

INTERPRETATION

Sewickley Presbyterian Church Newsletter
January/February 2019



SPC Youth Laurelville Weekend



OFFICE

Hours

Monday - Friday 9 AM - 5 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.

SOCIAL MEDIA



Find us on
Facebook



Instagram

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JOEY TOMALES
Custodial Staff

SPC WELCOMES REV. DEREK DAVENPORT!

We have exciting news to share with you! In an effort to help our church members Grow as Disciples of Jesus, we are welcoming the Rev. Derek Davenport as our new Parish Associate Pastor for Discipleship in 2019. Derek will join the SPC staff on a part-time basis, beginning January 6, 2019. He will oversee our church's discipleship ministry, working closely with the Discipleship & Spiritual Formation Committee and Adult Education sub-committee. Derek will help arrange guest speakers for Sunday mornings and other special occasions and will himself teach periodically throughout the year. Additionally, Derek will work with Mike Creamer and Brian Mack to enhance our Youth and Children's Ministries.

Many of you have already had the pleasure of meeting Derek and experiencing his incredible talent for teaching our faith in new and interesting ways. He has taught multiple classes for us on Sunday mornings, including this past fall. He also led our Wednesday night Lenten program in 2017 as well as our Confirmation Spring Retreat in 2018.

You can expect to see Derek on Sunday mornings, helping to lead worship and overseeing our Sunday school hour. He will also help out with other pastoral duties when needed.

Derek's full-time job is as the Director of the Miller Summer Youth Institute at the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Previously, he served as the Seminary's Director of Enrollment, and before that was the Associate Pastor of Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church in Orlando, Florida. He is a graduate of Grove City College and of the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

In addition to his duties at the seminary, Derek has been serving as Parish Associate at Parkwood Presbyterian Church in the North Hills for the past four years. He has also served as a guest teacher and preacher at dozens of churches, colleges, and events. In this capacity, he began teaching periodically at SPC in 2015.

His wife Erin, with whom he directs the Miller Summer Youth Institute, is also a Presbyterian pastor. They have two children, Dylan and Lydia.



When he's not working or spending time with his family, Derek researches and writes about Christian art, architecture, and symbolism. His research and writing have led him to complete a Master of Theology Degree with a thesis focused on art and architecture in the Reformed Tradition. He has also published articles in the Post-Gazette, the Presbyterian Outlook, These Days Devotional Magazine, and Wiley's Reviews in Religion and Theology. He has also contributed articles to the Encyclopedia of Christianity in the United States and American Religious History: Belief and Society through Time.

Please plan on welcoming (and meeting if you haven't already) Derek after the 11 AM worship service on January 6. We will have a reception for him in the Robinson Room.

In response to Derek's new role, Rev. Sarah Bird will focus less on discipleship planning and concentrate more on helping us to Live as a Church Family with an emphasis on congregational care. Caring for one another is of utmost importance to us, and we are thrilled that Sarah is able to devote more of her time to those in need.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the church office.



LAURELVILLE WEEKENDS

Back to back weekends at Laurelville this year made for quite the adventure, as we all had some fun in the mud while trying not to freeze our toes off. We really loved being able to spend both weekends at camp with our neighboring churches here in Sewickley! As much as we tried, we couldn't escape the bitter cold on either weekend. We enjoyed the fall festival, the pumpkin smashing, throwing pies in leaders' faces, and of course some solid Bible study and small group time. We're grateful for another great year of camp, and we are eagerly awaiting Surf City this summer!

CONFIRMATION FELLOWSHIP

Everyone knows that gingerbread houses are for competitive building projects, not for eating. We had a blast at our fellowship night at the Gensheimers' house breaking bread together, having some friendly competition, and learning about what it means to BE the Church rather than go TO church. We are having a great time with our Confirmation class this year, from classes and camps to fellowship nights like these -- we are excited for what the new year has in store for us!

STOCKING PROJECT

One of our favorite mission initiatives with our teens is the Center for Hope stocking project. This year we made a real effort to expand the vision of the project and make it a more engaged activity. With Rebecca Long's leadership we were able to put on a spaghetti fundraiser, help serve at the Parents' Night Out, and stuff the stockings in no time! We love being able to unify our efforts to bless others in such a simple way, but we couldn't do it without the support of our church family. So thank you for joining us in this project again this year!

By Mike Creamer, Director of Youth Ministries

UPCOMING EVENTS

All-Youth Laser Tag

January 13 | 3:45 PM - 5:30 PM

\$20 per person

Xtreme Laserstorm | 456 Home Drive, Robinson Township

We start the new year with our normal weekly programming on January 6, but are excited to kick the year off with an all-youth lasertag battle. The cost will include the games and dinner. If you would like to play arcade games bring a few extra bucks! We have 20 spots, so it will be first come first serve! Register on our website.

"The Event"

January 27 | 5:15 PM - 8:30 PM

\$5 per person

The Pittsburgh Project | 2801 N Charles Street

Last year we were able to join in for this Presbytery-wide youth event. We are pumped to be going back this January, as we will be hearing from Wayne Younger from the Pittsburgh Project. There will be games, snacks, laughs, and churches from all across the city there, so you won't want to miss this! All youth 6th-12th grade are invited to join.

Middle School Lock-In

February 22 & 23 | 5:30 PM - 7 AM

You have requested it, and we have responded: the Lock-In will be making a return this year! We will have more information to come in the new year, but until then be sure to mark these dates on your calendar!





Laurelville Weekend



Laurelville Weekend



Laurelville Weekend



Center for Hope Stocking Project



Confirmation Fellowship Night



Photos: Club 345 counting Christmas Food Basket donations

BEYOND CHRISTMAS

By Brian Mack, Director of Children's Ministries

Christmas is over, but as a good Christian educator I'm keeping the spirit of the season in my heart all year long! Every Christmas I find myself watching cheesy Hallmark Christmas movies that often have a vague point about what Christmas is really about, so this year, I wrote them down. I have over a dozen written down so far, but here are some of my favorites: "That's what Christmas is all about -- to remind us that wishes can come true," "There's no better time to start over than Christmas," and "See how the light shines through this ornament? That's what Christmas is, it makes everything shine brighter." As I read these again (and laugh!) it reminds me that our society so often gets the point of Christmas all wrong. I could give a bunch of examples of what Christmas really is about, and get into a deep theological debate about it, or I could let Dr. Seuss do it for me. When the Grinch has his epiphany at the end of the movie, he thinks to himself about what Christmas really is, "Maybe Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store. Maybe Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more." This past year reminded me that, simply put, Christmas means a little bit more. A little bit more than presents and carols, a little bit more than lights and pageantry, a little bit more than fellowship and family. God sending us His Son on Christmas means everything, it means a little bit more than even our best intentions or most sincere thoughts. So, as you travel through this new year, remember Christmas, and that it can never be put into a simple saying, but that it always means a little bit more.

Looking beyond Christmas and Epiphany, there are a few events that I would like to draw to your attention. On January 25, we will have another Parents Night Out. If you've been stuck inside with your kids for too long in the cold of winter, let us relieve you for a few hours so you can enjoy some time off. We'll enjoy dinner, games, crafts, and a movie at the church from 6 - 9 PM. We'll be accepting donations to cover our costs for the night. Sign-up online or at the church kiosk by January 22 to secure your place!

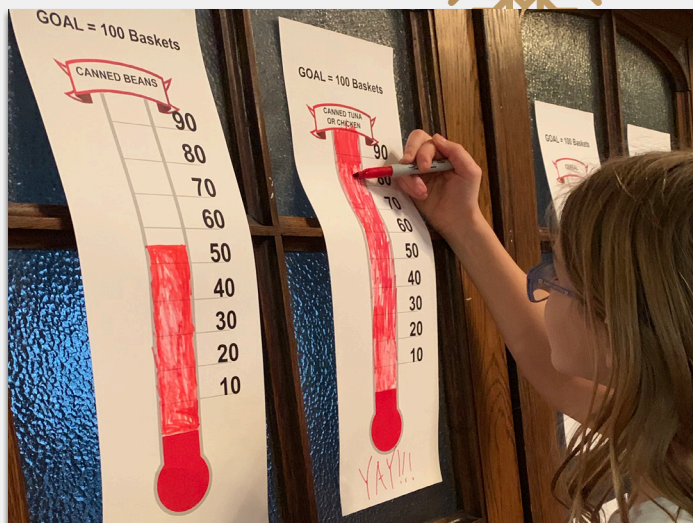
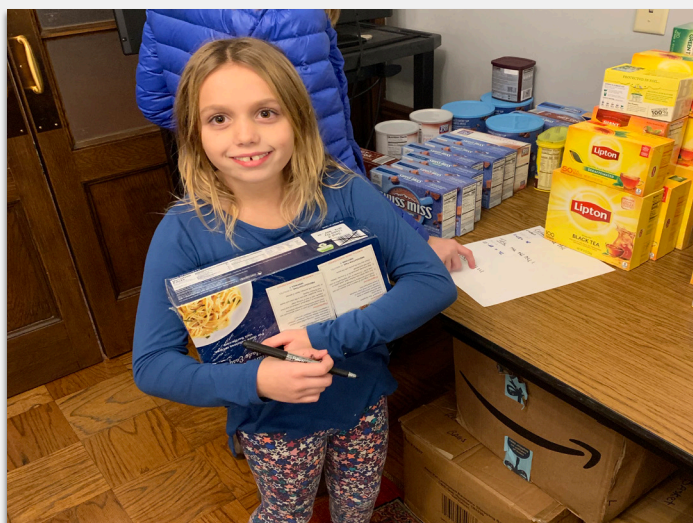
If you feel left out of all the fun and wish we had a fun event for the whole family, then do I have news for you! On February 15 at 6 PM we will be hosting a family dinner at the Faith House. We will provide the main course, drinks, and entertainment; all we ask you to bring is your family and a small dessert or appetizer to share. There is no cost to this event, we simply ask that you RSVP by Wednesday, February 13 to ensure we have enough for everyone. This will be a night of food, fun, and fellowship, and is a great way for you to connect with other parents and families in our church! We are always excited to share these events as a church family, and I hope to see you there!

Sunday School resumes: January 6

Club 345 resumes: January 16

Parents' Night Out: January 25

Family Dinner: February 15





'NEW' CHILDCARE UNDERWAY

By Joan Murdoch, SPC Member

Our Sunday morning childcare is moving to the Willets Room and Session Room (next to the Robinson Room)! Our church elders are working on ways to meet the needs of our young families and felt the new space will make childcare much more convenient. It will also offer a way for young parents to get to know each other more easily as they greet their children and enjoy fellowship in the Robinson Room area.

Session Task Force members Mary Weber, RC Hayden and Joan Murdoch are working with a design team which includes Madelaine McCrady, Melissa Cook, and Jenna Stevenson. In addition, parent Emilie Rubin and others have been working to outfit the space with appropriate toys. The Hammer and Nails group has already painted the Willets Room, and new carpeting and new toys are on the way to make this an attractive play space for the youngest in our church family.

Take a peak and watch the rooms be transformed for our little ones to enjoy!

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

By Tim Merrill, SPC Member

In a recent Advent sermon, Rev. Long commented on how inclusive our church is and how it has been so for many years. Indeed, some might say that this quality is *the* defining trait of the Sewickley Presbyterian Church. People with differing opinions on theology, let alone more mundane things like politics, have worshiped Jesus Christ together within our walls.

From a historical perspective, it might be argued that this inclusivity is in the DNA of our church. Though we date our founding as occurring in 1838, our pioneer church gathered Sewickley Bottoms residents as early as 1808. These were "old school" traditional Scot Presbyterians. In 1838, they joined with Mary Olver, John Champs, and David Shields, "new school" English Presbyterians, to petition the Pittsburgh Presbytery to form a new church. Our first minister, Rev. Daniel Eagle Nevin (shared with the Fairmount Congregation in Duff City) was of Scot heritage.

There, at the outset, were traditional and conservative, old school Presbyterians uniting with liberal New School Presbyterians to form a church, at a time when (as noted by William Cooper in his 1988 church history: *Remember, Re-*

PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION

By Jenny Hay, Director of FriendShip Preschool

Registration for the 2019-2020 FriendShip Preschool is taking place for children 24 months – to 5 years of age. FriendShip is located on the 2nd floor of the church and offers four developmentally based preschool classrooms. The mission of FriendShip is to provide our community with a high quality, Christian, faith based, early childhood program promoting social, cognitive, emotional and physical development in young children. The FriendShip children live under the Fruit of the Spirit. God's teachings about Love, Faithfulness, Generosity, Joy, Self-Control, Peace, Kindness, Patience and Gentleness guide us in our daily living.

For further information, please contact Jenny Hay, Director, 412-741-4550, ext. 225 or jhay@sewickleypresby.org.



Brian Mack sharing how Jesus healed the crippled man in the NT.

joice and Renew) "differences between old school and new school Presbyterians had become so intense, particularly in Western Pennsylvania, that the Presbyterian Church USA had been separated into two distinct and independent denominations." (p.29).

To be sure, the inclusivity between the new and old school Presbyterians was to be tested twice in the 1860's: first, with the installation of an organ in the new church building, and second with the precipitous (in the opinion of some) hiring of Dr. Bittinger as pastor.

Even so, the Church continued to grow and in 1871 Dr. Bittinger dedicated a new Chapel, Sunday School and meeting room immediately south of the Sanctuary as "the "Union Chapel" to commemorate the unification of the old school and new school churches." (Ibid p.79). Though the Union Chapel was replaced by the Robinson Room and offices in 1915, our very first stained glass window, the Children's Window, remains (some might say "hidden") in the Nimick Library, as does the Celtic cross designed by Dr. Bittinger now residing (or perhaps hiding as well) above the south end of that 1915 structure (on the Robinson Roof).



RETREAT REFLECTIONS

By Jenny Valente, SPC Member

Sewickley Presbyterian ladies gathered together at Antiochian Village on October 27 and 28 for the 2018 Women's Retreat. Everyone enjoyed a time of rejuvenation.

This year Reverend Sarah had her friend, Rev. Lauren Scharf, assist her. The two joked that they were able to do the shared teachings and remain friends, but there was so much more to it. Their love for the Lord, as well as their sense of humor, was a beacon for the weekend.

First time retreat attendee Brittan Curigiano said that she had an amazing time. "I think the small groups after the teachings was my favorite part." Brittan also invited her friend, Jenny, who felt a wonderful connection and acceptance.

Beth Johnson, who also attended for the first time, said that she had never thought so much about the scripture of the woman who touched Jesus' garment. "I can't imagine not getting a hug for years because you were considered unclean." And when asked why others should consider going

to the next retreat, she said, "You are not bored for even one moment."

Once again the ladies all agreed that the setting is beautiful, peaceful, and ideal for the retreat. Worship in the chapel is always moving and Spirit filled, but the addition of Lauren's prayers was particularly spectacular.

Jana Joseph came up with an awesome craft idea of making tile coasters that will surely be given as gifts. She and her daughter, Krista, also put together a trivia game. Nancy Morrissey, a member of the winning team, said "I don't think we even got one answer right....It was so much fun!" Nancy also agreed that the small groups were a wonderful experience.

If you are looking for a time of rest, a chance to enjoy the company of other Christian women, and to experience Jesus in a powerful way, join us on the next retreat. It truly is a great time!

REMEMBER WHEN?

By Ron Frank, SPC Member

- You became a member of Sewickley Presbyterian Church, and met some great people in your new member class?
- Your child was baptized in the church in the presence of your relatives and friends?
- Your child attended Sunday School, made new friends, and loved the donuts given in class?
- Your child was confirmed as a member of the church, and also was confirmed as a Deacon?
- Your child was married in the Church to the love of his life in the presence of relatives and friends?
- You joined a church committee and met terrific people who became friends?
- A friend was having marital problems and an associate

- pastor counseled them to a resolution of their issues?
- Your wife contracted a terminal disease, and the Pastor asked how she was doing and wished her well every time he saw her?
- The pastor visited your wife in the hospital many times, including the day before she passed, and said prayers reaffirming what we believe about dying and you saw the fear lift from her eyes?

You recently received your annual Pledge Card from the SPC. Please complete it after some thought about what is right for you and your family, to make sure our church can pay its blessings forward.


STEWARDSHIP
"God loves a cheerful giver"

My Life Is *Upside* Down ...

because I Know Someone with a Personality Disorder!

**A 10-session workshop—starting in January 2019—presented by:
Samaritan Counseling, Guidance, Consulting**

If you are close to someone with a personality disorder, you're most likely to feel *ill at ease, frustrated, highly stressed, confused, manipulated* and *misled*! So what on earth can you do about it?

Led by a licensed therapist, *My Life Is Upside-Down...* takes place in a safe, private environment where you will be supported and affirmed.

This workshop will help you to:

- Understand the most common personality disorders.
- Explore how you are affected (by the person with the disorder).
- Learn ways to communicate with him/her that are mutually helpful.
- Manage the stress that you are experiencing.
- Learn techniques for coping and taking care of yourself.
- Begin your personal journey toward healing.

Join this workshop by calling Samaritan at 412.741.7430. *Space is limited!*

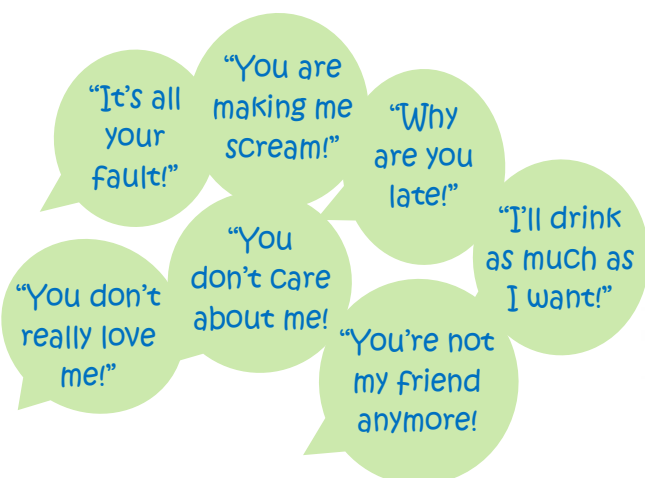
Samaritan accepts most insurances and offers financial aid for those who qualify.

Who should attend? Adults 21+ whose lives are being affected by someone with a personality disorder.

WHEN:
Workshop begins in
January 2019
(Start date TBD)

TIME:
5:30-7:00 PM

WHERE:
Sewickley
Presbyterian Church
Lower Level
414 Grant Street
Sewickley 15143





DAY ON THE LAWN RESULTS

By Becky Senior, SPC Member

News Flash! Day on the Lawn 2018 has provided over \$70,505 to our Mission Committee -- a new record beating the old one by almost \$9,000! On a rainy day in September, over 100 church members worked to sell donated items. We continued to earn money after the sale by putting items from the Antiques and Jewelry Departments in an auction.

\$70,505

Gross sales totaled \$65,141. How did we get to \$70,505? We had record donations of \$18,435 to underwrite expenses (total expenses: \$13,072). The DOL Leadership Team thanks all who helped in any way to make DOL 2018 a success and able to contribute to the mission of helping people in our community, in other parts of our country and around the world.

MALAWI VISITORS

By Barb Swan, SPC Member

In October, SPC hosted two visitors from Blantyre Synod, Malawi, as part of the Pittsburgh International Partnership Journey 2018. Andrew Machinjili, from Chonde (our partner congregation) stayed with us for two weeks. Derby Makwelero from Balaka congregation was with us the first half of the visit. Many members of the congregation helped to make our visitors feel welcome. They stayed in the homes of the Ziers and the Swans. The Bingmans hosted a Thanksgiving dinner in their honor.

Andrew and Derby had a full two weeks. They attended the Bell Choir Retreat dinner, Middle School and Senior High Fellowship, Koinonia, Men's Huddle, Staff Meeting, Bible Basics, and Club 345. A lot goes on in our church during the week. They also toured FriendShip Preschool and Center for Hope. There was a two-day retreat at Antiochian Village, and a farewell dinner at Mosaic Community Church - both events sponsored by the Partnership. They had lunch with Sarah Bird, and Cordelia Jacobs took them on a tour of Pittsburgh.

On his last day before returning to Malawi, Andrew helped serve dinner at The Ladle in Ambridge. He said grace in his native Chichewa before Carol Weir said grace in English. It was such a blessing to see Andrew interact with everyone dining at The Ladle, all of whom were very welcoming and interested in Andrew's background. He commented many times about the dinner programs at Center for Hope and The Ladle, mentioning specifically that these types of volunteer meals were new to him.





CHRISTMAS FOOD BASKETS

By Eric Fulmer, SPC Member

During the six-week period following the Minute for Mission kickoff on November 4, hundreds of containers of pasta, spaghetti sauce, canned tuna, mustard, ketchup, mayonnaise, canned beans, peanut butter, jam, cereal, oatmeal coffee, tea and cocoa silently accumulated in the Campbell Room. Colorful thermometers adorned the walls of the Robinson Room. You may have noticed activity at the Deacon's sign-up table or heard the distinctive gobble from Bud Thorne's phone at the Turkey Trot contest. All of these telltale signs were elements of an outreach effort to promote awareness of and participation in the annual Deacon's Christmas Food Basket Program.

Fast forward to Saturday, December 15. At 8:45 AM, a steady downpour greeted enthusiastic early bird volunteers as they arrived in the Robinson Room to accept their delivery assignments. For event coordinators, there is a certain level of weather-related anxiety leading up to a massive delivery event scheduled for mid-December. Ice and snow could easily derail the entire delivery process. But today, SPC Deacons breathed a collective sigh of relief as a parade of eager volunteers continued to pour into the Robin-



son Room to load their vehicles with bags of non-perishable food that had been donated by SPC members. The next stop for volunteers was Safran's Market where additional boxes of perishable food purchased for this project by SPC were loaded into their vehicles.

By noon, a total of 43 SPC delivery teams were on the road, navigating their way to the homes of 90 needy households referred by local human service organizations such as Center for Hope, Union Aid Society, Sewickley YMCA, Sewickley Community Center and others. Over half of the ninety food baskets were delivered to families in Ambridge (51). The remaining baskets were delivered to households in Sewickley (19), Leetsdale (9), Staunton Clinic (5), Coraopolis (3), Baden (3) and Fair Oaks (1). As a result of their coordinated efforts, all 90 needy households received a week's supply of groceries. Mission accomplished!

The adage "many hands make light work" aptly describes this experience. The Deacons extend heartfelt thanks to each and every donor and volunteer that helped to make this year's program a success.





Sewickley Presbyterian Church

LIVE · GROW · SERVE

414 Grant Street | Sewickley, PA | 15143

www.sewickleypresby.org

Dated Material

PLEASE EXPEDITE!

This newsletter is published by
Sewickley Presbyterian Church



SPC SPONSORS CARYN DOEGE

Church member, Caryn Doege, decided to go back to school in 2018 in pursuit of a Masters of Divinity to become ordained in the Presbyterian church. She is attending Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Our elders have officially decided to take her under care as she goes through the ordination process and discerns her call to ministry.

Caryn has been a member of our church since May of 2016. Since that time (and before) she has been heavily involved with our youth. She takes part in many of the events and activities we offer. Caryn has also delved into many other parts of the SPC ministry such as Day on the Lawn, spring and fall clean-up, and is currently serving on the Board of Deacons.

Caryn has integrated herself into the life of SPC since she joined the church. We should all be grateful for her passion for serving and her willingness to weave herself into the threads of this ministry. Please keep her in your prayers as she works towards a ministry in service to others, and more importantly to our Lord and Savior, Christ Jesus.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE NEW YEAR

January 6.....Rev. Davenport reception
January 13.....New Officer Ordination & Installation
Mission Trip Commissioning
January 19-26....Dominican Republic Mission Trip
January 27.....Annual Meeting

February 17..... Founders' Day
February 23..... Women's Winter Retreat

March 1.....World Day of Prayer at SPC
March 5.....Mardi Gras Pancake Supper
March 6.....Ash Wednesday Worship
Services
March 13.....Lenten Soup Suppers Begin