



# The Celtic Cross

February 2012

## From the Co-Pastors

*“Into the dark world  
 a snowdrop comes,  
 a blessing of hope and peace  
 carrying within it a green heart:  
 symbol of God’s renewing love.  
 Come to inhabit our darkness, Lord Christ,  
 for dark and light are alike to you.  
 May nature’s white candles of hope  
 remind us of your birth  
 and lighten our journey  
 through Lent and beyond.”*

—Kate McIlhagga

Dearly Beloved:

Lent is the season of the church year stretching from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday. Lent is often associated with penitence and “giving things up.” But Lent, which literally means “springtime,” is not intended just to be a “downer” when we give up a few pleasures. Instead, we should see it as a time of preparation and tending the “soil of our souls” so that the roots of our faith might deepen and the fruits of our faith might blossom. We acknowledge our sins and shortcomings, because that is the first step for change and growth. But we always do so with an awareness of God’s power and grace. As a result, Lent can also be a time for looking to the joy of God’s presence. Like a snowdrop blossom while winter still lingers in the air, joy can show up in what seems to be the unlikeliest of times and places—because God is always showing up there.

So for the six weeks stretching from Ash Wednesday to Holy Week, let us tend the soil of our faith so that God’s seeds might grow...

...through worship on Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday and the Sundays in between. During Lent, we will be preaching a series on some of Jesus’ most confounding parables, asking “What in heaven’s name is Jesus talking about?”  
 ...through daily times of prayer and reading the Scriptures, reflecting on our days and our lives. The devotional resources written by church members that will be distributed by the Spiritual Formation committee can be a real gift to all of us;  
 ...through our acts of service for others and our times of fellowship with the body of Christ. Join us on Wednesdays for dinner, fellowship and two new opportunities for study and discussion.

May we all might arrive at Easter and say, “What a great season this has been!”

And may God bless you all,  
 Carter and Kerry

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## Worship Matters

### **Sunday Morning Schedule:**

9:15 Sunday School for all ages  
10:30 Service of the Lord's Day (*in the sanctuary*)  
11:45 Fellowship Time (*in the Fellowship Hall*)

### **Upcoming in Worship**

**February 5** – Sacrament of the Lord's Supper  
Rev. Max Creswell, preaching

**February 12** -- Service for the Lord's Day  
Cherub Choir sings  
Scout Sunday

**February 19** – Service for the Lord's Day  
Service led by the Nashville Mission Trip participants

### **Wednesday, February 22, Ash Wednesday Service**

7:30 p.m. in the Community Room. See p. 3 for more details.

**February 26** – Service for the Lord's Day; Sermon Series: "Curious Tales of the Kingdom"  
Celtic Choir Sings

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## **Music Notes**

This month brings thoughts of loved ones near and far. We hope to warm your heart with joy-filled anthems and music. On February 5<sup>th</sup> the Handbell choir will play along with the Chancel choir in their baptismal anthem, "Washed Anew." The Handbell choir will also play "Trumpet Tune" at the offertory. The following Sunday, the choir will step into a new style, singing "O the Deep, Deep, Love of Jesus." If you are a 'Gaither music' fan, you will especially enjoy this piece. February 19<sup>th</sup> will challenge the choir as they sing the delightful "Hallelujah Amen" from Handel's "Judas Maccabeus." As we enter Lent, we will end the month singing a lovely new arrangement of "Jesus, Lover of My Soul."

I would like to thank Tim Detwiler for accompanying the choir on clarinet last month. I would also like to thank Scott Sample and Deb Voytko for spending extra time learning the challenging four-hand accompaniment to our anthem on the last Sunday in January. It is a blessing that we have so much talent in our church.

Don't forget to thank a choir member of any age for their dedication and gift of music.

Diane Land, Director of Music

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## **HENS Nursery School Registration Open for Church Members**

Church members now have an opportunity to register for openings in the HENS Nursery School for the 2012-13 school year. If you are interested, or have questions, contact the director (and church member), Jaylee Ferreri, at 610-326-3690.

## **Lent at First Presbyterian Church**

### **Ash Wednesday Service: February 22, 7:30—8:15 p.m.**

During Lent, we prepare ourselves for Christ's death and resurrection. We begin the season on Ash Wednesday with a quiet time of reflection and worship in the Community Room. We will mark ourselves with ashes, the sign of our human weakness and mortality, and we will remember God's unfailing grace and mercy shown to us in Jesus Christ.

### **Wednesdays During Lent (beg. Feb 29)**

There are two tracks for adults and two offerings for children:

#### **Track One: Biblical Explorations**

Spend two weeks exploring the Gospel of John with Dr. Kenneth Maahs of Eastern University and then two weeks with Rabbi Daniel Zuker of Congregation Mercy and Truth exploring the Bible and archaeology. It all adds up to four stimulating weeks of deepening our understanding of God's Word.

**Feb. 29 Speaker: Dr. Kenneth Maahs, Eastern University**

#### **Track Two: "You're Not My Type...But I Can Love You Anyway"**

Do you ever have the feeling that your spouse/child/parent/co-worker is just wired differently than you? That is because they are! Join Kerry and Carter for an exploration of the differing temperament types that God created so that we can better understand and appreciate why we are the way we are—and why those around us are different. Our discussions could not only help us in our marriages, families, and work situations, but also refresh us in our prayer life.

**First session: Feb. 29.** See Kerry and Carter for the survey you need to fill out for it all to make sense.

**Sr. Seekers are HIGHLY** encouraged to attend the class: "You're Just Not My Type" see above description.

#### **For Children in Grades 2nd to 8th Grade:**

We will be making our own renditions of a few Lenten Bible stories as we create a short film starring...You! If you are camera shy, there is a lot to do! Come join us!

#### **For Children age 4 to 1st Grade:**

Our younger children will be discovering the making Lenten crafts with Stephanie Adamski as they get ready to celebrate Easter!

#### **Childcare available for children under 4**

**Evening Prayer at 6:00 p.m., Dinner at 6:20 and Program 7—8 p.m.**

**Please sign up!**

## **Blood Drive, Wednesday, February 1, 2012, 4-8 p.m.**

Every donation can save three lives! Join us on Wednesday, February 1 and give blood. Sign up for an appointment on the bulletin board or by calling Jeannette Feroe or the church office.

## Spiritual Formation Opportunities

### Adult Education Opportunities

- **Forum Class (Community Room)**  
Topic: Christianity: The Second Thousand Years  
Join us for this award-winning video series discussing the history of the church since 1000.
- **Faith and Relationships Class (Library)**  
Topic: To be announced. Teachers: Sharon Trevoy and Rob Wade
- **Men's Sunday Mornings (Pastors' Conference Room).** Teacher: Bernarr Rhoades  
Topic: "Does God Speak to Us?"
- **Sacred Space for Women (Mary Ann Yost Room—110)** Teacher: Amy Shutt  
Topic: "Entering Christ's Prayer" uses selected readings from Luke's Gospel to focus on Christ's life of prayer and His oneness with the Father. Discover an image of Christ, not born into glory or crucified in bloodied defeat, but rather more like us, developing a union with God through constant prayer, contemplation and service.

### Weekday Opportunities

- **Thursday Ladies' Bible Study:** Meets February 2 & 16 from 9:30–10:30. Teachers: Ron Gower and Max Creswell
- **"Sisters of the Way" Bible Study:** 9:15-10:45 a.m. every Thursday. Teacher: Kerry
- **Evening Bible Study:** 7:30—8:30 PM on Tuesday, Feb 28 (doesn't meet on February 14 because Carter will be on the Adult Mission trip). Teacher: Carter
- **Moms' Time-Out:** Meets Wednesday, February 15, 9:30-11:00 a.m. Location: Amy Shenk's house—check with the church office for directions. Teacher: Kerry.  
Bring your children!
- **Praying the Scriptures Group (Lectio Divina):** Tuesday, February 7 and 21 at 7:30 p.m.  
Join Kerry and others for a quiet hour of praying the Scriptures.
- **Theology Reading Group:** Will not meet this month because of Lenten School. Check with Carter to find out the next meeting date and what the group is reading.

**Pick up your Lenten Devotions written by church members beginning Feb. 22**

**Music and Recreation for Children**

Parents, watch for a flyer coming home about some new things we are doing in Music and Rec. We are adding a mission component and a “Golden Rule” component that will open up some fun new and fresh ways the children can come to know God. Music and Rec meets from 4:30 to 5:45 every Wednesday Eve.



**Confirmation**

**Sunday, February 12: When Jesus is Lord of My Relationships: Part I at 5 p.m.** Note: Seekers will meet before confirmation at 3:00 p.m.

**Sunday, February 26: When Jesus is Lord of My Relationships: Part 2 at 5 p.m.**

**Junior Seekers, Grades 6-8**

**Sunday, February 5 (7:15 a.m.—9:15 a.m.): Makin’ Hoagies!**  
It’s onion smelling time. Come get some breakfast and help man the assembly line for our hoagie fundraiser. We will finish in time for you to go to Sunday School. (RSVP Liv)

**Sunday, February 12 (3:00-5:00 p.m.) “Will you be my Valentine?”** Come hang out in the kitchen as we make Valentines for people who do not usually get any. After we are done making the best valentines ever we will head out to hand deliver them! (RSVP Lipsky)

Mike and Mindy Lipsky (610-323-5616) Seth Rios (610-440-4036)

**Senior Seekers—Grades 9-12**

**Sunday, February 5—Makin’ Hoagies!**  
It’s onion smelling time. Come get some breakfast and help man the assembly line for our hoagie fundraiser. We will finish in time for you to go to Sunday School. (RSVP Liv)

**Saturday, February 19 — Skiing/Boarding/Tubing— your choice**  
We’ll be headed to Bear Creek for some winter fun. Details with price and times. will be sent out soon!

Advisors: Chris and John Macdonald (610-987-0529), Donna and Gary Rhoadarmer (610-327-8157), Gwen and Tim Allen (484-947-8299) and Scott and Liv Robertson (352-255-7802)



## Fellowship Opportunities

### PrimeTimers

**Tuesday, February 7, 2012 at noon: Pot Luck Lunch and Movie.**

Each person is asked to bring a food item to share at lunch with other Prime Timers and guests. A short meeting to discuss upcoming events will take place at lunch. Following lunch, we will watch the 1953 movie, *Roman Holiday* with Gregory Peck and Audrey Hepburn. Sign up on the bulletin board.

**Sign up now for Tuesday, May 15, 2012: “Jonah” at the Sight and Sound Theatre**

We will carpool from the church leaving at 10:00 a.m. Cost is \$46.55—money needs to be in ASAP so we can get seat assignments. Bring your own lunch or purchase something at the theater. We will go out to dinner after the show. See the bulletin board for more details.

### Men’s Breakfast—Saturday, February 11, 8 –9 a.m.

Join Carter and the guys for breakfast, fellowship, and fun.

### Young Adults Dinner and Movie Discussion—Saturday, February 18

Our monthly movable feast of dinner, fellowship, and discussion will be on Saturday, January 21 at the home of Seth and Elisha Rios. We will be discussing the movie “Shadowlands” (the English version), which can be checked out of the library. Check with Carter or Kerry if you have any questions.

## Deacons’ Bench

**NEWS FROM THE CLUSTER:** Thank you for your food donations to the Cluster - they were able to provide 194 holiday dinners for families to enjoy in their homes. Now, in the New Year, their pantry shelves need to be restocked. Food items especially needed are: tuna, canned meat, oatmeal, canned vegetables and fruit, spaghetti sauce, canned soup, canned pasta, real fruit juice. Also needed in the dry goods department are: blankets, toilet paper, paper towels, paper napkins, cleaning products, and personal hygiene products such as shampoo, tooth brushes, toothpaste, etc. The **only clothing being accepted at this time** are: coats, hats, mittens, and gloves. **Please save your Professional Pharmacy receipts** (including Rx receipts) as they give a rebate to the Cluster. There is an envelope on the bulletin board for these receipts.

**SPRING WORKDAY:** Mark you calendars for our Spring Church Workday – **Saturday, March 24 at 9:00 a.m.** with a rain date of Saturday, March 31.

## Counters Corner

Serving as Counters for the offering in February are Bill Campbell (captain), David and Sandy Allebach, and Sandy White. Thank you to all those who count—and to Hank Phillips our coordinator, and Don Trevoy, our financial secretary!

## Salt and Light

A monthly look behind the scenes at the mission and ministry of FPC

This month: SNEHA Ministry in India

(Society for Nurture, Education, and Health Advancement)



**Thank you from the children of SNEHA.**



**Girls in henna class.**

Several years ago we received a visit from Reeta Rao, who with her husband Hari, decided to dedicate their lives to the poor in India. Since then we have followed with wonder how they have brought this vision to fruition. They are working in the northern city of Dehradun with the expressed desire to uplift the urban poor, focusing mainly on women and children. SNEHA is a charitable Christian organization that services people of all religions, and weaves Christian teachings into their formal education program.

Picture a large slum area where lack of employment opportunities has forced people into collecting all kinds of waste products for recycling, and being known as “rag pickers”. Major problems include a lack of public toilets, scarce water supplies, open drains, and garbage thrown all over the place. How does one start to help a community like this? With fierce dedication, and complete faith in God, Reeta and Hari began working in the community in 1993.

Since then, and with the help of Christian organization throughout the world, they have built a school that gives formal education to over 400 children ages 5-18. Part of the tithe from our recent Vision Fund went towards the construction of a new wing for the school. Children who cannot attend school due to child-minding or other domestic help at home are helped in the slum with informal education.

Health awareness is promoted through both a health clinic and the training of community health workers to work with people in their homes. Women’s empowerment activities include literacy programs, skill training classes, and self help groups. SNEHA also works with the government and the community to improve their living conditions.

Reeta has been a visitor at our church on two occasions, and we are always honored to have such a dedicated Christian in our midst, as well as being inspired by her message of hope for people in need. A recent flood at the school caused major damage, but with the help and prayers of churches around the world they continue to do God’s work among the lower cast in India. Through our Mission Committee, we provide financial support to SNEHA each year and consider them an important international partner.

## Session Digest

At its January 25 meeting, the Session:

- Shared joys and concerns.
- Reviewed the Officers' Retreat held on Saturday, January 16 at Camp Innabah. Elders volunteered to serve on a Parish Nurse study team and a Digital Media "Think Tank" that is being formed. Volunteers from the congregation will also be solicited.
- Received the report from Treasurer Michelle Thompson regarding the 2011 Treasurer's Report which showed that the church was able to meet all mission commitments and capital fund allocations and end the year with a positive balance for 2011 thanks to very generous giving in December. The Session approved the final mission and capital fund allocations.
- Received the wonderful news from Stewardship that resident members of the congregation increased their pledged giving by 6% for 2012.
- Approved the recommendations of the Personnel Committee regarding staff salary and benefit increases. Approved the Personnel Committee's proposed changes to the terms of call of the co-pastors, which is subject to approval by the congregation at the annual meeting on Jan. 29.
- Approved the budget for 2012 which will be presented to the congregation at the congregational meeting.
- Approved moving the February Session meeting to February 22 because of the adult mission trip to Nashville.
- Agreed to prepare, serve, and clean up for the Lenten Supper on Wednesday, March 21, with Patty Picardi agreeing to serve as coordinator.
- Agreed that the congregation will celebrate in September the 50-year anniversary of the move of the church to this site in 1962 and recognize all those who have been members for 50 years or more.
- Ratified the nomination of Patty Picardi to succeed Chad Stacks as chair of the Endowment Committee, the timing of the transition to be worked out by Chad and Patty.
- Approved the expenditure of \$5460 from Capital Improvement funds to pay for the cover up of all exposed HVAC pipes in the kitchen, Fellowship Hall and adjoining stairwells.
- Approved the expenditure for up to \$3800 for a new freezer. The Administrative Committee is currently researching options and can now proceed on the purchase of the best option as deemed by the Committee..
- Received reports from Stewardship, Administrative Committee, Endowment, Fellowship Committee, Spiritual Formation, Nominating, Mission, Hospitality, and Worship Committees, and the Deacons and Clerk of Session.
- Please keep in your prayers:
  - Hospitality: For "Invite a Friend Sunday"
  - Worship: That those unable to attend worship in the winter months will be remembered.
  - Fun and Fellowship: For enthusiastic participation in our new activities.
  - Administrative: Prayers for guidance for ongoing projects.
  - Spiritual Formation: For our Sunday School teacher breakfast, bookmobile, and for the memorial recognition of former teacher Tierra Dobry as it continues to move forward.
  - Endowment: Thanksgiving for Patty stepping forward and for the Acorns of Faith.
  - Nominating: Thanksgiving for those who accepted the call to serve.
  - Mission: For many blessings for those going on the adult mission trip to Nashville.
  - Stewardship: Gratitude for the generous souls who answered God's call.



## Financial Highlights from 2011

Budgeted Giving and Other Receipts in 2011:	\$490,605
Actual Giving and Receipts:	492,186
Budgeted Expenses and Other Disbursements:	490,605
Actual Expenses and Other Disbursements:	489,019
Surplus for 2011:	3,167

### Comment:

We had a very good closing month to the year and were able to fulfill all of our obligations. Thank you, thank you, thank you for your generous response! The 2012 budget will be presented at the congregational meeting.

## Church Family News

Please keep in your prayers the following members who have been ill, injured, or hospitalized lately: **John Davis, Betty Soloway, Matt Sgriccia, Kathleen O'Hara, Marilyn Chapis and Sue Ploppert.** Please also keep in your prayers, **Brad Vogt**, as he returns to Afghanistan.

We send condolences to **Mary Messinger** and family upon the loss of her father.

Thanks to **Tom Babbony** for overseeing the HVAC work in the CE wing and to **Bob Hartman, Jr.** for cleaning out the rooms with the HVAC equipment.

## **Acorns of Faith**



### **Endowment Committee:**

Patty Picardi, chair, Dick Clark, Dave Duncan, Kurt Holloway,, Chad Stacks, Al Wrigley, and Barbara Winter.

Who are the "Acorns of Faith?" Anyone who has indicated that he or she plans to make a gift of any size to First Presbyterian's Endowment Fund. Anyone can join! The "price" of membership is simply loving this church and its God-centered mission, along with a deep concern to provide for generations to come.

Prior to making any gift, you are encouraged to consult with your attorney or tax advisor and your loved ones. Members of the Endowment Committee are also willing to meet with you to answer any questions you might have. Let us hear from you!

\_\_\_ I (we) are happy to participate in "Acorns of Faith" having included First Presbyterian Church of Pottstown in my (our) will, insurance policy, annuity, trust, or by an outright gift.

\_\_\_ I (we) would like to speak to someone to get further information about the Endowment Fund.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Lectionary Readings

### **January 30 to February 5**

Isaiah 40: 21-31, Psalm 147: 1-11, I Cor. 9: 16-23, Mark 1: 29-30

### **February 6 to February 12**

2 Kings 5: 1-14, Psalm 30, I Cor. 9: 24-27, Mark 1: 40-45

### **February 13 to February 19**

2 Kings 2: 1-12, Psalm 30: 1-8, I Cor. 4: 3-6, Mark 9: 2-0

### **February 20 to February 26**

Genesis 9: 8-17, Psalm 25: 1-10, I Peter 3: 18-22, Mark 1: 9-15

### **February 27 to March 4**

Genesis 17: 1-7, Psalm 22: 23-31, Romans 4: 13-25, Mark 8: 31-38

## Soul Feast—News from the Library

Over the last four years I have come to cherish our church library. Not only have I been amazed at the plethora of books available but also at the eclectic array that continues to perk my curiosity. Our library is an untapped resource waiting for people to come in and utilize it's many offerings. I encourage you all to take a look. Here are just a few of my favorite books or books that I have found helpful both in my personal life as well as my professional. Enjoy! Liv

### **Children's books**

*Old Turtle* by Douglas Wood

*Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* by John Stetptoe

*Cherry Blossom Tree: A Grandfathers Thoughts on Dying* by Jan Godfrey

*What to do When a Pet Dies* by Mr. Rogers

*Bible Times Crafts for Kids* by Neva Hickerson

### **Young Adult**

*The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis

*Hinds Feet on High Places* by Hannah Hurnard

*A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle ( My cat was named Meg after the main character)

### **Adult**

The many different biblical commentaries

Many of the bible history books

*The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hussein

*Where the Heart Is* by Bille Letts

*Life of Pi* by Yann Martel

And Don't Forget the DVD's!!! A few of my favorites are, *Invictus*, *The Help*, *Anne of Green Gables*, *Sweet Home Alabama*, *Simon Birch*, *Antwone Fisher*, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, *Independence Day*, *Second Hand Lions*, and *Cocoon*.

# February 2012

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

			1	2	3	4
			M/R 4:30 Evening Prayer 7:15 Committees 7:30 p.m.	Ladies Bible 9:30 Cluster lunch 12:15 Comm. Meal 5 Bells 6:30 Scouts 7 Choir 7:30		
5 Seekers 7 a.m. Sunday School 9:15 Worship 10:30 Rev. Max Cres- well preaching Communion Hoagie Sale	6 Cub Scouts 7	7 Prime Timers Pot Luck Lunch & Movie 12 Noon Lectio 7:30 p.m.	8 M/R 4:30 Deacon's Meeting 7:30 pm.	9 Sisters of the Way 9:15 Meal 5 Bells 6:30 Scouts 7 Choir 7:30	10 Cub Scouts set up for Pine wood Derby 6:30 p.m.	11 8 a.m. Men's Breakfast Cub Scouts Pinewood Derby 7 a.m.
12 Sunday School 9:15 Worship 10:30 Scout Sunday Adult Mission Trip leaves for Nash- ville Confirmation Class 5 pm Jr. Seekers 6:30	13 Cub Scouts 7	14	15 Moms' Time Out 9:30 a.m. M/R 4:30 Session 7:30 p.m.	16 Sisters of the Way 9:15 Ladies Bible 9:30 Meal 5 Bells 6:30 Scouts 7 Choir 7:30	17	18 Adult Mission Trip returns from Nashville 6 p.m. Young Adults Dinner and Movie at Rios
19 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Sr. High Seek- ers Skiing/ Tubing (time TBD)	20 Cub Scouts 7	21 Shawl 7 p.m. Lectio 7:30	22 M/R 4:30 Ash Wednes- day Worship 7:30 p.m. Comp. Friends 7:30 p.m.	23 Sisters of the Way 9:15 Meal 5 Bells 6:30 Scouts 7:30 Choir 7:30	24	25
26 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Confirmation 5 p.m.	27 Cubs 7 p.m.	28 Bible Study 7:30 p.m.	29 M/R 4:30 p.m. Prayer 6:00 Dinner 6:15 Lent School 7:00			

