a week but you can give up a day? Can you help our Presbyterian camp, Camp Kirkwood get ready for the summer camp season? There are jobs for all skills, abilities, and ages. Some of the tasks will be cleaning and moving, outdoor clean up, mulching, setting up tents, sanding, and painting. Interested or have questions, contact Tim Peckham or Carter or sign up on the church bulletin board.

Camp Kirkwood Comes to First Presbyterian Church Sunday, April 3, 9:15 a.m. in Fellowship Hall

Join us during the Sunday School hour during the Teacher Appreciation breakfast to meet Tommy Campbell, the new Camp Director of Kirkwood. Children and their parents will have a chance to get a taste of camp and learn more about Tommy and what it looks like to be a Kirkwood Camper. The Mission Committee pays 1/2 of registration costs!

"Fiddler on the Roof" at Steel River Playhouse 2 p.m., Saturday, May 21 (tickets must be purchased by May 3)

Thanks to the Prime Timers, we have a block of tickets for the unforgettable, "Fiddler on the Roof," showing at the Steel River Playhouse on High Street on Saturday, May 21 at 2 p.m. Tickets must be purchased by May 3 and will be distributed first come first serve. Tickets are \$21 for seniors, \$26 for all other adults, and \$14 for students. Sign up on the bulletin board. Let's fill the house!

Spiritual Formation Opportunities

Sunday Morning Opportunities

- **All Classes meet together on April 3 in the Community Room**
(because of the **Sunday School Teacher Appreciation Breakfast**)

April 3: Compassion, Redemption, and Boys Reaching Manhood—Father Greg Boyle

Last year's documentary on Father Boyle's ministry with the members of gangs in Los Angeles was one of the most popular Forum programs in 2015. Join us for an unforgettable, funny, insightful, and inspiring talk by Father Boyle this summer at Chatauqua.

- **Forum (Community Room) - A Month of Inspiration**

April 10: Boys to Men: Wes Moore

Wes Moore, author of the best-selling "The Other Wes Moore" shares about his work with teenaged boys in Baltimore, Maryland.. This video is a filming of his talk at the Chatauqua Institution this summer.

April 17: Religious Alternatives: Choosing Love over Power—Tony Campolo

Tony Campolo, sociology professor emeritus at Eastern University and a nationally known Lecturer and preacher shares his perspective on a tough issue in this video reproduction of his talk this summer at the Chatauqua Institution.

April 24: Luther and the German Reformation—Dr. Nathan Rein, Associate Professor, Ursinus College

- **Thoughtful Christians (Mary Ann Yost room)** Leaders: Sharon Trevoy, and Debbie Remelius, and Rob Wade **Topic: From Christ to Constantine**
- **Men's Sunday Mornings (Pastor's Conference Room)**
Teachers: Gary James, Paul Lepard, Tim Peckham, and Carter **Topic: Luke**

Weekday Opportunities

- **"Sisters of the Way" Bible Study:** 9:15-10:45 a.m. every Thursday. Teacher: Kerry
- **Next Week's Sermon:** 7:30—8:30 PM on Tuesday, April 12. (No meeting on April 26 because Carter will be on the adult mission trip). Teacher: Carter.
- **Praying the Scriptures Group (Lectio Divina)** 7:30—8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 5 and 19. Teacher: Kerry
- **Theology Reading Group:** We next meet on Monday, May 2 at Carter's house to discuss Miroslav Volf's Exclusion and Embrace. To get your copy or if you have questions—contact Carter.

Seekers News

Stock Sales are underway! Get yours today!

Confirmation

April 3: Bread for the Journey: Prayer 5:00-6:00

April 5: Mission Trip—We will gather at the church at 9:00AM and return by 3:00PM

April 17: Bread for the Journey: Worship and Sacraments 4:30-6:00 NOTE TIME

April 29-30: Confirmation Retreat

Junior Seekers

Sunday, April 10th After worship—5:00 High Ropes

We'll head out as a group to the Elmwood Park Zoo for High Ropes. If you do not want to do the high ropes, the zoo is there for you as well! Bring a lunch to eat together as we will leave after worship together. Cost is \$20 per person—the church is paying the rest.

Sunday, April 24th 6:30-8:00 TED Talks

This event will be a high-minded affair of discussion and conversation. It will also be an incredibly fun time for us to expand our horizons together and learn more about the world as a family.

Junior Seekers Advisors :

Sandro and Rosie Roseo, Jeff and Sarah Pinard, Mike and Mindy Lipsky, Jeff Fox-Kline

Senior Seekers—Grades 9-12

Sunday April 3: 6:00-8:00 Bowling

The Senior Seekers will gather at the church at 6:00 PM and then head out to Limerick bowl for some fun times bowling strikes, spares and mostly gutterballs. Cost is \$7 per person, with the church covering the rest.

Saturday-Sunday, April 16-17th, 9:30 Saturday-4:00 Sunday Beach Retreat!

Get ready for an opportunity to celebrate the gifts that God has given to us in blessing us with strong bonds of community as we explore our Christian identity. RSVP to Jeff. Cost is \$50 with scholarships available

Advisors' Contact info: Donna & Gary Rhoadarmer, Gwen and Tim Allen, Don and Melinda Kisela, Phil and Kim Wheelles, Jeff Fox-Kline

A Peek at Summer for Children and Youth

Camp Kirkwood— Applications are available for children . The Mission Committee pays half of each child's camp tuition. Pick up an application or talk to Jeff, Carter or Kerry for more info.

Mission Mornings for Junior High Seekers will be August (more details in the May *Celtic Cross*)

Backyard Blessings is coming back for another year! Look to this space in May for more information about our exciting intergenerational vacation Bible school experience.

Fellowship

MEN'S BREAKFAST—Saturday, April 9. 8 a.m.-9 a.m.

Kurt Holloway is our chef. Join Carter and the guys for food and fellowship.

PRIME TIMERS

April 9 (Sat) at 7:30 Pennsylvania Philharmonic Concert at Pottstown High School

The program is "Symphonic Soundtracks" Note: dinner before concert is cancelled. Tickets will be distributed when received. Meet at the High School auditorium, we have a block of tickets. If you have questions or need a ride, contact Mary Ann Hudson (610-326-3798).

May 21 (Saturday) at 2:00 p.m. "Fiddler on the Roof" at Steel River Playhouse

Sign up on the bulletin board. Tickets will be confirmed when payment is received. Deadline is May 3. Seniors: \$21, Adults: \$26, Students: \$14. Checks should be made out to "Prime Timers."

FAITHFUL FRIENDS (FORMERLY YOUNG ADULT FELLOWSHIP)

Faithful Friends is meeting at 6 at Judy Adair's house on Saturday, April 16. We will gather for a pitch-in supper, and there is time for food, fellowship, and discussion. Questions? Need directions or wonder what to bring? Contact Carter or Kerry or Judy..

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY—Tuesday, April 19 at 7 p.m.

The Prayer Shawl ministry meets in the library from 7 p.m. to about 8:30 p.m. Please join us as we create loving comfort for our church family and the wider community. If you knit or crochet, or would like to learn, please contact Jane Barndt, 610-469-9165, and become part of our group.

FAITH AND NATURE GROUP—Sunday, April 17 at 1:30/2 p.m.

Happy Spring to all! April is here and it is time to start planning on getting outside and feeling God's presence come alive through the gift that is the season of renewal. All the creatures of the sky and earth are eagerly becoming active with anticipation of starting new families of their own while the trees and flowers prepare to emerge in all their glory. Take the time to pause on your way to your car in the morning and just listen to the early morning concert of all the songbirds around your home. Maybe you pass a park or simply a nice field or woods in your travels, take a moment and pull over. And just listen. It may change you day.

We invite you to join us in welcoming Spring back when we **explore Coventry Woods Park in North Coventry Township on Sunday, April 17th**. This a fairly new park in the area with several trails of varying distances. Feel free to come and go as you need. We will meet at church @ 1:30 pm or you can meet us at the park at 2:00pm. Please sign up on the bulletin board.

In May we will be spending a day visiting the remarkable Chanticleer Gardens in Wayne, PA. The date is Saturday May 21st. Simply put, this is a truly amazing site and something you will not want to miss. I will have further details in next month's Celtic Cross. I encourage you to Google their website and check out the photos for a preview of what to expect. Hope to see you out there!

—Mike Deegan

Church Family News

Please keep in your prayers the following members who have been ill, injured, or hospitalized recently: Mary Messinger, Joan Zeigler, Jim Bathurst, Peggy Whittaker, Bill Wilson and Illyf Nichols. Please also keep in your prayers Adam Seanor who was injured in Iraq (concussion) and lost a fellow soldier and friend to enemy fire.

We remember send our condolences to the family of Dr. Richard Whittaker.

Thank you to the following groups serving Lenten Suppers: Sisters of the Way, the choir, Seekers advisors, Session, and Deacons. The food was delicious—the opportunities for fellowship priceless! Thank you to Amy Shutt for leading one of our Lenten Paths. Thank you to April Thorum and the Spiritual Formation Committee for their work on the Teacher Appreciation Breakfast.

Porter-Broward Taskforce Needs Your Ideas!

Our congregation has once again received a major grant from the Mary Porter Designated fund of the Community Foundation of Broward. As you may recall from this past year, the Session has established the following guidelines for use of the grant:

- **Enhancement of current ministries, which would include any of the following:** (1) Special one-time programs, concerts, lectures, or other ministry events or expenses over and above the present ministries funded by the General Fund. (2) Grant-funded ministry such as a part-time parish nurse position, and (3) seed money for new ministries.
- **Capital Improvements to our facilities that would have one of the following purposes:** Conserve energy consumption, reduce the environmental impact of our facilities and ministries, or increase accessibility and/or safety for members and visitors to these facilities.
- **Contributions to other ministries and non-profit organizations** that impact children and families or the quality of life of the greater Pottstown area.

If you have an idea that meets one of these criteria, let Carter and Kerry know and they will pass it on to the taskforce that will be studying the needs and making recommendations to Session later this Spring. **Please turn in your ideas by April 17.**

Deacons Bench—Report from the Cluster:

- There will be a silent auction at the Golf Outing (April 29). Folks who would like to know more about it should contact Kim Dent at the Cluster 610-970-5995 or go to <http://www.pottstowncluster.org/>, go to Events, Golf Outing.
- The Cluster has started a food exchange program with Operation Backpack. 39,800 pounds of food were distributed to 348 households and 836 individuals.
- Over 400 people were served this month for dry goods, and 300 personal care items were distributed. There is a continuing need for self-care items such as shampoo, toothbrushes, etc.
- 9 families were housed in February and a new Bridges Out of Poverty group is forming.

Session Digest

At its regular March meeting, the Session:

- Shared joys and concerns.
- Approved Carter and Kerry taking vacation March 29-31 to use the church's gift to celebrate Carter's ordination anniversary.
- Approved the following membership for the Porter-Broward Taskforce in 2016:
 - Dave Allebach (representing Session and Mission Committee)
 - Herb Barndt (Deacons and Admin. Committee)
 - David DeLong (at-large)
 - Donna Force (Session and Spiritual Formation)
 - Kurt Holloway (at large)
 - Andy Lane (Session and Admin.)
 - Sharon Sgriccia (at large)
 - Missy Weber (Deacons)
- Approved celebration of the Lord's Supper on Senior High Seekers Retreat in April.
- Heard from the Personnel Committee concerning Peggy's retirement and plans for handling the transition, including drawing up a job description and advertising the opening.
- Approved allocation of funds from Capital Improvement to purchase new pumps for the heating system (up to \$6500) and make repairs to the roof of the Christian Education wing (up to \$5000).
- Received the report of Michelle Thompson, church treasurer and approved monthly allocations to Capital Improvements and Mission.
- Discussed reorganization of Session teams for serving communion.
- Received reports from the Administrative, Endowment, Hospitality, Mission, Spiritual Formation, and Worship committees: and Deacons.
- Please keep in your prayers:
 - Hospitality: for Invite A Friend Sunday and our Inquirers' Class;
 - Worship: for a joyous and worshipful celebration of Christ's resurrection;
 - Administrative: for successful completion of our latest capital improvement projects;
 - Endowment: thanksgiving for our Acorns of Faith;
 - Spiritual Formation: thanksgiving for our teachers and advisors and childcare volunteers;
 - Mission: for a good beginning for our community garden and for our Lenten collection;
 - Personnel: thanksgiving for Peggy's dedication and guidance as we seek her successor.

Financial Report for the General Fund

Budgeted income for the year:	\$608,932	Budgeted expenses for the year:	608,932
Budgeted income through Feb 28:	101,489	Budgeted exp. through Feb 28:	101,489
Actual income through Feb 28:	97,279	Actual expenses through Feb 28:	85,128
Income this time last year:	84,767	Expenses this time last year:	88,886
Deficit to date (after Capital Improvement and Mission allocations paid):			(\$964)
Deficit this time last year:			(\$13,933)

Lectionary Readings

For the week April 1 to 10:

Acts 9: 1-6, Psalm 30, Rev. 5: 11-14, John 21: 1-10

For the week of April 11 to 17:

Acts 9: 36-43, Psalm 23, Rev. 7: 9-17, John 10: 22-30

For the week of April 18 to 24:

Acts 11: 1-18, Psalm 148, Rev. 21: 1-6, John 14: 31-33

For the week of April 25 to May 1:

Acts 16: 9-15, Psalm 67, Rev. 10, John 14: 21-20

Counters Corner– Month of April:

Counters will be Team #2: Keith Harrison, Karen Stacks, Bill Wilson and John McNey.

Family Faith Formation

“Welcome” reads the partially colored poster that is sitting next to me in my office. The poster was colored by families and members of the Lenten path “a colorful family”. It’s not the most intricately colored piece, there’s inexplicable parts that are uncolored, there is coloring outside of the lines, there’s a pattern drawn over another pattern for some reason. But there’s also parts that are delicately shaded, colored with care and patience. Most of all, there are the marks of family. Parts shaded with delicate precision reside next to scribbles and smears.

This is the kind of welcome that we are promised in the church family. This family that knows the best way to love someone is unconditionally. This means that sometimes your perfect work will be juxtaposed with something messy, but it also means that the messiness can go along with something beautiful. In the fusion and in the in-between is the true beauty.

Isn’t that what family is, though? Nothing is ever perfect, and your best and most beautiful moments happen amongst the chaos. Looking at the coloring page I notice the most arresting parts are the ones that happen outside of the lines: the drawing of a person praying, the drawing of the cross, but most importantly the signatures of the hands that worked on it. We work together to create the most beautiful mess there is, and we call that the church. —Jeff

Health Ministry Survey—insert

Please take a few moments to respond to the enclosed survey from Dawn and our Health Ministry team that will guide Dawn’s work in the coming year as our Parish Nurse.

Prayer Chain

Do you have concerns on your heart you would like lifted in prayer? For many years, there has been a faithful chain of women who quietly, privately pray for people inside or outside the church. If you would like them to pray for you or someone you love, contact Suzanne Fritsch or the pastors.

Library News

What's Missing?

After inventorying the library shelves we have come across many DVDs that are missing. If everyone can look through their shelves at home to see if they have any of these movies listed below that will greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Missing DVDs

Adult movies that have GREEN stickers along the side

The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel
The Bible in the Beginning
The Bucket List
Hairspray
The Notebook
Pan's Labyrinth
Seabiscuit

Family movies that have BLUE stickers along the side

American Girl: Molly
The Cat in the Hat
Despicable Me
Happy Feet
Overboard
Peter Pan
Wall-E

Children's movies that have RED stickers along the side

Aladdin
The Best of Dr. Seuss
Dumbo
The Rescuers
Winnie the Pooh: A Very Merry Pooh Year

Wildwood (NJ) Trip, September 2016

Interested in a bus trip to Wildwood NJ, September 19 -22? Deluxe Round-Trip Motorcoach Transportation, Deluxe Accommodations, Spectacular Entertainment, Dolphin Watch Boat Cruise, Sunset Beach and Patriotic Flag Ceremony! For information and reservations see Anna Chilton (484-624-5582) or Cindy Foust (610-517-6570 or cynthiafoust@comcast.net) See the bulletin board for further details and brochures!



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