

INTERPRETATION

Sewickley Presbyterian Church Newsletter | May/June 2018



For behold,
the winter is past;
the rain is over and gone.
The flowers appear
on the earth,
the time of singing
has come,
and the voice of the
turtledove
is heard in our land.
The fig tree ripens its figs,
and the vines
are in blossom;
they give forth fragrance...

Song of Solomon 2:11-13a



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May 29 begins: 9 AM - 4 PM

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NEWSLETTER

The SPC newsletter, **Interpretation**, is published six times a year. Please make submissions to, or if you have any questions contact, Jennifer Johnson at jjohnson@sewickleypresby.org.

VISITATION

If you or a member of your family are in the hospital and would like a visit, please call the church office to let us know.

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We aspire to be a CHURCH where the GOSPEL of Jesus Christ is
FAITHFULLY PROCLAIMED and FAITHFULLY LIVED
in grateful response to God's love.



PEACE BE WITH YOU

I think it is interesting that when the resurrected Jesus first appeared to all the disciples as they were huddling together in fear behind closed doors, the first thing he said to them was, "Peace be with you" (John 20:19). Why peace? I think maybe I would have preferred something a little more useful, like maybe great success in life or knowledge of the universe or the ability to predict the stock market or assurance of a long, healthy life. But peace? Now to be sure, we could certainly use a little more peace around the world, with all the violence we see on the news every day. Heck, we could even use a lot more peace in the church, with all the infighting and separation. Never mind Washington, D.C. But surely Jesus died and rose from the dead to do more than simply satisfy Rodney King's request, "Can't we all just get along?"

So what is this peace that Jesus offers us? Certainly, it's not peace as the world understands it: "As long as I have everything I want, as long as I am happy, I will leave you alone. You can do your thing, and I will do mine. We'll live in 'peace'." That's not the kind of peace Jesus came to give us. As he told his disciples just a few days earlier, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives" (John 14:27). That's because the peace that Jesus brings is based on something much more than just a temporary level of satisfaction resulting from having all my needs and desires fulfilled. It's a peace that was bought with his own life, a peace that says Jesus knows exactly who you are, behind all of your masks and deceptions, and he knows everything you've done. And he loves you. And he has prepared a place in eternity for you. And not even death itself can stand in his way of coming to find you, not so that you might leave one other alone in "peace," but that you might take the good news of his gracious love into your homes and your schools and your offices and around the world, so that everyone might come out from behind whatever doors they are hiding and experience the peace of Christ.

Of course, the only way we can share the peace of Christ with others is if we have experienced it ourselves. Again, that is why worship, reading the Bible, daily devotions and prayer are so important. They are the means by which the Holy Spirit infuses us with that "peace of God which surpasses all understanding" (Phil 4:7). It is the same peace that gave Jesus the courage to go obediently to the cross for our sakes. And if the resurrection teaches us anything, it is that God is faithful and trustworthy and more powerful than anything we will ever face in this life. And there is nothing else in all of creation that has the power to fill us with the peace of Christ like knowing that we are known, loved, forgiven, and held in the hands of the God who created us, not just today, but for all eternity. After all, Jesus Christ is risen indeed! And because he lives, we know that we shall live also (John 14:19).

In Christ,
Kevin



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DOLLAR & SENSE: Did you know?

By Laura Mikush, Business Administrator

An electrical projection screen has now been installed in Ansby Hall. This screen was part of the Faith House project that was not needed, so thanks to Hammer & Nails it is now being used in Ansby Hall.

FRIENDSHIP PRESCHOOL

By Jenny Hay, Director of FriendShip Preschool

The FriendShip Preschool has been busy celebrating the joys of beautiful spring and extra outside playtime as the school year winds down. *Gentleness* was our May Fruit of the Spirit which we incorporated with God's creation of our earth and how we must take care of it. The PreK classes were on Litter Bug Patrol as they walked around our church neighborhood picking up strewn litter. FriendShip actively teaches recycling of products in all their classrooms. Taking care of God's creation with *Gentleness* shows care and thoughtfulness. The PreK classrooms were fascinated watching the metamorphosis from caterpillars into butterflies. On a recent beautiful morning the children released their butterflies, watching them fly off.

The PreK classes performed the Billy Goats Gruff and Caps for Sale as their end of the year shows May 22 and 23. They also danced to a lively hip hop song they learned under the direction of Heather Taylor-Martin, their weekly Music Movement teacher. The 25 PreK children will be attending the Quaker Valley, Sewickley Academy, Cornell, Falk School, Hopewell, Moon, North Allegheny, kindergartens in the fall. Following the last day of school on May 25, the Children's Corner room will remain open holding Summer Drop-Off Days, May 30-June 8, Monday through Friday. It is always amazing to watch the growth process of our children from 22 months to 5 years of age and the FriendShip teachers feels so blessed to be a part of this wonderful developmental period.

At the end of May, a long chapter within the FriendShip Preschool is coming to a close with the retirement of Terry Doughty (Head Children's Corner teacher), Pat Lear (Head PreK teacher) and Heather Taylor-Martin (Music Movement and FriendShip I Assistant). Terry Doughty began teaching in Children's Corner in 1993 and Pat Lear in 1994. Heather joined FriendShip in 2012. Terry and Pat are ready to spend more time with families and pursue other adventures. In the near future, the Doughty family plans to move to South Carolina. Heather Taylor-Martin will be instructing fitness classes at Robert Morris University. FriendShip has been extremely blessed with their outstanding teaching capabilities and love of children for so many years. They will forever remain in the hearts of so many FriendShip families. "Be joyful always, pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." 1Thessalonians 5:16-18



GIVE VIA TEXT MESSAGING

You can now give an offering via text message. Follow the following directions below and see how easy it is!

1. Send a new text message to: **73256**
2. Enter this text message and hit return: **giveatpc**
3. You'll receive a message with a link -- click on it
4. Enter the \$ amount you'd like to give
5. Choose where you'd like to have the money go to from the drop-down menu
6. Fill in the required data. Once you have donated, the system will remember your data for the next time.

If you have any questions please call Laura Mikush at 412.741.4550.



IT'S ALMOST SUMMER TIME!

By Susie Wardrop, SPC Member

As I write this amid April snow showers, I'm thinking summer and sunshine and Sunday Lawn Receptions at SPC. On behalf of the Membership Committee, I invite you to join your church family each Sunday out on our front lawn for refreshments after the 10 AM service. This is a great time during the summer months to meet visitors, enjoy each others' company and chat with our Pastors.

If you would like to bring cookies, mini muffins or fruit to any of the receptions, from May 27 - September 9, please contact Susie Wardrop at swardrop7@gmail.com or 412-216-4776. It would be most appreciated!

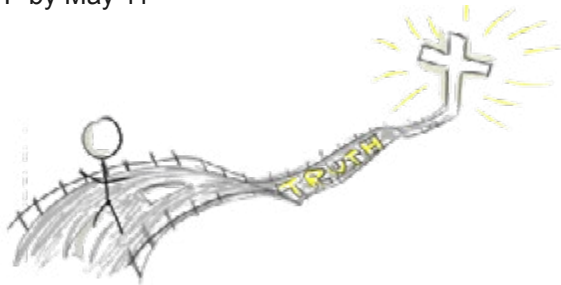
Many thanks to the Fellowship and Hospitality Committee who have committed to host the receptions in July. See you on the front lawn!



May 14 | 6:30 – 8 PM | Robinson Room*

If you've been taking part in our Read the Bible in a Year program, then plan on joining us for our second Bible Bash! We'll have dinner (not pizza this time), have some fun (bring your creativity!) and discuss some of what we've read in the past couple of months. We hope to see you there!

*RSVP by May 11



TEACH ME YOUR WAYS

By Carlton Leeper, SPC Member

Dear fellow believers in Jesus Christ,

I just finished reading 2 Kings and am left wondering when will we humans learn to obey God with all our heart, soul and strength? You'd think that we would have learned a thing or two from Adam and Eve, but no! Each king is given the golden opportunity to obey God and to be a shining example of righteousness to the people of Jerusalem and Judah, but most failed miserably!

Hey, this sounds all too familiar! King George Carlton Leeper was 13 years old when he became king, and he reigned in Pittsburgh fifty-two years. His mother's name was Jane. He did evil in the eyes of the Lord! You see, this is not the king that we should aspire to emulate. We need to be like King Josiah! Josiah was eight years old when he became king and he reigned in Jerusalem thirty-one years. He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord and walked in all the ways of his father David, not turning aside to the right or to the left.

The Old Testament is very dense and difficult to read. However, there is one thing that I will remember. Do evil in the eyes of the Lord and it will not go well for us. Do right in the eyes of the Lord and life will be a more fulfilling ride. Each day I pray that God will teach me his ways, that I may walk in the truth (Psalm 86:11-13).



PLEASE GIVE US YOUR THOUGHTS

By Matt Braksick, SPC Elder

Time flies! It is already time for the Nominating Committee to begin working to nominate Elders, Deacons and Nominating Committee members to begin their terms in 2019. The following people are serving on this year's nominating committee:

Matt Braksick (chair), Steffler Balsley, Kati Doebler, Ed Neese, Beth Rom, Heather Wiehe, Debbie Tranter, Beth Genter, Nancy Morrissey, Jenna Stevenson, Lisa Edelman

Ruling Elders oversee all activities of the life of the church, while Deacons provide "hands on" ministry of service and compassion for the church and community. Ruling Elders and Deacons are men and women chosen to represent the rich diversity of our congregation, and the nominating committee will strive to guarantee inclusiveness and broad participation.

The slate of officers will be presented to the congregation at the congregational meeting held in the fall. The slate is voted on by the congregation. Members of the church are invited to nominate themselves or another member of the congregation to serve. Nomination forms are available in the Robinson Room. Nominations can also be made by calling the church office or contacting a member of the committee.

Once the slate is approved by the congregation, an ordination/installation service will take place in January of 2019 and officers will begin their three-year term. Officers cannot serve more than two consecutive terms.

We ask you to please prayerfully consider who you know that might be good candidates for service and pray for guidance and discernment for our committee to nominate those individuals who will faithfully, creatively, and lovingly lead our church.



WOMEN'S RETREAT 2018

By Jane Shadle, SPC Member

The women's retreat will be held Saturday, October 27 - Sunday, October 28 at Antiochian Village! Mark your calendars and stay tuned for more information. Registration will begin in July. Be sure to make time for this beloved event which nearly 60 women have attended over the past two years!

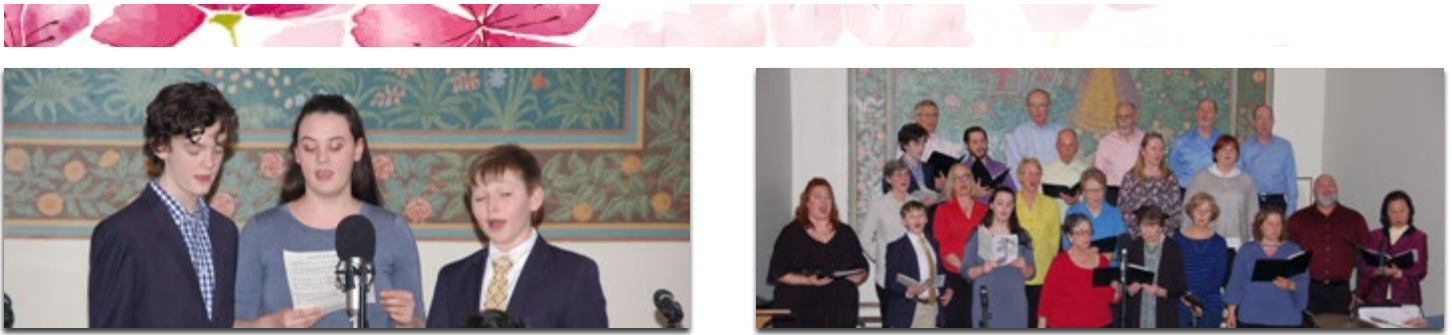
Church Picnic



June 3
Front Lawn
after the 10 AM Service

FOOD, FUN & FELLOWSHIP!

Brought to you by the Deacons & Children's Ministries



CHOIR LITE RECAP

By Jennifer Berg, SPC Member

With the afternoon sunshine streaming through the windows — the Robinson Room was at capacity for the 25th Annual Choir Lite Concert on March 18. This special yearly concert began as an informal performance in which choir members could showcase their talents, have some fun and perform secular or popular songs that would not be appropriate for a Sunday Worship Service. Nearly anyone with a musical bent is welcome to participate — previous concerts have featured a ukulele, a barbershop quartet and even a choreographed dance number. For the second year — the charming and witty Jennifer Berg returned as the mistress of ceremonies. The assembled crowd enjoyed musical pieces ranging from 18th Century opera to modern Broadway classics. Some of the highlights include: middle school student Cole Tyson belting out a ballad from the movie “Beauty and the Beast”; Anna Singer and Xiu Ru Liu singing the “purr-fectly” delightful “Cat Duet” by Rossini; and the entire chancel choir swinging to the Irving Berlin standard, “Blue Skies”.

There was even a special guest appearance by the world-renowned opera singer (and husband of alto soloist/section leader Xiu Ru Liu) Guenko Guechev. Guenko and Anna Singer performed the flirty duet “La Ci Darem la Mano” from Mozart’s Don Giovanni. Tenor soloist Colin Farley led the Youth Choir in a rendition of the modern day choral classic “Praise His Holy Name”. The show concluded with the traditional number “As Long as I Have Music” in which former choir members are invited to join in. Craig Dobbins and Raymond Blackwell shared accompanist duties on the piano. And Hayden Moyer provided the beat with his drumming skills.

Each year choir members select a local charity to support with the concert’s proceeds. This year the profits were donated to the Quaker Valley Blessings in a Backpack program. Morgan McFadden, a 7th grader at Eden Christian Academy, said a few words about her work with the charity. A national program, Blessings in a Backpack works to provide food on the weekends for school children that might otherwise go hungry. The Chancel Choir was thrilled to be able to donate \$785 to this worthwhile cause.

If you were unable to be there on March 18, you can find photos by Mark Hitchens on the church Facebook page or you can watch a video of the concert recorded by David Breit on this link: http://jupiter.rmxpres.com/webcast/data/Choir_Lite_2018/main.htm

DO YOU PLAY AN INSTRUMENT?

by Jeremy Fisher, Worship leader

Calling all orchestra players: Youth and adult orchestral instrumentalists are invited to participate in leading worship on Sunday, May 20 at both the 9 and 11 AM services. The material will include three hymn arrangements, and musicians will receive parts two to three weeks in advance of the first rehearsal.

Please email Jeremy Fisher if you would like to participate: jfisher@sewickleypresby.org

Rehearsal and worship schedule is as follows:

Sunday, May 6: 12:15-1:15 PM (rehearsal)
 Wednesday, May 9: 4:30-5:30 PM (make-up rehearsal)
 Saturday, May 19: 10 -11:15 AM (final rehearsal)
 Sunday, May 20: 8:30 AM - 12 PM (warm-up, worship)

SUMMER CHOIR: BE A PART!

On May 27, our summer worship schedule begins! We’ll have worship at 8 AM and 10 AM in the sanctuary. On that Sunday, the Summer Choir has its first rehearsal. Unless otherwise noted, practice is at 9:15 AM on Sunday mornings in the sanctuary.

The Summer Choir provides a wonderful opportunity for returning college students or persons who travel greatly during the week to raise their voices in song. Others who are interested in trying the choir in a less formal setting are also invited and encouraged to participate. You need not make a weekly commitment, simply drop by as your schedule permits.

If you have any questions or concerns or for further information, please contact Craig Dobbins at 412-741-4550 or cdobbins@sewickleypresby.org.



OUR COMMUNION TABLE IS (ALMOST) 75 YEARS OLD THIS YEAR!

By Tim Merrill, SPC Elder

In the History Closet, a letter dated August 14, 1943 from Margaret Campbell to Corporal Alfred H. Johnson was found. She was, of course, the daughter of William Oliver Campbell; Al Johnson was our organist/choirmaster for 41 years. He was on a leave of absence serving in the military in Italy during WWII.

After giving Mr. Johnson the news of the Church, including the line "I had a delightful visit with Miss Agnes Way who was 102 years old last March. It is amazing what strength and interest in people she still has," she concluded her type-written letter with "Best wishes to you, wherever you are, and whatever you are doing. I hope you are able to bring the loveliness of music to the boys over there for you certainly have much to bring them if you are ever given a chance."

Miss Campbell then added a handwritten postscript, "This is a secret – no one knows but the clerical family, my family and you! I am giving a Communion Table as a memorial to Bayard Christy."

Bayard H. Christy had died earlier in 1943, after serving as an Elder of our Church for 32 years (his father, George Christy had been an Elder for 37 years). He wrote several histories of our Church and was a nationally recognized ornithologist.

The Communion Table was dedicated May 7, 1944. It is the work of Leslie Nobbs of New York. "In symbolic language, the carving of the table wood speaks primarily of the sacramental use for which the memorial is intended, yet the symbols chosen are reminiscent, at the same time, of Mr. Christy's life and works. A panel, cut in high relief at the east end of the table, portrays St. Francis of Assisi surrounded by the lovely birds he loved; to the west a similar carving depicts St. Martin of Tours parting his cloak to give warmth to a beggar. The table front is divided by a columnar arrangement of the twelve apostles – each in his separate niche – into three additional panels, the central one of which displays an empty cross supported by adoring angels. At the foot of this central panel are the words, 'Glory to God.' Beneath St. Francis the name is written 'Bayard H. Christy, 1872-1943.' Under St. Martin is the significant inscription, 'And I will give him the morning star.' Along the edge of the mensa, where the celebrant alone can read it, is the text, 'Sir, we would see Jesus.'" (from *A Book of Memorials*, The Presbyterian Church of Sewickley, Pennsylvania, Thistle House 1946).



BACCALAUREATE

June 9 | 4 PM



For the past six years, SPC has hosted Baccalaureate for our local, graduating high school seniors. The service will be held in the sanctuary. If you are a graduating high school student, you are invited to attend, as well as your family and friends. The service will be streamed on our website for those who cannot attend and would like to listen in. If you have any questions, please contact Tina Thomas at tinathomas99@verizon.net.

SPRING CLEAN-UP

May 19 | 8:30 AM

Spring has sprung and it's time for a little spring clean-up around our beautiful church property. We'll be doing the usual mulching, edging, trimming, digging, planting, joking, and laughing!

Bring your kids, your spouse, your friends, your neighbors, your neighbors' friends, and even your neighbors' kids! All are welcome! Also, bring your usual gardening tools and some water to drink.

If you have any questions, please contact Mark Gensheimer at mgensheimer@CSMCKEE.COM.

SUMMER WORSHIP

May 27 - September 2

8 AM & 10 AM Worship Services

Held in the Sanctuary
No Sunday School Classes

Visit our website to see groups and events held throughout the summer months.

SUMMER OFFICE HOURS

From May 29 to August 31, the church office will be open from 9 AM - 4 PM, Monday - Friday.



DAY ON THE LAWN



DAY OF SALE
September 8, 2018

Day on the Lawn, affectionately known as DOL, is a huge, church-wide event, where donated merchandise is sold to shoppers in order to raise funds for mission.

Planning for the big day begins early in the year. An event like DOL requires a lot of volunteers. We always need more help: we know that many hands make light work – and nowhere is that more evident than during the planning and execution of Day on the Lawn.

The fun starts with **Donation Drop-Off Days (DOD)**. There are nine drop-off days throughout the summer, from May 19 until Labor Day Weekend. DOD volunteers receive donated merchandise and place it in designated storage areas around the church. Please consider working one or more DODs. It really is fun, and families can work together – students can even earn community service hours by working a DOD.

**Sign up to work DODs on the SPC website
or in the Robinson Room.**

WILLIAM OLIVER CAMPBELL PREACHER WEEKEND

Guest Preacher: Rev. Paul T. Roberts

by Sandy Cooper, SPC Elder

We had the great privilege to have Rev. Roberts lead our officers' retreat, worship and adult education over April 7 and 8. The retreat was on Saturday morning in the dining room from 9 AM -12 PM. The topic was the concept of race, which was recently noted as a troubling persistence of an unscientific idea in a recent Newsweek article.

Rev. Roberts challenged the officers to think about the history of racism in this country. We were to think about how opportunities and rights have been inconsistent for all Americans. History has shown that the underlying belief in many of our institutions and communities is that a person of color is inferior, less capable, and undeserving of the same rights and privileges white Americans enjoy. These themes are the similar to what Rev. Michael Stanton from Open Hands ministry spoke about during his series in Adult Education.

Rev. Roberts explained that prejudice is a preconceived idea about something or someone and racism is prejudice that allows for systematic oppression. Rev. Roberts challenged us more personally by showing us excerpts from a couple of popular television shows and a movie depicting racial prejudice. We were asked to discuss these issues in small groups and share how we might personally speak up if we were to find ourselves in a similar situation. For example, if you are at a dinner party and someone has the entire table's attention and is giving his or her opinion about something which is thinly veiled or overtly racist, what do you do? Do you disagree? Do you tell yourself that you don't feel that way and think it's not worth it to speak up? Do you speak up? What do you have to lose? Will you lose your social standing and respect of others? Are you so angry that you are unable to construct a calm response? Do others perhaps feel uncomfortable like you and are also unwilling to challenge these thoughts and opinions? What does it mean to be created in the image of God? What does being a Christian require of us in these moments? These are not easy questions and they bring lots of emotions to the surface. But it is at the surface where we explore and open ourselves to what God has in store for us both personally and as a church.

On Sunday morning, Rev. Roberts preached from Genesis 1:26-27 and Revelation 1:9-19. In Revelation, John is speaking to the seven first century churches of Asia minor. Rev. Roberts suggests that in Revelation we find an assessment of the church with its "depth, breadth, location and identifiable characteristics." It examines what we do well as a church and what we don't do well. He preaches that "We must demand more of ourselves. We must hold ourselves accountable." John poses challenges to us as individuals, as Christians and as a church. What do we do to break free from the bondage of conformity, comfort and repetitiveness? Where is God leading us when we enter a place or relationship where we are certain we have no skill or experience? Will God really be with us? Will He truly equip us for the journey? When we cry out with resistance, is it in fear of failure or fear of change? Can we move into the future with God's help knowing that faith requires us to move without certainty of the outcome?

As the body of the church, all members of that body working together in faith can and should become the church of tomorrow. As the saints of Sewickley Presbyterian Church have done for us, we must also faithfully prepare for the future in grateful response to God's amazing love and faithfulness to us all. Let us continue the momentum.





KENNYWOOD PARK DAY

May 28, 2018

Every year, SPC 'tags along' on the Quaker Valley School District Kennywood Day. Our Director of Children's Ministries, Brian Mack, reserves a pavilion and provides lunch and other refreshments for those who are at the park and want a place to take a break! Please bring a snack to share and meet us in Pavilion #3 (behind the Jack Rabbit).



MEMORIAL DAY PARADE

Before heading off to Kennywood for the day, join us along the front of the church property to watch the Memorial Day parade go by. This is a yearly tradition! Many SPC members bring their lawn chairs (or just use the curb to sit on) and enjoy each other's company while we honor those who have served our country. We will provide refreshments and hope to see you there!

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Do you know someone who would benefit from a scholarship? The Christy Johnson Scholarship, endowed by her family and administered by Sewickley Presbyterian Church, provides financial support to a member or friend who wishes to pursue a broadening experience in education or service consistent with the unfulfilled direction of Christy's life. The Scholarship provides approximately \$2,000 for travel and living expenses for two or three months for one individual, annually.

Applicants should be a member or friend of Sewickley Presbyterian Church, a high school graduate, under 30 years of age, with a permanent residence in the Sewickley area. Their program should occur outside Western Pennsylvania, include aspects of growth of person and faith, and service to the human community. Those receiving the scholarship are expected to make a written and oral presentation to the congregation and Christy's family upon their return.

A LOOK AT OUR WINDOWS

"ANGEL OF PRAISE"

(Connick Studios)

in memory of
John Alvin McCague (1857-1941)

"ANGEL OF PRAYER"

(Connick Studios)

in memory of
Mary Vernon Charnley (1855-1903)



The east window in the Chapel depicts an Angel of Praise with a golden horn. The window is a memorial to John Alvin McCague, for many years an Elder, church school leader and Clerk of Session.

John Alvin McCague had been raised in Moon Township. He was baptized in, and was a member of, the Sharon Presbyterian Church. He and his wife, Emma Ogden, moved to Sewickley in 1897. In 1900, he was ordained an Elder, serving as Clerk of Session from 1905 to 1938.

The west window depicts an Angel of Prayer, its censor symbolizing prayers rising to God. The window is dedicated to Mary Vernon Charnley, a much beloved church school teacher. Rev. Dr. William Oliver Campbell described her as "one in whom the trials of life seem to evoke more and more the graces of the spirit."



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

by Brian Mack, Director of Children's Ministries

Vacation Bible School is almost here! June 11-15 we will be taking over the church with our "Shipwrecked" theme, learning that no matter what situation we find ourselves in, Jesus rescues! This is made clear through our Bible stories each day, where we hear Jesus' parables about lost things, Martha worrying, Jesus' friends struggling in the garden, Jesus welcoming a criminal on the cross, and Peter and John healing in Jesus' name. We learn that anywhere we are and whatever is going on in our lives, Jesus is always there for us. We see this further established in KidVid Cinema. Each day we hear a new story from a child in a difficult situation, and how they made their way out of it with the help of their friends, family, and ultimately, Jesus. With games, crafts, snacks, and music, our Vacation Bible School this year is sure to be a hit!

If you want to be a part of our VBS, there are a few ways you could get involved. If you'd like for your kids to attend this week, simply RSVP by May 29. The cost is \$25 per child, with discounts and scholarships available for families with multiple children and anyone who has need.

On top of your children attending, we need your help as well. With camp happening earlier this year, our time frame to decorate is crunched up against the end of the school year. With this being the case, we will be focusing on our decorating efforts the week prior to camp, June 4-8. In addition to the helping beforehand, there are plenty of ways we could use your help the week of camp. We of course need teenage crew leaders, and adult station leaders to help lead the flashiest parts of camp, but that's not all you can do! You can help with registration on the first two days of camp, prepare snacks behind the scenes, be our camp nurse, or even just help supervise as we travel to and from the Faith House each day.

If you think you may be interested in helping in any of these ways, or if you have any questions, I would love to talk with you! You can call, email, or simply stop by the office anytime! Please consider being part of this amazing week, and I can't wait to share this with all of you!

June 11 - 15 Register Now!





SEWICKLEY STUDENT NIGHT

by Mike Creamer, Director of Youth Ministries

Last summer a group of local youth workers and I began meeting together to pray, share our excitement for ministry, and dream about what it would look like to collaborate together in ministry. Over the last few months we have been planning to have a night where there were no divisions between our students of denomination, church, school, or clique, but rather an evening where in a shared space we were all one group, one body, one Church. It's amazing how much we can accomplish together when we try! This combined youth group night was a blast! We played 9-square, spikeball, and giant jenga, enjoyed ice cream, worship, preaching, and more -- all happening in the span of two hours! To see more than four churches and over 125 teenagers coming together into one space, united with the same purpose, was truly inspiring to watch unfold. It was a real pleasure hearing from Kory Grant (KG) as well, who is the youth pastor at St. Philips in Moon, as he was our speaker for the night. There is no doubt that things went great, and we are stoked about what is coming next in our community!



COMING UP...

Youth Car Wash
May 5 | 9 AM - 12 PM

Move-Up Sunday
May 20 | 10 AM

SYI Summer Mission Trip Registrations Deadline
May 25

Confirmation Sunday
June 3

Baccalaureate
June 9 | 4 PM



CONFIRMATION RETREAT

This year we had the pleasure of having Derek and Erin Davenport join and lead us as we spent an evening together with students and their mentors learning about how our faith is lived out on a daily basis. We learned about what it means to write a statement of faith, what the importance of the Church's faith statements are (such as the Nicene and Apostle's Creeds), and we practiced writing our own as well as applying them to every day situations. It was a very special time to share with our students and mentors as all were able to open up and process what our lives with Christ mean to us. We're looking forward to a great last few months before we finish up the year with our confirmands!

MIDDLE SCHOOL LOCK-IN

Thank you to everyone that joined us this year for another great time at the middle school lock-in. We had a blast together competing in the the Pineapple Games together, both here at the church and at the YMCA. Although staying up with teenagers until 2 or 3 in the morning may sound crazy to some of you, it's one of our favorite events that we get to do each year because of how great it is to spend quality time with our students. There was a lot of blood (from me), sweat (from everyone), and tears (from just a few), and that's what made this year memorable! We hope you'll join us next year for the next adventure!





BLANKET SUNDAYS: MAY 6 & 13

Each May we honor the special women in our lives by helping to change someone's life who is in need of our help. Our congregation is actively involved with the Church World Service Blanket Program. For many years, our church has been helping to keep our neighbors warm by providing blankets to families here in the United States and around the world.

What difference can a blanket make? A blanket can provide warmth to a victim of a flood or fire, or serve as bedding to a guest in a homeless shelter, or be a gift of welcome to a newly arrived refugee or migrant worker. Last year blankets made a difference in the lives of families living in Colorado's rugged and rural San Luis Valley. In a remote area of the San Juan Mountains called "the flats," many homes don't have running water or electricity. During the winter, when temperatures drop to life-threatening lows, many of these families heat their homes using only firewood. Often their firewood runs out before the winter ends. That's where our help comes in.

Because of our support of the CWS Blankets Program, Church World Service provides blankets to many organizations and nonprofits, including La Puente, a mission that provides services to the families living in "the flats." At the beginning of last winter, Robert Lockwood, one of the case managers for the Rural Outreach Initiative, delivered the blankets to these families. The warm, wool CWS Blankets were a welcomed gift. Robert, the caseworker who delivered the blankets said, "...we are grateful for the support of Church World Service as we could not do what we do without your continued generosity and belief in our mission. Thank you..."

In May, our church has an opportunity to provide hope to many families. Share this love by providing CWS Blankets to those in need. On May 6 and 13, consider donating a blanket. Each blanket costs only \$10, but these blankets can be a vital resource for someone needing a little support, warmth and encouragement. Together, we can help even more families stay warm next winter. A table will be set-up in the Robinson Room to accept your donations. Thank you.

CENTER FOR HOPE APRIL DINNER

by Gretchen Burnham, SPC Member

What a glorious night it was! Thank you all for your participation in April's meal. We served over 80 diners, and had enough for seconds and several take home dinners. Our guests loved the pulled pork. Also, someone donated a large bag of small carrots. We decided to serve them with ranch dressing for dipping - a very popular item.

After clean up, a box of leftovers was delivered to a local family. The father was so very grateful for all that Center for Hope does for his family.

I wish you all a wonderful "spring-filled" month, and look forward to serving with you on May 24.



STRENGTHENING OUR PARTNERSHIP IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

by Sandy Cooper, SPC Elder

It is with excitement and anticipation that 15 members of our congregation embark on a journey to the Czech Republic in June. SPC has a long history of mission partnership with the Czech Republic. Our partners there are The Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren (EECB), the Diaconia, and the The Protestant Theological Faculty at Charles University. This partnership has been in existence since 1983. Over the years many of you have met individuals from our partnerships when they have traveled here to Sewickley. It is our privilege that the following individuals have embraced a relational mission trip to the Czech Republic: Nico Simakas, Paul Szuba, Julia Weicht, Emma Grubb, Pat Fulmer, Eric Fulmer, Charlene Beck, Joe Beck, Joan Murdoch, Elizabeth Szuba, Ann Strong, Deborah Murdoch, Mike Creamer, Rev. Sarah Bird and Sandy Cooper.

An experience like this can never take place without the love, encouragement, prayers and financial support of our church family. We are so grateful for your support!! The "Czechs in the Mail" fundraiser has raised over \$3000 toward our trip. We look forward to sending postcards to those of you who participated.

We know that God has called each of us to this place at this time. It is our privilege to participate in God's mission and are so excited to see what He has in store for us!! Please continue to keep us in your prayers.

"You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you." John 15:16

THANK YOU FROM OUR PARTNER CHURCH IN PREROV, CZECH REPUBLIC

This is a beautiful Easter greeting from our partner church in Prerov. The faith and passion of this letter are evident, especially as it is not written in their native language. Pray for our church members who will be traveling to the Czech Republic this summer as they take part in the ministry of this church.



Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb, while it was still dark, and saw the stone already taken away from the tomb. (John 20,1)

Dear friends in Sewickley,

Mary is set to the journey early, just in the dark. She didn't wait until becomes clear. Darkness was around her and inside her. It was for her difficult to realize that she is a part of God's story. And that the most important events from Jesus life have happened in the night – night of Birth and of the Passover.

And not only events from Jesus life. Abraham has obeyed God, left his tent to observe the stars which have reminded him the Gods promise of plenty descendants and blessing.

We need experience a darkness to sight what is fundamental. In the night we see much further than on the day. When we observe the stars at the sky, we see what on the day is impossible being blinded with the sun.

We need experience the darkness to see. Don't be afraid to accept darkness, either in the form of anxiety, fear, illness or weariness of political life. Just in the deep of night we are getting to know how we are, we must not pretend anything and we know how the light is important for us.

Jesus doesn't promise a life without problems, without darkness, he calls us to set to the journey to see that the stone is taken away. The stone we considered to be a full stop of everything. Into darkness breaks a dawn, into stress comes a new power and hope, into our uncertainty enters the resurrected Christ.

Dear brothers and sisters, we wish you a celebration of Easter full of joy, hope and faith in which we are connected to each other. May our Lord, Jesus Christ stay in the middle of you with his blessing.

We all in the congregation at Přerov are looking forward to spend couple of days in June with a group from Sewickley during the trip to the Czech Republic. As we hope it will be a wonderful opportunity to speak and think together how to develop further our partnership.

With the warm greetings and wish of peace

Marek Zikmund (pastor) and Martin Skalický (head of presbyters)

Přerov, March 28th 2018



Sewickley Presbyterian Church

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www.sewickleypresby.org

Dated Material

PLEASE EXPEDITE!

This newsletter is published by
Sewickley Presbyterian Church



Do you know a woman who is hurting? Perhaps you've "been there" and feel that God is calling you to help.

Many of the women we serve do not have the resources to pay for counseling. When you give a gift to Samaritan, you help these women receive hope and healing. You empower them to regain their strength and provide a better life for their children and themselves.

With your gift of \$125, you provide at least four faith-based counseling sessions for a woman in need. To donate by check, make it payable to Samaritan Counseling and mail it to the address below.



SAMARITAN
Counseling • Guidance • Consulting

202 Beaver St., Sewickley, PA 15143

*Please join us
on Friday, May 18th
from 12-2PM
at the Hyeholde Restaurant
for a Celebration of Women!*

Lunch, cash bar, soft jazz, and an
inspiring message by Rev. Tega
Swann, Refreshing Springs Ministry

Cost: \$125

To RSVP, visit our home page at
samaritancounseling.net or call
Beth Healey at 412-741-7430 x1001
or send her an email at
bhealey@samaritancounseling.net.

*Thank you for healing the hidden
wounds of women in crisis!*