

The Celtic Cross

May 2018

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Letter from the Co-Pastors

Dearly Beloved,

Whenever we gather at the font for the joyful privilege of baptizing a young child into the covenant people, both parents and congregation promise to carry these children in the faith until the day when they can walk the way of faith on their own. On May 20 in worship, we will welcome 12 young people who have been preparing in Confirmation class over the past nine months to confirm those promises made at their baptisms and begin walking the way of faith. Since our opening September retreat, **Kaylana Adair, Bella Bradley, Alina Orzechowski, Jeremy Thompson, Jacob Spadt, Sydney Madden, Luke Macdonald, Gabe Roseo, Ben Drago, Bradleigh Barcus, Payton Vogt, and Liam Watson** have been pondering the Christian faith and what it means to live the Way of Christ as a disciple. And they have been serving Christ and God's kingdom in personal and interesting ways.

On May 20, they will stand by that font and freely confess their faith for themselves. We hope you can join us for this joyful occasion in worship. Then afterwards, come downstairs in the Fellowship Time to see how they have felt called to serve and give through their Kingdom Projects. May 20 marks an important milestone in the journey of these earnest young disciples, and in the journey of this congregation.

We also want to invite you to take part in another journey in May. In 2 Corinthians, Paul writes, "in Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself...and entrusting the message of reconciliation. So we are ambassadors..." How can we be ambassadors of reconciliation when it comes to one of the great issues of our time, racial and ethnic differences? How can we be part of the solution rather than part of the problem?

Surely, the answers to those questions lie in listening and learning, shedding unhelpful attitudes and behaviors and growing into new ones. Debby Irving, the noted educator and author of Waking Up White who spoke here in March, has a 21-day "Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge," with lots of resources to read, listen to, or watch. In May, on Sunday mornings in the Community room we are going to discuss together what we learn from those resources and what Christ may be calling us to do. What you read, listen to, or watch is up to you. You can pick up written materials on the table in the lobby or visit debbyirving.com/21-day-challenge/. How do you learn best—by reading, listening, watching, or writing? There are resources for all options. Carter or Kerry will lead the discussion on Sunday morning and we will watch and discuss one of the short videos.

The journeys of disciples—new or seasoned—may not be easy but they are always worthwhile. Come, let us follow!
—Carter and Kerry

Upcoming Events

Deacons' Blood Drive, Tuesday, May 1, 3:00—7:00 p.m. at the Church

Join us in giving the gift of life as Miller-Keystone's bloodmobile will once again be visiting our church. Miller Keystone is a community-based blood supplier which means the blood you donate stays local. To make an appointment, go online to www.giveapint.org or contact our Parish Nurse, Dawn Skelly. Thank you to all of our faithful donors! **Donate blood—you have it in you!**

Memory Screening, Wednesday, May 9

Do you or a loved one have concerns about your memory? *Memory Screening is coming!*

Dr. Verghese will be here with his staff on Wednesday, May 9, offering 15-minute slots from 3 to 7 p.m. The memory screening can help identify persons at risk who could then benefit from participation in a clinical trial. See more information in Dawn's Health Ministry column on p. 9. Sign up on the health ministry bulletin board or contact Dawn by April 29 so Dr. Verghese can plan appropriately.

Presbyterian Day Camp (Kirkwood Camp on the Road) June 25-29

This year we are so excited to introduce a new summer program: Day Camp at FPC! Staff from Camp Kirkwood will join some volunteers from our congregation to lead us in games, fellowship, Bible study, and arts & crafts.

Rising K-5th graders are invited to join us at the church from 8:30am-3:30pm June 25-29. Lunch will be provided on Friday, Mon.-Thurs. bring a sack lunch. The cost is \$50. Scholarships are available.

Registration is through Kirkwood's website: www.kirkwoodcamp.org/campontheroad

Stock Sale

Our Senior High Seekers need to sell "stock" to support our youth workcamp/mission trip to Lewes, Delaware this summer. Please buy shares at \$10 each which will help to pay for construction supplies as our youth to help elderly and poor residents in the Lewes area keep warm, safe, and dry. Then, attend the annual "stockholder" meeting after the trip to hear what your shares of stock did this summer!

Coming Attraction: Strawberry Fest, Sunday, June 10, following worship

Sunday, June 10th immediately following the Worship Service, join us in Fellowship Hall for our annual Strawberry Fest to welcome the summer. The Deacons will provide the strawberries, ice cream and whipped cream. Bring your appetites and celebrate with your church family. Please sign up on the bulletin board, the bulletin insert, or call the church office.

In the Footsteps of the Apostle Paul: Greek Trip, June 2019 led by Carter

For a trip brochure with all of the details, or for more information, contact Carter.

Spiritual Formation Opportunities

Sunday Mornings

- **Forum (Community Room)**

May 6, 13, and 20: The 21-day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge

Do you have a concern about race relations in our country—and want to learn more? Do you wonder how the church can be part of any solution—rather than part of the problem? Did you attend the Debby Irving seminar—and are looking for the next step?

If your answers to any of these questions is “yes,” then join Carter and others for a discussion of some of the resources that Debby Irving has put together for groups to consider. You can go to debbyirving.com/21-day-challenge/ and read, listen, or watch to any of the resources during the week. On Sundays, we will discuss what we learned, and watch one of the short videos together. If you have questions or cannot access the website, see

Carter

May 27: To be determined

- **Thoughtful Christians (Mary Ann Yost Room)** Teacher: Debbie Remelius
Topic: Unafraid: Living with Courage and Hope in Uncertain Times
A video series with Adam Hamilton.
- **Men’s Sunday Mornings (Pastors’ Conference Room)** Teachers: Gary James, Tim Peckham, Binky Huff, and Carter
Topic: First Corinthians (Bible study)

Weekday Opportunities

- **Sisters of the Way:** 9:15-10:45 a.m. every Thursday. Teacher: Kerry
- **Next Week’s Sermon:** 7:30—8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 22. Teacher: Carter
- **Praying the Scriptures Group (Lectio Divina)** 7:30—8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 1 and 15. Teacher: Kerry
- **Theology Reading Group:** Will next meet during the summer. To find out what we are reading, or if you want further information—contact Carter.

Music Notes continued from p. 2

May 27th **We welcome Richard Smoker to the piano and organ during this service.**

Prelude: TBA

Anthem: “Give Me Jesus” - arr. Berry (Chancel Choir)

Offertory: TBA

Postlude: TBA

Blessings,

The Music Ministry ~ Jo Ann, Deb and Cindy

Seekers News

Confirmation

Wednesday May 16—Confirmands go before Session 7:30

Sunday May 20—CONFIRMATION SUNDAY!

Junior Seekers

Sunday, May 6th—Assemble Freezer Meals 6:30-8:00

We are joining with the Senior Seekers to help serve our Deacon's Meal Ministry. We will assemble meals to put in the freezer for anyone who needs them

Saturday, June 2—Relay for Life! 9:00AM

The Junior Seekers will participate in the Relay for Life and enjoy each others company as we join the Pottstown community in this annual event. Please come out to have a great day together as we support a worthy cause.

Senior Seekers

Sunday, May 6th—Assemble Freezer Meals 6:30-8:00

We are joining with the Junior Seekers to help serve our Deacon's Meal Ministry. We will assemble meals to put in the freezer for anyone who needs them

Saturday, May 19th Workcamp Preview -- time TBD

If you are coming to Workcamp you are expected to be at the Workcamp Preview. We will be working together on a project as we prepare for the work that comes, but also learning how we work together as a community.

Mark your Calendars!

The "Advisor Appreciation End-of-Year Parent-Youth Picnic" is **Sunday, June 10th** , 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Workcamp Participants—Mandatory Meeting After Picnic on June 10

All Seekers going on this year's workcamp and parents of first-time participants need to attend this meeting to learn details about this year's trip and sign the covenant and other paperwork. **This meeting is brief but mandatory.** Parents of first-time workcampers are encouraged to attend. **WORKCAMP PARTICIPANTS!** Stock sales are due at the end of the month. \$100 per person are required, but if you raise \$125 that knocks \$25 off of your workcamp costs, so get selling!

Summer Opportunities

Thursday Hangouts are back this Summer. Starting at the end of the school year Jeff's office is open to any Seekers (rising 6th graders all the way to graduating seniors). Stop by on Thursdays from 1:00 to 3:00 and spend some time hanging out. Play games, chat, laugh, enjoy a great time with your church family.

Mission Mornings is the second full week in August (August 13-17). All Junior Seekers are invited to this week of service with partners new and familiar! Look for further information in June.

Fellowship

Men's Breakfast, Saturday, May 12 at 8 am

Join Carter and this gathering of guys for breakfast, fellowship and devotions. We will send you on your way at 9 a.m.

Faithful Friends, Saturday, 6 p.m., May 19 at Carter and Kerry's house

Carter and Kerry are hosting a pitch-in dinner on their deck for young adults. To find out what you can bring, or to get directions, contact Carter or Kerry.

Faithful Friends with Children, Saturday, May 12 at 5pm

Faithful Friends will gather at Manderach Playground in Limerick for a potluck picnic to wrap up the year. Let Jeff now if you need directions or to be added to the mailing list.

Prime Timers

Will not meet in May and upcoming plans are still unfolding.

Faith and Nature—Bicycling/Walking, Sunday, May 6 at 2 p.m.

Meet at the Riverfront Park for a nice day with your church family. Ride or walk at your own pace. Sign up on the church bulletin board or by contacting the church office.

Prayer Shawl Meeting, Wednesday, May 16, 12:30 to 2:00 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.

Library News

This month the library is highlighting award winning movies. Whether the movie has won an independent award, an Academy Award, or a Golden Globe, there is a movie for everyone. Also, there are more wonderful (award winning or not) movies on the shelves waiting to be seen by you.
—Laura

Church Family News

Please keep in your prayers the following members who have been ill or hospitalized or have been receiving treatment recently: Jim Bathurst, Jenn Drago, Cora-Celeste Missimer, Betsy McKissic, Jean Faubert, Kati Stafford, and Joan Zeigler and former staff member, Peggy Cressman.

We extend our condolences to the family of Marion McNey and to Carter, Keith Harrison, and Mike Deegan and families upon the deaths of their mothers.

Thank you for a job well done to outgoing elders, Barb Peckham, Sharon Holloway, and Patty Picardi. Thank you as well to outgoing Deacons, Lorraine Estell, Laura Hazeltine, Lisa Livezey, Tim Peckham, Bill Wilson, and Julianna Roseo. **Thank you to** the members of the Garden Committee, Sue Moyer, Chuck Krueger, Tom and Judy Babbony, Dee Phillips, Linda Hale, and Elaine Siever and the Deacons and Cub Scout Pack 146 for all of the help getting our grounds ready for summer!

Live Generously: Women's Center of Montgomery County

The Mission Committee wants to thank everyone for their generous Lenten Project donations for the Women's Center of Montgomery County. Bags and boxes of toiletry items, paper and cleaning products, baby supplies, pajamas, purses, and much more were delivered to the Pottstown office after Easter. The staff began pulling out specific items immediately to give to certain women who they know needed the items desperately.

The WCMC works to eliminate domestic violence so that women can live safer, more stable lives and thrive. Through their programs and services they work to save lives, promote self-sufficiency, create institutional change and reduce the impact of domestic violence.

The WCMC is extremely appreciative of the relationship that has been built with our church in recent years. Through our contributions that have been given, the Pottstown office infrastructure has been strengthened with computer and phone upgrades and replacing old furnishings. In addition victims have been given cash for their relocation away from their abuser, to provide groceries for their families and to pay for gas or bus fare to get to court hearings in Norristown. Volunteers are always needed as counselors and community educators.

Live Generously—Adult Mission Trip, Fall 2018

After a missed year, the long awaited, anxiously anticipated next chapter of the **ANNUAL DOMESTIC ADULT MISSION TRIP** is returning. Concluding a lot of searching we felt a call to go to Texas and assist with efforts to clean up and re-build from the floods of Hurricane Harvey. We have made a reservation to stay St. Andrews Presbyterian Church in Beaumont, Texas. We have reserved the week of October 14, 2018. Actual travel date has not yet been determined but will depend upon various factors.

They can accommodate a maximum of 25 persons, so we will be the only group there, just as with previous years in other locations. Accommodations will be similar to what we have experienced in the past. The work sites are expected to be within 10 miles of the church. Although we won't know for sure until closer to the time, it is anticipated that they will be in rebuilding mode by the time we go.

We have much to plan and coordinate including air and ground travel, tools & equipment, etc. Depending upon the work we may or may not take the tool trailer, but if anyone might be interested in towing the trailer in the event we need to take it, please let me know.

We are looking forward to another good year of rewarding work, wandering Holy Spirit, and good fellowship, not to mention tasty cuisine as has become our tradition.

What should you do?

1. Think about it now and make a commitment, at least preliminary to save your spot. You won't regret it. If this will be a first time for you, and are apprehensive, and want some more info, call or email me.
2. If you would like to assist with any of the logistics such as travel, tools and equipment, please let me know.

Let's hear from you. **Call or email:** Tom Zeigler, 610-327-3805 tom@tomzengineering.com, or Carter or Kerry (clester@fpcpottstown.org; kplester@fpcpottstown.org; 610-326-0620)

Session Digest

At its April meeting, the Session:

- Shared joys and concerns.
- Elected Sharon Sgriccia Clerk pro tem.
- Joyfully heard the statements of faith of new elders Kurt Holloway and Tim Peckham and new deacons, Gary Rhoadarmer, Rich Skone, Bonnie Skone, and Sally Stetler, and youth deacons, Porter Stacks and Emily Weber. These new officers were also examined as to what they learned during officer training. The Session unanimously approved their “examination.” They will be ordained in worship on Sunday, April 22.
- Approved the formation of a Security Taskforce made up of representatives from the Deacons, Admin. Committee and Spiritual Formation Committee. The Taskforce will investigate best practices for a congregation of our size and bring back recommendations to the Session.
- Approved this year’s Porter Broward Taskforce team: Andy Lane, Dave Allebach, Herb Barndt, Donna Force, Sharon Sgriccia, Gwen Allen, Sharon Trevoy, and Tom Zeigler.
- Learned that Kerry will not be taking previously approved study leave April 17-20 because the timing was no longer good having been away for Carter’s mom’s service. Carter also will not be taking study leave in June as approved because his class was canceled.
- Heard from Jeff about Young Children and Worship training, new Senior High Community time, and the plan for Presbyterian Day camp.
- Approved the transfer of Linda Luey Pfaff to the Tabernacle Methodist Church in Poquoson, Virginia.
- Received the monthly financial report through March 31 from Jon Allen and approved all allocations for Mission and Capital Improvement through March 31.
- Following two months study, unanimously approved the recommendation from the Administrative Committee to hire McGee Electric to install exterior perimeter lights and lights for the parking lot with the funds to be provided from the Capital Improvement budget and Porter Broward.
- Received a report from the Mission Committee regarding the upcoming electronic recycling event.
- Elected Sue Moyer, Tim Peckham, and Donna Force to serve as commissioners to Presbytery at Valley Forge, Presbyterian Church on Tuesday, May 15.
- Received reports from the Administrative, Hospitality, Mission, Spiritual Formation, and Worship committees and Deacons.
- Expressed gratitude to outgoing elders Barb Peckham and Sharon Holloway (Patty Picardi was absent).
- Prayer requests by the Committees:
 Mission: for a safe and productive trip to Honduras and for a successful community recycling event.
 Spiritual Formation: that our Sunday School teachers and children and youth volunteers will really feel the deep appreciation of the congregation as will those who are becoming new teachers and volunteers.
 Worship: joyful gratitude for our Easter worship.
 Hospitality: for our Inquirers’ class and for this summer’s visitors.
 Admin: for successful completion of the lighting project and for peace where there is warfare.

Financial Report

Annual budgeted income	\$601,033	Annual budgeted expenses	\$601,033
Budgeted income thru 3/31	\$150,258	Budgeted expenses thru 3/31	\$150,258
Actual income thru 3/31	\$144,902	Actual expenses thru 3/31	\$137,147
Actual income last year:	\$139,532	Actual expenses last year:	\$119,163

Deficit to date after all Mission and Capital Improvement allocations paid: (\$2,945)

Surplus this time last year due to vacant staff position: \$10,199

Counters Corner

Counters for the month of May: Hank Phillips, Dedra Phillips, Barbara Winter, and Chuck Krueger

Health Ministry News

Do you or a loved one have concerns about your memory?

Come to our memory screening!

Dr. Verghese will be here with his staff on May 9th

Appointments will be in 15 min. time slots from 3pm-7pm

Alzheimer's Disease (AD) is a major public health concern and the number of people who suffer from AD is growing rapidly. Current medications do not prevent the downward progression into dementia.

Alzheimer's Disease is believed to be caused by the accumulation of an abnormal, toxic protein in the brain. This protein causes changes in the brain over a period of 5-10 years, during which the only early symptoms are Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI). These symptoms can be easily missed by medical professionals!

There has been tremendous progress in understanding Alzheimer's disease over the last few decades. New medications in the research phase are believed to be able to prevent the downslide from MCI to Alzheimer's Dementia. Regular **memory screening**, using specific tests for short-term memory, can help identify persons at risk who could then benefit from participation in a clinical trial.

There is good reason for **HOPE** that we will beat this dreadful disease!

Memory Screening is the first step.

Please see Dawn with any questions or concerns.

(Age range for this testing is 50-85 years young)

Sign up on the health ministry bulletin board, or contact Dawn **by April 29th** so

Dr. Verghese can plan appropriately.

-Blessings in mind, body and spirit, Dawn

Lectionary Readings

For the week of April 30 to May 6:

Acts 10:44-48; Psalm 98; I John 5:1-6; John 15:9-17

For the week of May 7-13:

Acts 1:15-17, 21-26; Psalm 1; I John 5:9-13; John 17:6-19

For the week of May 14-20:

Acts 2:1-21 or Ezek. 37:1-14; Psalm 104:24-34, 35b; Romans 8:22-27 or Acts 2:1-21; John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

For the week of May 21-27:

Isaiah 6:1-8; Psalm 29; Romans 8:12-17; John 3:1-17

Family Faith Formation

Prayer -- it can be a scary word. I, along with many people, have struggled with my prayer life, trying to find a routine that brings me closer to God and that I do on a regular basis. Prayer life is all about experimentation and finding what works for you and your family.

It is important to model prayer for our children; don't be afraid to let your children see or hear you pray. Pray with your children, even if you think they are too young to understand.

I often find it helpful to have some structure to my prayers. Here are a couple ideas for praying with children, whether young or old:

- Photo Prayer - Print photos of significant people in your child's life. Slowly and deliberately go through them saying "God bless Mama", "God bless Grandpa", "God bless Uncle Joe", etc. For older children you can add specific prayers for each person. Conclude the prayer with a simple "Amen".
- Prayer Walk - Go on a walk in your neighborhood or park. As you walk give thanks for the things you see and notice. "Thank you God for flowers." "Thank you God for bird songs." "Thank you God for sunshine."
- Lord's Prayer Body Prayer - This one will take some work to memorize but feel free to make a cheat-sheet. Adding motions to the words that are so familiar to us can help children (and adults) add meaning to them.

Our Father - raise hands, palms open. **Who art in heaven** - look up, stretch arms up.

Hallowed be thy name - lower head, fingers cover mouth. **Thy kingdom come** - raise head, spread arms with palms up. **Thy will be done** - hands in front of face, palms together.

On earth - keep palms together, kneel on one knee. **As it is in heaven** - remain on one knee, look up and raise hands, palms up. **Give us this day our daily bread** - stand, hold hands together in front of body, expectantly. **Forgive us** - bring right hand to chest in a fist.

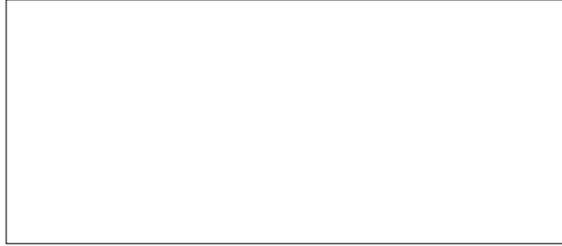
Our debts - bring left hand to chest in a fist. **As we forgive our debtors** - extend both arms out. **Lead us not into temptation** - kneel on one knee, hold both hands out, as if giving a stop sign. **But deliver us from evil** - cover face with both hands. **For thine is the kingdom** - hands out to sides, palms up. **And the power** - stand, clench fists, flex arms.

And the glory - extend arms up, wave hands. **Forever, Amen** - lower hands to shoulder height, palms up.

—Jeff

May 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Yoga 11 am Blood Drive 3-7 pm GS 6:30 pm Sr. Seekers Community Time 7 pm Lectio-Divina 7:30 pm	2 Yoga 11 am Security Taskforce Mtg. 4 pm M/R 4:30 pm Evening Prayer 7:15 pm Committees 7:30 pm	3 Bible Study 9:15 am Yoga 11 am Jr. GS 5 pm Meal 5 pm Beg. Bells 6 pm Bells 6:30 pm Choir 7:30 pm	4 Relay for Life set-up for Fundraiser 7 pm	5 Relay for Life Scrapbook Fundraiser (9am-9pm)
6 Sun Sch 9:15 am Worship/Comm. 10:30 am Teacher Appreciation (after worship) F&N Bike/Walk Sunday 2 pm Seekers assemble freezer meals 6:30-8 pm	7 Cub Scouts 7 pm	8 Yoga 11 am GS 6:30 pm Sr. Seekers Community Time 7 pm	9 Yoga 11 am Memory Screening 3-7 pm M/R 4:30 pm Relay 5:45 pm Deacons 7:30 pm	10 Bible Study 9:15 am Yoga 11 am Jr. GS 5 pm Meal 5 pm Beg. Bells 6 pm Bells 6:30 pm Choir 7:30 pm	11	12 Men's Breakfast 8 am Faithful Friends with children 5 pm
13 Sunday School 9:15 am Worship 10:30 am Cherubs sing 	14 Cub Scouts 7 pm	15 Primary Election Day 7am Yoga 11 am GS 6:30 pm Sr. Seekers Community Time 7 pm Lectio-Divina 7:30 pm	16 Yoga 11 am Prayer Shawl 12:30 pm M/R 4:30 pm Session meets w/Confirmands 7:30 pm	17 Bible Study 9:15 am Yoga 11 am Jr. GS 5 pm Meal 5 pm Beg. Bells 6 pm Bells 6:30 pm Choir 7:30 pm	18	19 Sr. Seekers Workcamp Preview (time TBD) Faithful Friends 6 pm
20 Sunday School 9:15 am Worship (Pentecost) 10:30 am Confirmation Sunday Celtic Choir sings Reception for Confirmands (after worship)	21 Cub Scouts 7 pm	22 Yoga 11 am GS 6:30 pm Sr. Seekers Community Time 7 pm Next Week's Sermon 7:30 pm	23 Yoga 11 am M/R 4:30 pm Relay 6 pm Compassionate Friends 7 pm	24 Bible Study 9:15 am Yoga 11 am Jr. GS 5 pm Meal 5 pm Beg. Bells 6 pm Bells 6:30 pm Choir 7:30 pm	25	26
27 Sunday School 9:15 am Worship 10:30 am Memorial Day Remembrance	 28 Memorial Day Church Office closed	29 Yoga 11 am GS 6:30 pm Sr. Seekers Community Time 7 pm	30 Yoga 11 am M/R 4:30 pm	31 Bible Study 9:15 am Yoga 11 am Jr. GS 5 pm Meal 5 pm Beg. Bells 6 pm Bells 6:30 pm Choir 7:30 pm		



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
750 N. Evans Street
Pottstown, PA 19464
Phone: 610-326-0620
Fax: 610-326-4805
Website: www.fpcpottstown.org

