

The First Presbyterian Church of Lewisburg

18 Market Street, Lewisburg, PA 17837

www.first-presby.org T: 570-524-4419

Sunday Worship: Sunday School – 9:00 a.m. (Virtual Only)

Worship Service - 10:30 a.m. (In-person or Livestream)

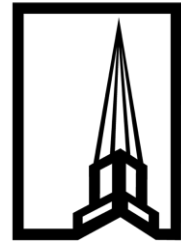
On Wednesday, February 17th, we begin a season called Lent. During Lent, we prepare for the great celebration of Easter Sunday, which dawns this year on April 4th. (By the way - ever wonder why the date of Easter shifts from year to year? It's because in 325 A.D., at the First Council of Nicaea, the Church decided that Easter would be the first Sunday following the first full moon following March 21st. And 1,696 years later, we're still following in their footsteps!)

It was during Lent a year ago that we entered into a season of waiting the likes of which none of us had experienced before; life in the pandemic caused by the novel coronavirus. As we approach a full year of these restrictions and precautions, mask-wearing and event cancellations, social-distancing and Zoom-fatigue – I'm beginning to feel like it will never end!

But even as the weeks drag on, I'm still excited for what life will be like when it's over – being able to shake hands and hug, to cheer with the crowd at games, to relax and talk with family and friends without worrying about getting too close. When the pandemic ends, a joyful freedom will return; freedom to gather, freedom to sing, freedom to celebrate and enjoy each other's company to a degree that we cannot safely do right now.

This year, I find that pandemic life has given me a greater appreciation for these weeks of waiting for Easter. Lent reminds us how, just like a virus, our sin and soul-brokenness limits our freedom. Sin restricts my relationships with others, how fully I can enjoy and celebrate the blessing of their company. Sin limits my relationship with God, it muffles and masks my fellowship with our Heavenly Father.

The good news is that Easter is coming, Jesus' triumph over death and over sin. His promise that through faith in Him, and



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

LEWISBURG, PA

Upcoming Events

Thursday, Feb. 4

5:30 p.m. Dinner By the River

Sunday, Feb. 7

10:30 a.m. Holy Communion

Sunday, Feb. 14

10:30 a.m. Installation &
Ordination of Church
Officers



Wednesday, Feb. 17

Ash Wednesday

February Meetings

Tuesday, Feb. 16

7:00 p.m. Zoom Session Meeting

February Ushers

Peg Bouton

Dave Shrom

April Shrom

Anyone interested in ushering can sign up on the board in the narthex or notify the office.

by His grace, that victory is mine as well. Our Easter celebration foreshadows and anticipates the great Resurrection Day, when He will return with all God's glory, and we will enter fully into his eternal kingdom.

There is an end to the darkness. There is an end to the trouble. There is an end to death and sorrow and tears. And it started that very first Easter morning, when Jesus walked out of his tomb. And the memory of that now, and the hope it inspires, is enough to carry us through the troubles of today.

The release we long for is deeper than a desire to put away the masks and restrictions of a pandemic. Our heart's real longing is for the freedom of release from the weight and curse of sin. That is the real joy of Easter. As we wait for it, let us keep our eyes and minds focused on God's greatest cure, the gift of Jesus Christ, and the love that saves us, restores us, and preserves us.

For His glory and praise, now and forever. Come, Lord Jesus, come!

Pastor Ryan

February Birthdays & Anniversaries

February Birthdays

- 6 Wanda Einsig, Amber Lind
- 8 Larry Fletcher, Kassie McTammany
- 10 Glenn Dobbs
- 13 Delaney McSween
- 16 Karen Black
- 17 Rob Guissanie
- 18 Samantha Stancavage
- 20 Justin Sabo, Dave Shrom
- 22 Bill Black
- 23 Marcia Thomas
- 25 Janine Fisher
- 26 Bob Gronlund
- 27 Marian Fletcher

February Anniversaries

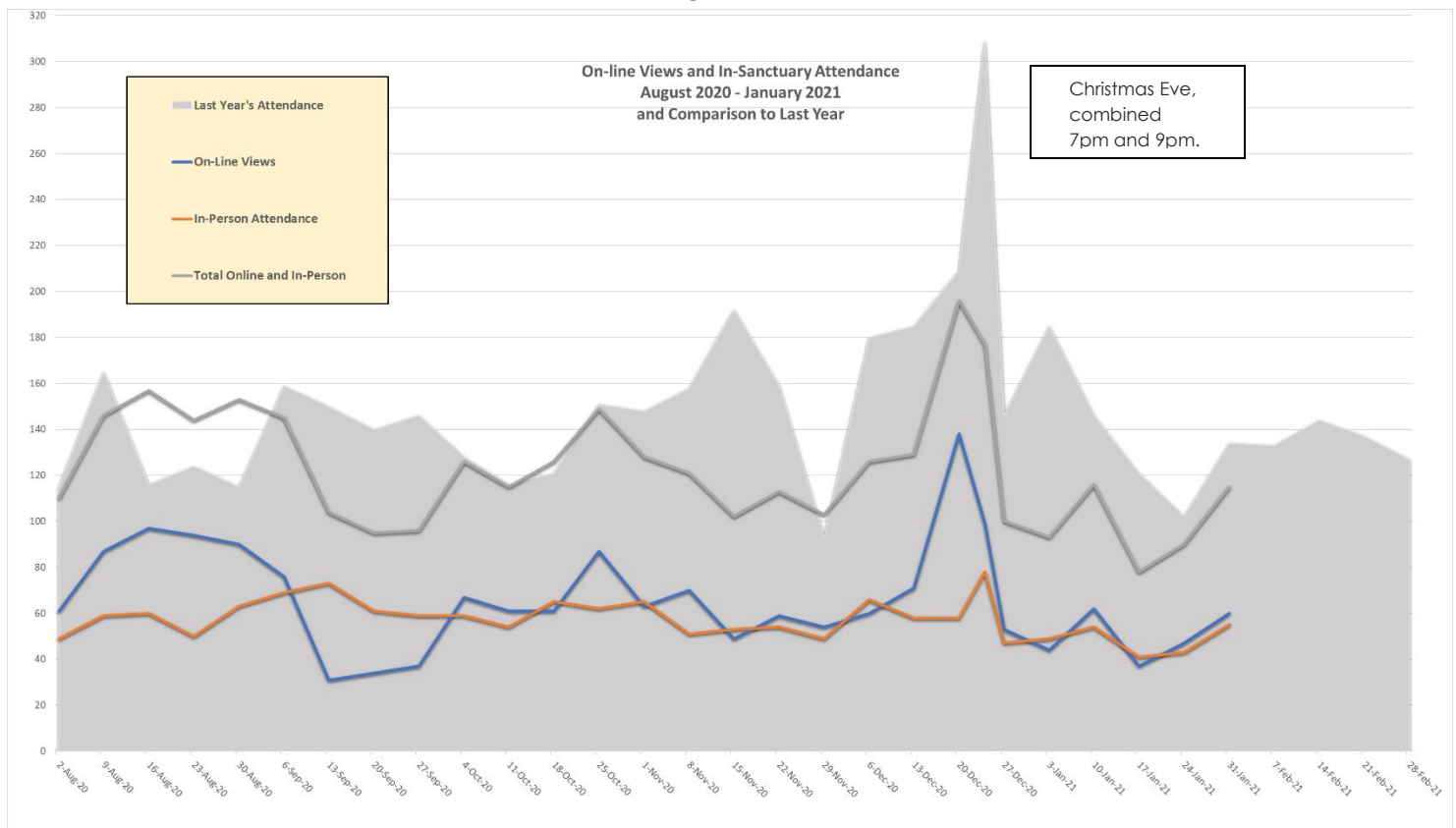
- 2 Roger & Nancy Curran
- 4 Gene & Bea Heid
- 13 John & Amy Tirpak
- 16 John & Bonnie Troxell



“So, how is the church?” Without the usual programs and events that offer us time to talk and fellowship, many members have asked me how our church is doing.

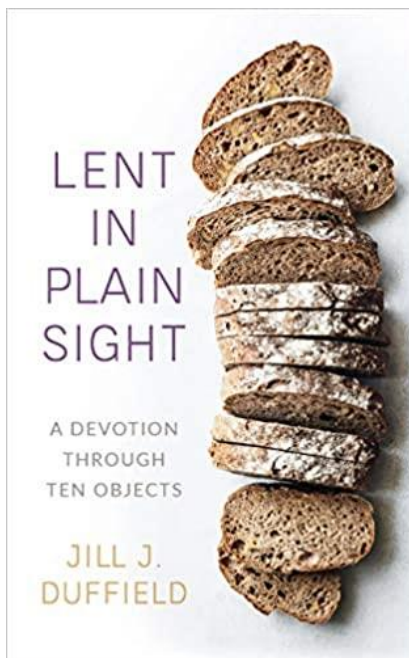
I have found that this pandemic makes it difficult to keep up with everyone – more often now, it is only through second or third-hand conversations, sometimes weeks after the fact, that I learn about members falling ill, or going into the hospital, or even suffering a death in their family. More than ever, I would ask that you please share with me directly any concerns you have, or that you know are affecting our church family or members of our community. The best way to reach me is to call my cell – 570-903-0600. You can also use my church email – pastor@first-presby.org

For those who like charts and data, below is a chart of our Sunday worship service attendance over the past six months. The blue line shows the number watching our YouTube livestream and additional views through the week. The orange line is the attendance in the sanctuary. The grey line is the sum of the those two. The lighter gray background area is our attendance from the same Sunday a year ago.



Our financial giving and stewardship has remained strong. We finished 2020 without having to make any cuts either to staff or to the support we give to our missionaries. For 2021, the Session has planned for our activities and events to return to normal over the summer and going into next fall. Letting our Stewardship and Finance Committee know what you expect to give over the course of the year is very helpful in their planning. Also, using the offering envelopes makes counting easier and faster for those who record and process the Sunday offering. Please let the office know if you'd like your box, and we'll gladly get it to you!

Recommended for Lent –



For anyone looking for a good Lenten devotional, let me point you toward [Lent in Plain Sight: A Devotion Through Ten Objects](#), by Jill J. Duffield. Published in 2020 by Westminster John Knox Press. Reflecting on such common objects as dust, bread, coins, shoes, and towels, this book offers a verse of scripture, a reflection, thoughtful questions, and a prayer, for each day of the six weeks of Lent.

(Of course, if you order through Amazon, please remember to use smile.amazon, and chose “First Presbyterian Church, Lewisburg” so that our youth ministries receive .5% of each purchase.)

This book is available in both paperback and Kindle editions.



Sharing Our Concerns for Prayer

More than ever, we need to encourage and lift each other up to God in prayer. If you would like to be included on a regular “prayer chain”, please send your email address to Alison at info@first-presby.org

Every week, Pastor Ryan will email a list of the concerns, needs, and joys that we can pray for.


Church Building Access and Church Office Hours

Because of an increasing incidence of people from outside of the congregation wandering into the church during the day and evening hours, we are making changes to our building security policy. The Session approved keeping all exterior doors locked unless there are two or more staff members in the building. We are making these changes to ensure that both our staff and any members coming into the building, feel safe doing so.

If you need to pick-up or drop something off or have a project at the church, please call the church office at (570) 524-4419, or email Alison at info@first-presby.org. You are welcome to call Pastor Ryan at (570) 903-0600, or Matt Rishell, Director of Youth Ministry, at (717) 515-4057. We will work with you to get what you need!

Currently, the church office is open on Wednesdays, from 9am-2pm. At other times, we ask that you please contact our staff to make sure someone is there to unlock the door for you.

Registration is open for the 2021 Winter Leadership Conference – Equipping the Saints. It will be held via zoom this year on Feb 20, 2021. Registration is at 8:30 am. The deadline to register is Feb 12, 2021. Registration forms are available in the office or can be emailed to you upon request.

REGISTRATION FORM FOR NORTHUMBERLAND PRESBYTERY EQUIPPING THE SAINTS 2021			
NORTHUMBERLAND PRESBYTERY PO BOX 334 430 BROAD STREET MONTOURSVILLE, PA 17754		EMAIL: PRESBYNORTH@COMCAST.NET WEB: www.northumberlandpresbytery.org 570-368-3906 OFFICE PHONE 570-368-3907 FAX	
1. NAME Address _____ City, _____ state, _____ Zip _____		Contact Information Preferred Phone Number: Email:	
2. NAME OF CHURCH YOU ATTEND OR PASTOR 3. Address of the Church		There are no registration fees.	
4. Are you requesting Continuing Education Units for this class (.3 CREDITS) 10 HOURS OF CLASS <input type="checkbox"/> Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> No		PLEASE MARK THE APPROPRIATE BOXES <input type="radio"/> Teaching Elder (Clergy) <input type="radio"/> Ruling Elder <input type="radio"/> Commissioned/Certified Ruling Elder <input type="radio"/> Deacon <input type="radio"/> Lay Person	

2021 Winter Leadership Conference Northumberland Presbytery Equipping the Saints: Helping Church Leaders Lead

Saturday, February 20, 2021

On ZOOM

Details for joining the event will be sent to those registered the week after February 15.

Our objective is to educate, equip and inspire God's people for Christian Service.

All members of our presbytery are welcome to attend.

Please encourage your congregation's participation by circulating this registration form.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

8:30 AM	Registration and Orientation
9:00-9:15 AM	Opening
9:15-11:45 AM	Class time with a 10-minute Break
11:45-12:00 noon	Closing

Workshop Offerings and Presenters (choose one):

<input type="checkbox"/>	Officer Training Presenter: Steve Cureton, Executive Presbyter If you are a new Elder or Deacon or would just like a refresher course, this class is for you. Come and hear what it means to be an officer of the PC (USA), and rediscover our Book of Order, history, Reformed theology, and the connectional nature of the PC (USA).
<input type="checkbox"/>	How Are You Hoping? Presenter: Doug Orbaker, Chair, Committee on Service, and Organizer of SINDR (Susquehanna Interfaith Network for Disaster Response) In light of the difficulties of being the church during the stresses of the pandemic and political season, how has your church maintained a spirit of optimism and hope? How has your congregation continued its mission and ministry? This will be a time of sharing and brainstorming, recognizing that some restrictions for our life together may continue for a while longer.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Praying the Scriptures: contemplative tools for personal and congregational prayer Presenter: Jill Young, Protestant Campus Minister, Bloomsburg University Not only is Bible study vital to our discipleship, but so is prayerful listening to God's Word through the Holy Spirit. Learn about prayer practices including lectio divina, imaginative contemplation of Bible stories, and intercession centered in a Scripture passage. We will consider how these practices can be tools for individual, small group, or congregational prayer and can help us open up space in our lives to hear God afresh.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tactics for Teens Presenter: Christina Frank, elder, Great Island Presbyterian Church, Lock Haven How can we keep teens involved? What works? What doesn't? Participants will explore ideas presented by youth leaders and have an opportunity, via a round table discussion, to share what works (or doesn't) to motivate our youth.



First Presby Kids News FEBRUARY 2021

You came near when I called out to you. You said, 'Do not be afraid.'
Lamentations 3:57 (NIV)

Virtual Sunday School! Every Sunday at 9 am, our kindergarten through 5th grade students gather together online for a 30-minute lesson led by our rotating team of Sunday School teachers.



Jesus is one amazing man! King of kings. Son of man. Emmanuel. Savior of the world. Join us this month as we look at the miracles of Jesus and discover what it's like to have the power of Jesus in our life.

"I can do all this through him who gives me strength." Philippians 4:13 (NIV)

Nursery is open! The nursery is now open during Sunday morning worship services. It is available for children ages 3 and under, accompanied by 1 adult. No nursery volunteers are assigned at this time. Please continue to follow our safety precautions including sanitizing hands before play and wearing masks during play.

Looking ahead to Easter! The wind may be blustery and the temperatures below freezing, but warmer weather and brighter seasons are coming! We are currently working on a plan for Easter. It may be an egg-hunt at church, or one you can do at home. Details will be coming!

It's never too early to plan for VBS! Mark your calendars for a bodacious week of fun! **August 2-6** we're taking a totally tubular trip through the early church. During BOLT: Totally 80's, kids will hear stories from the Book of Acts and learn how God's Spirit worked in and through the early believers. Moreover, they'll discover they too have been empowered to take the good news of Jesus to the ends of the Earth.

Details about location and time will be coming as we continue to monitor the local impact of Covid-19.



Follow us on Facebook @ FirstPresbyLewisburgPA

Corey Jusko

Director of Children's Ministry

firstpresbykids@gmail.com

February Youth Newsletter

We hope that this newsletter finds you all well and having had a great and safe Holiday season with your loved ones.

Like many, we're anxious to get back to normal – playing games, being loud, worshipping together, eating way too many pancakes with our friends before school, and seeing other people face-to-face. However, the safety of our students will always be our top priority. With numbers still so high for Union County especially, despite the school's decision to return to in-person instruction, we have decided to continue online-only Youth Group.

We understand that it's not ideal, but we hope that as the holiday spike in Covid cases runs its course and the vaccine continues to be distributed we can return as soon as possible.

In addition to weekly Zoom messages and discussion, the high school students are continuing to read "Blue Like Jazz" by Donald Miller for this year's small group book study.

We've also been very encouraged to see the work that is being done at the Love Does School in Afghanistan thanks in part to the generosity of our youth! Despite instability in the region and, of course, Covid-19 complications, they were able to finish the construction of their new school!

Please continue praying for our summer mission trip! We already have 25 of 28 spots filled for Wilmington, DE from July 11th – 17th. If you/your student would like more information or to join us as a worker or chaperone, please reach out to Matt Rishell at firstpresbyyouth@first-presby.org

Who thought last March when this all began we'd be here almost a year later still trying to work through Covid? It's not what anyone expected and it's difficult for us all – our students included. Please continue to pray for our program, that it bounces back better than ever when we can meet regularly again, and for the students themselves – for their safety, their health both mental and physical, and of course for the continued development of their faith.

Thank you!

Matthew Rishell – Director of Youth Ministry

Would you like to be included in our weekly Youth Newsletter to stay up to date on all of our latest events and updates? Contact Matt at firstpresbyyouth@first-presby.org



It's (Still) Happenin' at the Himmelreich!

Though the Himmelreich Library is not yet open for general browsing, you can still benefit from its wonderful collection of Christian books and resources.

From the Library website – www.thehimmelreich.com – click on “Access our Collection” and you can virtually search the catalogue. The Library staff and volunteers do provide curbside pick-up and exchange of library volumes. Current hours are posted on the website.

2021 Offering Envelopes are available in the narthex. If you have not been assigned envelopes in the past, but wish to use them, please contact the office or use the sign-up sheet located with the envelopes. If you would like to continue using envelopes but are worshipping from home at this time, please notify the office and we will deliver them to you.



The Flower Chart for 2021 is available in the narthex at the bottom of the stairs. Please sign up for your desired date and notify the office of your dedication at info@first-presby.org or 570-524-4419. The cost to sponsor flowers is \$40.

The Eastern Union County Supplemental Food Program is looking for teen and adult volunteers to carry groceries at our Food Pantry distributions, from 1:15-3:30, on the first and third Friday of every month. We are located at the First Baptist Church at 51 South 3rd Street in Lewisburg. Masks are required, and social distancing practices are in place. If you can carry a bag of groceries up a flight of steps, please volunteer at an upcoming distribution on February 5 and 19 and March 5 and 19. Questions? Call Cindy at 570-523-6898.

