

The Celtic Cross

February 2014

From the Co-Pastors

Beloved Community,

As you now know if you attended this year's annual meeting, we recently received some unexpected good news: the Community Foundation of Broward County (Florida) has informed us that our congregation has been chosen to receive a grant from the Mary N. Porter Designated Fund of the Foundation. Mary, a lifelong member of this church, had homes in both Pottstown and Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. At her death, most of her estate went to the Foundation, but she indicated to the Foundation a commitment to both this congregation and Pottstown, and so we were chosen to receive this grant, which we did not solicit. We are humbled by the grace — and the responsibility — of this blessing!

Because this is a grant which may or may not be renewed in future years, the Session has deliberated long about how we are called to use this wisely, both for the life of our congregation, and the work of God in the world. The Foundation expects us to demonstrate how we have used the grant to do more than we otherwise are able to do, and so the funds will not be used for regular items in the general budget. Here are the guidelines which the Session has adopted, providing for three general purposes (but no set formula):

- Enhancement of current ministries, which would include any of the following:
 - A. Special one-time programs, concerts, lectures, or other ministry events or expenses over and above the present ministries funded by the General Fund.
 - B. Ongoing ministry that would be supported by the grant with the understanding that the ministry would continue only as long as grant money is available, or
 - C. Seed money for new ministries that are expected to be fully funded in time through pledges to the General Fund, but which need help getting started.
- Capital Improvements to our facilities that would reduce the environmental impact of our facilities and ministries, or increase accessibility or safety for members and visitors, and
- Ministries beyond our congregation that benefit children and families, or strengthen the welfare and quality of life of the Pottstown area.

With the guidelines now established, it is time to dream! How shall we use this money? This will take much prayer and imagination. In coming months, the Session will provide opportunities for people to share their suggestions and ideas. In any case, our prayer is that we may be faithful stewards of any and all of our gifts so that we can continue to be a congregation who “seeks to grow deeper in Christ and reach farther in love.”

—Grace and peace,
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 2 – Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
 Congregational Meeting Follows

February 9 -- Service for the Lord's Day
 Celtic and Cherub Choir sings
 Scout Sunday

February 16 – Service for the Lord's Day

February 26 – Service for the Lord's Day

Coming in March: Lent at First Presbyterian Church

Ash Wednesday Service: March 5, 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. March 12)

Evening Prayer at 6:00, Dinner at 6:15, and Programs at 7:00-8:00. There are two tracks for adults and two offerings for children:

Track One: "You Just Don't Understand" - Carter and Kerry

Why can men and women walk away from the same conversation with two different understandings? How can we better understand each other as spouses, friends, or co-workers? How do we talk about difficult issues with those we love or work with? Join Carter and Kerry for the fun—and hopefully also for the insight!

Track Two: "Christian Perspectives on the Middle East" - Various Speakers

Move beyond the headlines to hear first-hand perspectives from various Christians with ties to the Middle East.

For Children in Grades 2-5 Adventures in Storytelling! Gather together and tell the stories of the Bible in fun and interesting ways. Great stories, great company and a whole lot of fun. Come join us!

The Girl Scouts are providing crafts and other activities for children under 7

Upcoming Events

Blood Drive, Tuesday, February 4, 2014, 3:30-8 p.m.

Every donation can save three lives! Join us on Tuesday, February 4 and give blood. Sign up for an appointment on the bulletin board or by calling Jeannette Feroe or the church office. Appointments will cut down on your waiting time but walk-ins welcome!



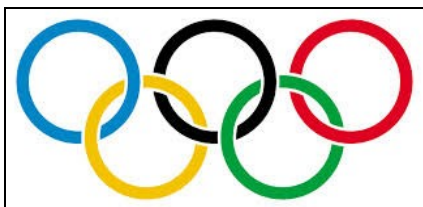
Senior Seekers Stockholder Lunch and Workcamp Video Presentation

Sunday, February 9th, after Worship

Lunch will be served after worship on Sunday, February 9th, 2014. Following lunch, the much anticipated 2013 Workcamp video will be shown. Please RSVP to the church office or sign up on the Seeker Bulletin board by Feb. 3 so we know how many to plan for. Questions? See Jeff or a Senior Seeker advisor.

Winter Walk in the Woods, Sunday, February 16 (leave from church at 1:30 p.m.)

Where: Turtle Trail in French Creek State Park. This is a moderate 3.5 mile walk through the woods with some hills as it meanders through the Hopewell Big Woods. Winter birds and wildlife may be active as this is a lightly used trail. If the weather is not cooperative, we will move our walk to Nolde Forest where the trails see more foot traffic. Please sign up on the hallway bulletin board. Any questions? Please contact Mike Deegs at 484-524-8072/ mdeegs16@aol.com.



Come celebrate the Winter Olympics with your church family on Saturday, February 22, 2014 for our Annual Progressive Dinner!!!

This year our theme is the Olympics. We will all meet at the church for hors d'oeuvres. Then we will split up to have dinner. We will then gather again at the church for desserts and some friendly Olympic competition. We are looking for volunteers to host guests in their homes for dinner. If you have a table that seats at least six people, you qualify as a host home. The host home is asked to provide the main meal! To keep with our Olympic Theme we are asking the host family to serve a meal or dish representing a country in the Olympics. One guest will bring salad and bread to complete the meal. The remaining guests will provide hors d'oeuvres or desserts.

RSVP by February 9th by signing up on the bulletin board or calling the church office (610-326-0620). You will be notified with a phone call when sign-up is received.

Spiritual Formation Opportunities

Adult Education Opportunities

- **Forum Class (Community Room)**

Topic: Test of Faith. Teachers: Carter and others

Are science and Christianity in conflict? Has the Big Bang pushed God out of the universe? Is evolution compatible with religious faith? Are humans no more than biological machines? In the award-winning video discussion series "Test of Faith," we will hear from world-famous physicists, cosmologists, biologists and the like discuss the findings of science and their faith. Join us for this illuminating and interesting discussion!

- **Faith and Relationships Class (Library)**

Topic: To be announced. Teachers: Sharon Trevoy and Rob Wade

- **Men's Sunday Mornings (Pastors' Conference Room).** Teacher: Carter and others

Topic: "The Promised Land"

- **Sacred Space for Women (Mary Ann Yost Room—110)** Teacher: Amy Shutt

Topic: "Feasting on the Word" Join us as we look at each week's lectionary texts.

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, Feb. 11 and 25. Teacher: Carter.

Join Carter to discuss the texts which will be preached upon in the next week's sermon.

- **Praying the Scriptures Group (Lectio Divina):** Tuesday, Feb. 4 and 18 at 7:30 p.m.

Join Kerry and others for a quiet hour of praying the Scriptures.

- **Theology Reading Group:** In February we will be meeting with a representative of the Templeton Foundation to explore ways we might widen the conversation on science and faith in our congregation and community. If you are interested in being part of this meeting, contact Carter. We next meet to discuss a reading when we meet on April 30 to discuss the book, The Evolution of Adam by Peter Enns.

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 2014-15 school year. If you are interested, or have questions, contact the director Michelle Yammatani, at 610-326-3690.

HENS Playground Fundraiser: Bingo Night, Friday, Feb. 21

Doors open at 6:30. Bingo begins at 7:00. There are wonderful door prizes (Keurig Vue, American Girl doll, numerous gift cards). All proceeds go to refurbish the playground.

Music and Recreation for Children

Music and Rec has been a wonderful time as Pastor Jeff and the kids are learning new games from each other. The games have been great, the group is having a good time and the singing is always exciting. Music and Rec meets from 4:30 to 5:45 every Wednesday Eve.



Confirmation

Sunday, February 9: When Jesus is Lord of My Relationships: Part I at 5 p.m.

Sunday, February 23: When Jesus is Lord of My Relationships: Part 2 at 5 p.m.

Junior Seekers, Grades 6-8

Sunday, February 9 (6:00—8:00 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, Sandro and Rosie Roseo, Maggie Kanter, Jake Erickson, Tunde Olidapo

Senior Seekers, Grades 9-12

Saturday, February 8 (2:00—4:00PM)—Work Camp Video Lunch Prep! Help set up the Workcamp video lunch. We'll do preparation for the food, and help get the tables set up to get everything running!

Sunday, February 9 (After Worship)— Work Camp Video! Join the Stockholders as we premier the Workcamp video in Fellowship Hall. We'll have some food and get psyched up for Workcamp this Summer!

Advisors: Kim and Phil Wheelles, Donna and Gary Rhoadarmer, Gwen and Tim Allen and Don and Melinda Kisela

Junior and Senior Seekers, Grades 6—12

Sunday, February 2 (5:00—8:30 PM)- SuperBowl Party! Junior and Senior Seekers join together to watch the first half of the superbowl! Hoagies from the hoagie sale will be eaten beforehand, and the Puppy Bowl will be shown before kickoff!

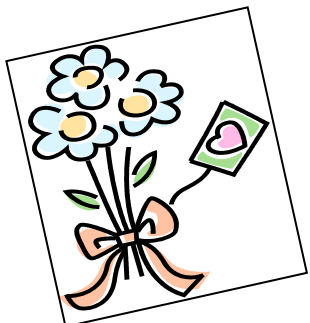
Sunday, February 23 (6:00—8:00 PM)- Olympic Games Junior and Senior Seekers will get together and compete with and against one another in Olympic style games!



Fellowship Opportunities

Progressive Dinner, Saturday, February 22

See p. 3 for all of the details.



Hold the Date: Sunday, May 4

All Daughter's Event (an fellowship for all of the females in the church of all ages). More details to come!

Faith and Nature Group

Winter Walk, Sunday, February 16—see p. 3 for all of the details.

Prime Timers

Tuesday, February 5, 2014 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. Following lunch we will play some class TV game shows—with some special guests! Sign up on the bulletin board.

Sunday, March 9, Potluck Dinner and Hymn Sing

Wednesday, May 21, Trip to Sight and Sound to see "Moses"

After the show, we will have dinner at a Lancaster area restaurant. Block seats have already been purchased but you can get your own seats and join us for the trip and dinner. 11:00 a.m. show.

In June—"The Music Man" at Steel River Playhouse here in Pottstown. Watch for more information and date.

Men's Breakfast—Saturday, February 8, 8–9 a.m.

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

Faithful Friends (formerly Young Adults) Upcoming Events

"Faithful Friends" is the new name for the group formerly known as "Young Adults." It is for adults, single and married, without or with children. We plan to alternate meetings "with children" - although you don't have to bring one to come! - and with just adults. We will see if it develops into one group, two separate groups or somewhere in between. Each time there will be time for fellowship and discussion.

Saturday, February 8, 6 p.m. Faithful Friends with Children

For direction, or to find what to bring, or any other question, contact Carter, Kerry, or Jeff.

Saturday, March 31, 6 p.m. Faithful Friends at Carter and Kerry's house



Highlighting opportunities
to serve and ways that your
financial contributions help
others

Adult Mission Trip to the Jersey Coast, March 30 to April 5, 2014

Once again this year, we are sending an adult crew to help areas still recovering from Hurricane Sandy, more than a year later. We will be traveling to Morningstar Presbyterian Church in Bayville, New Jersey. Our mission dollars will help to support this trip as volunteers help financially qualifying homeowners repair and rebuild. If you have questions or are interested, contact Tom Zeigler or Carter or Kerry so that you can be added to the email list.

**A short informational meeting will be held Sunday,
February 9 right after worship.**

Invite a Friend Sunday, March 9

It's that time of year again when we dedicate one Sunday of the year as "Invite a Friend Sunday." Now in reality, every Sunday is "Invite a Friend Sunday," but we make a big deal of it just once a year and even serve cake in Fellowship Hall following worship—you know that if cake is served, it is a special Sunday! Why do we do this? Well, for a number of reasons:

- We want to offer our church as a church home to anyone who doesn't have one.
- We have many wonderful educational events for all ages.
- We have a terrific music program.
- We are a very active four generation church.

By far, most of those interested in finding a new church home come to us because they've heard great things about our church from others. Your comments about our church causes a person to think: "I've heard good things about First Presbyterian—I'll attend a service and check it out." Your personal invitation is the clincher! And once they're inside, God takes over, through the actions of all of us, and they see a welcoming church with active members and a place where they can grow closer to God.

—The Hospitality Committee

(written invitations will be available in the church lobby closer to March 9)

Recycling at First Presbyterian Church

Paper Retriever Recycling – Manor Care has generously allowed us to place the green/yellow container across the street from the church. The company accepts all kinds of paper, including newspapers and excess mail. We make \$5.00/ton, with half going to Manor Care.

Aluminum Cans – There are two bins for the collection of these cans, one in the main hallway and the other in Fellowship Hall. **All** proceeds from these cans go to Habitat for Humanity

Ink cartridges, Cell Phones, Batteries – Bins for these items are located in the cloak room and in Fellowship Hall.

Session Digest

At its January 29 meeting, the Session:

- Shared joys and concerns.
- Elected Rob Wade to serve as Clerk of Session and Michelle Thompson to serve as Treasurer for the congregation.
- Received the report from Treasurer Michelle Thompson regarding the 2013 Treasurer's Report. 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 2014. Alleluia!
- Approved the 2014 budget which includes the recommendations of the Personnel Committee regarding staff salary and benefit increases. Agreed to adopt a "deficit" budget for 2014 with the surplus from the 2013 year to be used as needed to cover that deficit. The terms of call of the pastors must also be approved by the congregation at the annual meeting on February 2. The budget will be presented to the congregation at the annual meeting.
- Discussed how to share the news of the Broward Foundation Grant with the congregation and how to solicit suggestions and input from the congregation on use of the money.
- Approved money from the capital improvement fund to replace four computers which are using soon to be outdated operating systems.
- Reviewed the Officers' Retreat held on Saturday, January 11 at Camp Innabah.
- Approved use of approximately \$1800 from the Broward Foundation Grant to purchase a defibrillator for the congregation.
- Agreed to prepare, serve, and clean up for the Lenten Supper on Wednesday, April 2, 2014, with Dave Duncan agreeing to serve as coordinator.
- Agreed that there will be no coffee hour between the second and third services on Easter so that turnover between the services and parking will be smoother.
- Received reports from Stewardship, Administrative Committee, 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: For our Easter services and for volunteers who will help to prepare the Easter breakfast.
 - Fun and Fellowship: That we might continue to have activities that draw church members together .
 - Administrative: Thanksgiving for all of those who did the hard work of putting another budget together.
 - Spiritual Formation: Thanksgiving for our volunteer teachers and for their impact on our children and youth.
 - Nominating: Thanksgiving for those who accepted the call to serve.
 - Mission: For discernment in making decisions regarding the 2014 mission budget.
 - Stewardship: Thanksgiving for the generous response of the congregation in making their statements of intention for 2014.

Financial Highlights from 2013

Budgeted Giving and Other Receipts in 2013:	\$539,176
Actual Giving and Receipts:	539,785
Budgeted Expenses and Other Disbursements:	539,176
Actual Expenses and Other Disbursements:	510,993
Surplus for 2013:	\$28,792

Comment:

While we ended up with a very favorable balance for the year, the budget figures are a bit misleading. Our surplus is largely due to the fact that the Associate Pastor position was not filled as early as budgeted. The complete 2013 report and the 2014 budget will be presented at the congregational meeting on February 2. Copies of the reports are also available to anyone interested.

Counters' Corner

Head Counter in February: Dave Duncan

Other Counters: Bill Wilson, Liz and John Genter.

Thank you counters—and counter coordinator, Hank Phillips and Financial. Sec., Don Trevoy!

Church Family News

Please keep in your prayers the following members who have been ill, injured, or hospitalized lately: Trystian Hernandez, Avery Rose-Craver, Brenda Hatfield, Dick Clark, Jean Hollenbach, Flossie Schumacher, and Jim Bathurst.

We sent our condolences to Polly Gower upon Ron's recent passing. Also, conodolences were sent to Don Kisela and Rob Drago upon the recent passing of their mothers.

Music Notes

As this long, cold winter continues, the choirs will warm your hearts with their beautiful anthems. The Chancel Choir will open the month with the stunning, "He Watching Over Israel," from "Elijah" by Mendelssohn. On February 9th, we will sing "The Perfect Wisdom of Our God" by Keith Getty. The following Sunday will showcase the powerful "How Great His Love," by Ruth E Schram. On the last Sunday in the month we will sing "Follow Me," by the talented Lee Dengler. The Handbell Choir will play a delightful version of "Every Time I Feel The Spirit", on Feb 16th.

If you would like to sing with our amazing choir, we practice on Thursday evenings from 7:30 – 9:00 P.M. in the choir room (which is on the stage). If you are interested in subbing for the bell choir, you can contact me through email, by phone, or see me at church. Also if you play an instrument and would like to play sometime, please let me know. We are always looking for new talent. Don't forget to thank a church musician when you see them. They spend hours each week practicing so your Sunday music is memorable.

—Diane Land, Music Director

Crafdy1954@comcast.net 610-327-1566

Lectionary Readings

January 26 to Feb. 2

Micah 6: 1-8, Psalm 15, I Cor. 1: 18-31, Matt. 5: 1-12

February 3 to 9:

Isaiah 58: 1-9, Psalm 142: 1-9, I Cor. 2: 1-12, Matt. 5: 13-20

February 10 to 16

Deut. 30 : 15-20, Psalm 119: 1-8, I Cor. 3: 1-9, Matt. 5: 21-37

February 17 to 23

Lev. 9: 1-2, Psalm 119: 33-40, I Cor. 3: 10-11, Matt, 5: 38-48

February 24 to March 2

Exodus 24: 12-18, Psalm 99, II Peter: 1: 16– 21, Matt. 17: 1-9

Kitchen Korner—What is Foodborne Illness?

Foodborne illness is a disease carried or transmitted to people by food. There are numerous ways that food can become unsafe: poor personal hygiene, purchasing or receiving food that is already contaminated, using unclean/contaminated equipment, failing to cook food adequately to the proper temperature, or holding food at improper temperatures.

Anyone can get a foodborne illness but there are various groups who are most susceptible: infants and pre-school children who have not built up adequate immune systems, pregnant women, seniors whose immune systems have weakened with age, people on certain medications such as antibiotics, and people who are already ill.

An outbreak incident occurs when 2 or more people experience the same illness after eating the same food. What this means is that if 2 individuals seek treatment at a doctor or emergency facility, it is their responsibility to report the possibility of a foodborne illness outbreak to the local health department if they are at all suspicious that what the people ate could be the reason for their illness. It is important that those using our church kitchen remember that we do serve many of the most susceptible populations. A perfect example is the guests who attend Community Meals on a Thursday night. Often their health is not the best and they have weakened immune systems. What you or I can eat with no problem is not the same case for those in more vulnerable populations. So please take every precaution when cooking for others in our kitchen. Thanks!

—Marcia Zeigler, Kitchen Coordinator

February 2014

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

						1
2 Sunday School 9:15 Worship 10:30 Communion Congregational Meeting Souper Bowl Hoagie Distrib	3 Cub Scouts 7 HENS Board Mtg. 7:30	4 Bloodmobile 3:30 p.m. Lectio 7:30 p.m.	5 Endowment Mtg. 8:30 am PT Lunch & Game Show Fun 11:30 A.M. M/R 4:30 p.m. Relay Mtg. 5:45 Prayer 7::15 Committees 7:30	6 Sisters of the Way 9:15 Meal 5 Bells 6:30 Choir 7:30	7	8 Men's Breakfast 8 a.m. Cub Scouts Workshop 9-12 Sr. Seekers 2 pm 6 p.m. Faithful Friends w. chil- dren
9 Sunday School 9:15 Worship 10:30 Scout Sunday Adult Mission Trip Mtg 11:30 Stockholders Lunch 11:45 a.m. Sr. Seekers BS after lunch Confirmation Class 5 pm Jr. Seekers 6:00 p.m.	10 Cub Scouts 7	11 Next Week's Sermon 7:30	12 M/R 4:30 Deacon's Mtg. 7:30 p.m.	13 Sisters of the Way 9:15 Meal 5 Bells 6:30 Choir 7:30	14	15
16 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Winter Walk in the Woods 1:30 p.m.	17 Cub Scouts 7	18 Shawl 7 p.m. Lectio 7:30	19 M/R 4::30 Session Meet- ing 7:30 p.m.	20 Sisters of the Way 9:15 Meal 5 Bells 6:30 Scouts 7:30 Choir 7:30	21 HENS Bingo Fundraiser 6:30 p.m./	22 Progressive Dinner 5:30 p.m.
23 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship 11:30 a.m. Back- yard Blessings meeting. Confirmation 5 p.m. Sr. & Jr. Seekers	24 Cubs 7 p.m.	25 Next Week's Sermon 7:30 p.m.	26 M/R 4:30 p.m. 7:30 Comp. Friends	27 Sisters of the Way 9:15 Meal 5 Bells 6:30 Choir 7:30	28 6:30 p.m. set up for Pine- wood Derby	

