



The Celtic Cross

September 2017

Letter from the Co-Pastors

“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

a time to be born, and a time to die;

a time to plant, and a time to pluck what is planted...

a time to weep, and a time to laugh;

a time to mourn, and a time to dance...

a time to seek, and a time to lose;

a time to keep, and a time to throw away...”

Dearly Beloved:

The unknown author of the Biblical book of Ecclesiastes aptly notes that there are different times and seasons in every human life, and the priorities and tasks change with those changing times and seasons. So it is in the life of the church. September and the coming of Fall bring a changing season kicked off by two great traditions in the life of this congregation: Rally Day to begin the Sunday School year, and the Deacons’ annual church picnic to mark the end of summer and the beginning of the school year. Later in September a new confirmation class of seventh and eighth graders will begin their journey of faith exploration, while choirs and Bible studies return after their summer sabbath. Worship, ministry, and fellowship certainly go on through the summer, but there is a different energy level as more people gather in the sanctuary for worship, in rooms and corridors for fellowship and learning, and in our community for mission and service.

But life is never a changeless cycle of endless repetition. There is always something fresh and new even as we return to familiar patterns. On September 10, we will dedicate our new church playground after a long wait—and much effort by several volunteers to overcome bureaucratic and engineering hurdles. And we will install our new Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministry, Jeff Pinard—a familiar face taking on a new role.

The God of Abraham and Sarah, of Peter and Paul, can be trusted to never be satisfied with the status quo, and to always be working to transform individuals and communities towards love and justice. But the God we encounter in Jesus Christ can also be counted on to be with us in all times and seasons, in turbulent times when change seems to come too quickly, and in stagnant times when change can seem too far off in the distance. Once again, may we seek to be renewed and refreshed through prayer and worship, and energized and transformed through service and ministry.

See you in church,
Carter and Kerry

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Worship Matters

Upcoming in Worship—Worship moves to 10:30 on September 10!

- September 3: Service of the Lord's Day at 9:30 a.m.
 "Serving and Seeing God in Our Daily Labors" - Reflections by
 Bill Campbell and Cynthia Foust
 Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
- September 10: Service of the Lord's Day at 10:30 a.m.
 Commissioning of Sunday School Teachers, Young Children and Worship
 Ministers and Youth Advisors; Installation of Jeff Pinard
 Dedication of Playground
- September 17: Service of the Lord's Day
 Commissioning of Choirs and Music Ministers
- September 24: Service of the Lord's Day
-

Music Notes:

As the long, hot days of summer come to a close, we welcome back the choirs, both children and adults alike, to rehearsals and Sunday services. Deb will begin **Sunday, September 3rd's** service with the prelude, "Amazing Grace" arranged by Berry. The anthem will be a piano 4 hand piece entitled "O Come and Sing Unto The Lord" played by Deb and Cindy. The piece was composed by Gilbert Martin, based on an old Irish hymn tune. Karg-Elert's "Abide, O Dearest Jesus" will be played during the offertory. Tim Allen will provide the communion music and Deb will close the service with Berg's "Cornet Voluntary" as the postlude.

On **Thursday, September 7th**, the **Chancel and Handbell choirs** will kick-off the rehearsal season with their annual gathering of "Just Desserts" in the Peace Garden at 6:30 PM. Chancel Choir rehearsal will follow at 7:30 PM in the choir room.

Our Rally Day service on **September 10th** will include the prelude, "Celtic Tapestry" by Martin, and the Chancel Choir's anthem "With a Voice of Singing" by Shaw. Deb will perform the offertory "Voluntary in G" by Heron and postlude Travers' "Trumpet Voluntary."

The **Celtic Singers** will resume Music & Rec on **Wednesday, September 13th** with Jeff Pinard and Mrs. B! The **Cherubs** will resume their rehearsals during Sunday School starting on **September 17th**.

The **Chancel Choir** will offer two other beautiful anthems this month, Harlan's "How Firm a Foundation" with 4 hand piano accompaniment by Deb and Julie Kovach on the September 17th and Franck's "Panis Angelicus" on September 24th. Deb will also be offering "Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty" arranged by Bonam, Croft's "Voluntary in D", Purcell's "Trumpet Tune," "There is a Fountain" arranged by McDonald and Rheinberger's "Intermezzo"

Looking forward to making a **Joyful** noise unto the Lord.
 —Cindy, Deb and Jo Ann

UPCOMING EVENTS

RALLY DAY FOR ALL AGES!

September 10th– 9:15 a.m.

Sunday School is here and we want to kick it off in style! Come to the Fellowship Hall at 9:15. Teachers will be there to get to know the students. Catch up with your friends! Adults will be able to learn more about the adult spiritual formation opportunities. All are welcome to join us as we explore our faith stories and continue our journey together:

“What’s Your Story?”

YOU are invited to the annual

CHURCH PICNIC!

**Sunday, September 10th
4:00 – 7:00 p.m. (Dinner at 5:30 p.m.)**



Come out this year for a Tail Gate! Wear your favorite sports team’s logo and join in for games, water balloons, gaga, and BINGO.

And new this year: an inflatable **“Wide World of Sports”** activity.

What to bring: a side dish to serve 6-8 people—the Deacons will provide chicken, refreshments, and dessert. Please also bring a chair or blanket to sit on.

Please sign up or RSVP to the church office by September 6 so the Deacons know how much chicken to order.

Saturday, October 7—Celebrating the Presbytery’s 300th!

Join approximately 1000 other Philadelphia Presbyterians and public dignitaries in celebrating in worship Philadelphia Presbytery’s 300th anniversary on Saturday, October 7, 2017 at 10 a.m. Rev. Dr. Craig Barnes, President of Princeton Seminary, and Rev. Denise Anderson, Co-Moderator of the PCUSA General Assembly will be preaching. Special music will be offered by the All-Presbytery Celebration Choir and Voices of Hope Youth Choir. Because no Presbyterian church in Philadelphia is big enough, we will be gathering at Enon Tabernacle East church.

Sign up as soon as possible on the church bulletin board. We will either carpool, or if there is enough interest, charter a bus. Carter, Kerry, and Patty Picardi, our Clerk of Session, are participating in the service. Hope you can join in the celebration!

CROP Walk, Sunday, October 1

Join us on Sunday October 1st for our annual CROP Walk in the Pottstown Community. The walk starts at First Presbyterian Church and there are two routes to walk, one a mile long and one five miles long. To join the team from First Presbyterian, or to donate for the walk, go to www.crophungerwalk.org/pottstownpa and link to the First Presbyterian team.

Spiritual Formation Opportunities

Adult Spiritual Formation on Sundays

All classes meet together on **Rally Day, September 10 in Fellowship Hall**. And on **September 17, we will all gather in the Community Room to see and hear reports from last June's Honduras Trip**.

- **Forum (Community Room):**
September 24 and October 1: "What Money Can't Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets" by Michael Sandel
Michael Sandel, a Harvard ethicist and one of the most popular college lecturers in America, Join Carter as we see a video of a Sandel presentation and explore together when and how we should rely on markets to make decisions. The discussion will be both practical and provocative. While reading Sandel's book would be helpful, it will not be necessary.
- **Thoughtful Christians (Mary Ann Yost Room) Topic: To be determined**
Discussion leaders: Debbie Remelius and others
- **Men's Sunday Mornings (Pastors' Conf. Room): "John"**
Teachers: Gary James, Binky Huff, Tim Peckham and Carter
- **Faithful Friends Sunday School (Fellowship Hall) Coordinators: Gwen and Tim Allen and Kim Wheelles**
We will gather around a table in Fellowship Hall with coffee and discuss issues relevant to our faith and daily lives. Our resource will be the "Wired Word," which can be read before or at the beginning of our time together.

Adult Spiritual Formation During the Week

- **Sisters of the Way:** 9:15-10:45 a.m. every Thursday beginning September 21. Women of all ages dig into scriptures which will be preached. Teacher: Kerry
- **Praying the Scriptures:** Led by Kerry, this meditation circle (lectio divina) meets on the first and third Tuesdays of the month beginning October 3.
- **Next Week's Sermon:** Explores the texts for next week's sermon. Meets the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month 7:30-8:30 p.m. beginning September 26. Teacher: Carter
- **Theology Reading Group:** Join Carter and the group. We will mark the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation by reading a famous essay by Martin Luther, "On Christian Liberty." Our meeting date was being pinned down as *The Celtic Cross* went to press. To find out the meeting date at Carter's house, or if you have questions, want directions, or want a copy of the essay, contact Carter. Feel free to join us even if you haven't read the essay this time.

Children and Youth at First Presbyterian Church

Music and Recreation for Children in Grades 2-5

Music and Recreation starts up Wednesday September 13! Join us EVERY WEDNESDAY from 4:30-5:45 for an evening of games and music! All children from 2nd through 5th grade are welcome to join us. We have new games to play, new songs to sing and new friends to see. It's going to be an amazing year together! We can't wait to see you there!

Third Graders Welcomed to the Lord's Supper and Worship

Third graders and parents (and any other interested parents and children) are invited to join Jeff, Kerry and Carter for a pizza supper and discussion concerning worship and the Lord's Supper on Sunday, September 24th at 4:30 p.m. at the church. Then, on Sunday, October 1, we will introduce the children to the congregation and welcome them to the Lord's Table. This is an important rite of passage as our young ones join the rest of the church family in celebrating the Lord's Supper. Please RSVP to the church office, and call Jeff, Kerry or Carter if you have any questions.

CONFIRMATION AND SEEKERS

CONFIRMATION RETREAT, SEPT. 22-23

The Confirmation retreat marks the beginning of the year for the Confirmation class. Join us as we begin traveling the exciting road of faith formation and fellowship as we learn more about ourselves as Christians, Presbyterians, and human beings. All of the details are on the flier coming to prospective seventh and eighth-grade confirmands and parents in the mail. If you do not get yours, contact the pastors!

SEEKERS AND THE CHURCH PICNIC, SUNDAY, Sept. 10, 4-7 p.m

Gaga pit, Water balloon toss, Hanging out with friends, Jeff and the Advisors, Food and drink—what is not to like? The whole family is invited so be sure you get your parents to sign up on the church bulletin board.

Senior High Seekers will go the Allens following the picnic

SEEKERS/PARENTS HEAD-TO-HEAD ENCOUNTERS

Sept. 17, 6:30 p.m.

The game where parents and youth try to "get inside each others' heads"

Sunday, September 17th, 6:30—8:00 p.m.

Teams are made up of a Seeker and one of his/her parents.

(Limited to 8 teams—so contact Jeff or the church office if you want to be one)

Plus, a bonus game: "HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW JEFF PINARD?"

After the game and ice cream sundaes, Seekers will split into junior and senior high groups and parents will meet with the advisors to discuss upcoming events. **RSVP to the church office if you can attend or be a team.**

Letting Our Blessings Flow—Volunteering Our Time

TUTORS AT BARTH ELEMENTARY

The tutoring program will begin its seventeenth year in October. Can you offer one hour a week to work with one student who could use some extra help? Studies show such a time commitment will have far more influence than you know. Our coordinator, Sharon Holloway, has a wealth of experience working with students in the Pottstown School District. Contact Sharon and say “YES, I’ll help!”

COMMUNITY MEALS

On the second Thursday of each month, we provide a free dinner in Fellowship Hall to those in need in our community (on other Thursdays, other congregations serve the meal in our church). If you can help cook on a second Thursday, please contact Sandy Allebach, Elaine Siever, or Kerry. If you can help serve and clean-up the meal (4:45—6:15), please contact Kerry or Carter. The more the merrier!

CLUSTER OUTREACH CENTER, 57 N. FRANKLIN STREET

The Cluster Outreach Center is always in need of **volunteers**. Volunteers are needed to help with various needs. Some of the opportunities:

- Serving food/putting food orders together
- Stocking/sorting food in the Food Pantry
- Meeting with clients to sign-up for Food pantry assistance
- Sorting clothing and household goods
- Administration and office assistance

To volunteer, you can submit an application online at www.pottstowncluster.org, or contact the Cluster volunteer coordinator at 610-970-5995.

MEALS ON WHEELS, 1976 E. HIGH STREET

The Meals on Wheels program that serves the Pottstown area is in great need of volunteers to deliver meals to the home-bound elderly and disabled in our community. Most volunteers give of their time once a week for less than 2 hours. We currently have four open routes in Pottstown. Meals are delivered Monday through Friday from approximately 10:30 to 12:00. If you can help, contact Ruth Hood, 610-326-1610, ext. 336 or at rhoo@fsmontco.org.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Beginning on August 1, 2017, the Montgomery & Delaware County affiliates of Habitat have joined forces to become Habitat For Humanity of Montgomery and Delaware Counties. Habitat’s focus is to provide families with safe and affordable homes. Their mission is to eliminate poverty housing by rehabilitating, building, and repairing homes. They do an incredible job by empowering families to work hard and help them become homeowners. They have been serving Montgomery County since 1989!

For many years now, First Presbyterian Church has supported this fantastic organization - both financially and with providing volunteers to help with their projects. **(cont. p. 7)**

Habitat for Humanity Volunteering cont.

The Mission Committee of our Church is proud to partner with Habitat and show our support with the local projects that directly impact our surrounding communities.

We have a great opportunity to continue supporting Habitat by helping them with 2 rehabilitation projects. Both homes are in Pottstown, located on Walnut Street. Starting in early October 2017, and running through the end of May 2018, they will be needing volunteers to help with various projects. These projects range from framing walls, running wires for electricity, insulation, drywall, painting, and installing new fixtures.

Volunteers can help with projects on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. If you are interested in volunteering, there are 2 ways for you to get involved :

Individually – If you have time that you would like to share on your own schedule, please contact Elizabeth Hefner at Habitat. Her email is: ehefner@habitatmontco.org

As a Group – First Presbyterian will schedule work days to volunteer. Elizabeth will provide us with a schedule of projects for the coming months. You can sign up for specific days. If you are interested in being part of a group, please contact John Livezey. jdlivezey@verizon.net

Letting Our Blessings Flow—Barth Back To School Collection



Please Help Provide Much Needed Supplies

Throughout the back-to-school season, we will be collecting donations of school supplies to help fill classrooms and backpacks and provide the Barth Elementary School students and teachers with a solid start to their school year.

Items especially needed include pencils, large erasers, 24-count boxes of crayons, glue sticks, and folders with pockets.

Operation Backpack: A Personal Perspective

Operation Backpack (OBP) is a local, non-profit organization that is close to my heart. Their main goal is to fight childhood hunger. Students in our community and surrounding communities are enrolled in the program. Each student receives a backpack every Friday filled with food for the weekend. These students would go without food over the weekend if it wasn't for the help from OBP. I can't even imagine what it would be like to be hungry with no food in our home. It saddens me to think of the kids going without. That is why I am happy to help with OBP whenever possible. There are many ways to help, you can volunteer your time on a sort night or a pack night, help deliver backpacks to schools, donate specific food items, offer financial support, or a great way to help is to run a food drive. When I was confirmed, I ran one for my Kingdom of God project at Redners and raised \$1,710 worth of food for OBP in just a few, short hours. **(cont. p. 10)**

Fellowship—see also p. 3

PRIME TIMERS—

12 Oct. (Thurs.) 12:00 Noon REMINISCE LUNCH in Fellowship Hall

If you wish, bring an heirloom, collectible, keepsake, photo, artwork or memory to share. Lunch will be POT LUCK. Sign up on bulletin board across from office.

UPCOMING EVENTS

9 Nov. TV Game Show Fun, Episode 3 & Pot Luck Lunch

6 Dec. Lunch (TBA) then CAROLING at Manatawny Manor

9 Dec. "A Christmas Carol" (the musical) 2:00 PM Steel River Theater

MEN'S BREAKFAST, Saturday, September 9, 8 a.m.

Come join Carter and other men for fun and fellowship on the second Saturday of each month. This month we meet on Saturday, September 9 at 8 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. We break at 9 a.m.

FAITHFUL FRIENDS and FAITHFUL FRIENDS WITH CHILDREN

Plans are taking shape as the *Celtic Cross* went to press for a gathering of both Faithful Friends groups. Both groups try to meet every other month for fellowship, dinner, discussion, and prayer (although the discussions and prayers are much shorter when the children come!). Fellowship and fun are common to both groups! To find out details about the next gathering or to be added to the email list, contact Carter or Kerry.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY—Wednesday, September 13th and Wednesday, September 27th

The Prayer Shawl ministry will meet every second and fourth Wednesday of the month from September through May. We meet in the library from 12:30-2:00 pm. Please join us as we create loving comfort for our church family and the wider community. If you knit or crochet, or if you would like to learn, please contact Jane Barndt, 610-469-9165, and become part of our group.

Lectionary Readings

We invite you to use these readings for your daily devotions :

September 4-10: Exodus 12:1-14, Psalm 149, Romans 13:8-14, Matthew 18:15-20

September 11-17: Exodus 14:19-31, Psalm 114 or Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21, Romans 14:1-12, Matthew 18:21-35

September 18-24: Exodus 16:2-15, Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45, Phil. 1:21-30, Matthew 20:1-16

September 25-October 1: Exodus 17:1-7, Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16, Phil. 2:1-13, Matthew 21:23-32

Library News

I am highlighting 3 new additions to the library that are wonderful for the social issues they tackle to the more relaxing words from the “ocean to the beach.”

Loving (2016) is a movie celebrating the 50th anniversary of the landmark federal civil rights case, Loving v. Virginia, that led the Supreme Court to legalize interracial marriage. Starring Ruth Negga and Joel Edgerton as Mildred and Richard Loving who married in 1958 despite that fact it was against Virginia law. With the help of lawyer Bernard S. Cohen and constitutional law expert Phil Hirschkop, it was taken to the Supreme Court where it held laws prohibiting interracial marriage as unconstitutional. For more insightful stories go to lovingproject.com to listening to more interracial couples’ incredible stories.

The Eagle Huntress (2016) is a documentary following a 13 year old Kazakh girl, Aisholpan, who become the first female in 12 generations of her family to become an eagle hunter. It is traditionally passed down from father to son but she rises to the challenge.

Wisdom from the Waters: A Little Encouragement from the Ocean to the Beach by Jake Townsend is a small book illustrated with beautiful water color pictures of sea animals with encouraging phrases for whenever someone needs a boost.

—Laura Hazeltine

Church Family News

Please keep in your prayers the following people who have been ill or hospitalized or receiving treatment: Mary Ann Hartman, Suzanne Fritsch, Marianne Harrison, Laurie Wilson, Esther O’Keefe, and Cora-Celeste Missimer.

We send condolences to the family of Paul Hughes who recently entered eternal life, and to Polly Gower whose sister recently entered eternal life.

We pray for all teachers, administrators, children, and youth, and their families as the new school year begins.

We rejoice with Seth and Elisha Rios on the birth of their son, Ethan Edward Rios.

Thanks to all those who kept our **gardens** watered and weeded this summer: Sue Moyer, Doreen Duncan, Jen Drago, Jo Ann Bathurst, Dee Phillips, Kathy Benning, Sandy Allebach, Ted and Kay Vogt, Tom and Judy Babbony, Adele Klein, Richie and Bonnie Skone, the Frain Family, Eileen Wade, Sharon Holloway, Andy Lane, Jon and Barbara Allen, Chuck Krueger, Herb and Jane Barndt, Al and Linda Cybart, and Keith Harrison. And thanks to Sue Moyer for coordinating the summer schedule!

A Big Thanks to all who helped with **Mission Mornings** for our junior high youth: Connor Ferreri, April Thorum, Ginny Bleyer, Deb Mohollen, Donna Force, Lenore Madden, Sandro Ro-seo, and Jane Sample.

Finally, thanks to all who volunteered to do childcare during worship this summer. What a great team helped us all keep our baptismal promises!

Health Ministry News

Thank you to everyone who has donated health related supplies. We often receive donations other than equipment that cannot be stored in the attic. There will now be a new health ministry closet to house these items! The closet is located across from the sound room. Please help yourself to items if you are in need. There are various Depends, Band-Aids, gauze sponges, a baby monitor, underpads to cover a chair or mattress, and other various items. If you have donations in the future please continue to leave them in the parish nurse office.

Keep your eyes open for new reading material in the health ministry literature rack. I will continue to rotate what is there every other month. I also have more pamphlets and books in my office that I only have one copy of. I will be providing a list of what is available and hang it by the literature rack. Please see me if you would like to borrow any of those materials.

Any suggestions for topics or material you would like to see our health ministry team provide please let me know!
—Dawn

Counters Corner—September

Head Counter: Hank Phillips

Regular Counters: Dedra Phillips, Barbara Winter, and Chuck Krueger

Letting Our Blessings Flow—Have you forgotten anything?

Many of us were away during the summer but the church's ministries continue 365 days a year. If your weekly contributions went missing while you were missing, can you "catch up" your giving this September—so that we can continue to do Christ's work in Pottstown and in the world? **Online giving is now possible**, either on a one-time or recurring basis—check out

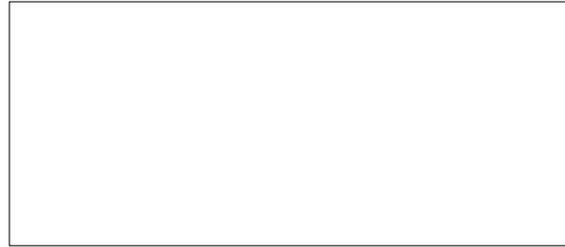
Operation Backpack (continued from p. 7)

It was an awesome and amazing feeling to know that I could help my fellow students by donating a little bit of my time. It was also cool to witness the generosity of others in our community towards this organization. It was a positive and uplifting experience. If you are moved to help fight childhood hunger, I encourage you to check out OBP. You can learn more by visiting their website at www.operationbp.org or contact the Director, Lisa, at lisah@operationbp.org

Thank you,
Julian Weber

SEPTEMBER 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 Worship/ Communion 9:30 am	4  Labor Day Church Office Closed	5 Yoga 11 am GS 6:30 pm	6 Yoga 11 am Relay 6:00 pm Evening prayer 7:15 pm Committees 7:30 pm	7 Yoga 11 am Meal 5 pm HENS Back to School 7 pm Choir 7:30 pm	8	9 Men's Breakfast 8 am Rally Day and Picnic set-up 9:30 am
10 Rally Day 9:15 am Worship/ Comm. of Teachers, Adv- isors, Install of Jeff Pinard & PG Dedication 10:30 am Picnic 4-7 pm Seekers Bonfire 7:15 pm	11 HENS Classes begin Cub Scouts 7 pm	12 Yoga 11 am GS 6:30 pm	13 Yoga 11 am Prayer Shawl ministry 12:30 pm Music/Rec 4:30 pm Deacons' Mtg. 7:30 pm	14 Yoga 11 am Meal 5 pm Choir 7:30 pm	15 Dobry Wedding Rehearsal 5 pm	16 Dobry Wedding 2 pm
17 SS 9:15 am Worship/ Comm. of Choirs/Music Ministers 10:30 am Upperclassmen Lunch (after worship) Seekers Head-to-Head Encounters 6:30 pm	18 Cub Scouts 7 pm	19 Yoga 11 am GS 6:30 pm	20 Yoga 11 am Music/Rec 4:30 pm Session Mtg. 7:30 pm	21 Bible Study 9:15 am Yoga 11 am Meal 5 pm Choir 7:30 pm	22 Fall Confirmation Retreat	23 Fall Confirmation Retreat
24 Sunday School 9:15 am Worship 10:30am Prep. For Lord's Table 4:30 pm	25 Cub Scouts 7 pm	26 Yoga 11 am GS 6:30 pm Next Week's Sermon 7:30 pm	27 Yoga 11 am Prayer Shawl 12:30 pm Music/Rec 4:30 pm Compassionate Friends 7:30 pm	28 Bible Study 9:15 am Yoga 11 am Meal 5 pm Handbells 6:30pm Choir 7:30 pm	29	30



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