

INTERPRETATION

Sewickley Presbyterian Church Newsletter
Spring 2020



Painting of Rev. William O. Campbell
located in the Campbell Room

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
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A LITTLE GOES A LONG WAY

By Kelly Stover, SPC Member

I want to share a story with you regarding our ability to drastically change someone's life with one simple gesture. After attending the Congregational Care Ministry training back in November, and once the Coronavirus started impacting our area, we were invited to help check in with some of our members, particularly those for whom leaving home might be especially difficult during this time. Over the past month I called several SPC members, and every time I experienced much gratitude for my phone call. There was one phone call in particular though that I can't stop smiling about; it will forever resonate in my heart.

When I called this person – let's call her Jane* – as the phone rang several times I found myself continuing to wait as if I knew someone was going to pick up on the other end. After about 10 rings, I heard this sweet voice say hello. I introduced myself and said I was calling on behalf of our care ministry team and that I was checking in to make sure Jane was healthy and safe. Thirty minutes later I found myself still chatting and laughing and finding so many commonalities between the two of us.

At once I discovered that Jane could really use a ride to church. I shared with her that I would be more than happy to start giving her a ride to church when we all come back together one day soon, and she was so happy I could almost hear her smile over the phone. I was touched by this woman's love for and commitment to our church and congregation. Not only am I delighted to be able to help Jane in the future, I am also delighted to have a new friend.

As I reflect on this experience, I see it as a lesson that during times like this we can all look deep inside ourselves and find something -- it can be the smallest thing -- but find something we can use to care for another person. I can't sing, I am not a doctor, I don't have tons of money, but I sure in the heck like talking! So, maybe that one phone call didn't change Jane's life, but it sure did change mine. I urge each of us to dig deep, get creative and get focused on helping others. The reward in the end will surprise us because when our hearts start giving, our souls start sharing, and our love starts resonating, the possibilities are limitless.

**Name and identifying details have been changed to maintain confidentiality*

DOLLAR & SENSE

By Laura Mikush, Business Administrator

Did you know? Prior to and during the closure of the church buildings our custodians, Joey, Nick and David, have been deep cleaning our buildings.

As an example, David wiped down every pew, Bible, hymnal, and pew pad in the Sanctuary and Chapel. Joey and Nick cleaned each room, wiped down tables,

chairs, door handles, etc. and then locked down the rooms that could be locked to prevent anyone from going in and contaminating them. The office and bathroom are still being cleaned each week. As we begin to think about returning to the buildings, a new and updated cleaning program will be designed and implemented.



By Jenny Hay, Director of FriendShip Preschool

The FriendShip Preschool came to an abrupt halt mid-March with announced school closures for the remainder of this school year. However, that did not keep our wonderful teachers from reaching out to their students and maintaining their individual class schedules.

Online learning quickly became a part of our preschoolers "at home" routines as instruction was adjusted for the students. A lot of creativity and fun has evolved by using YouTube and Zoom meetings! Circle time activities, weekly themed lessons, stories, craft projects, learning videos, math activities, and games have taken place during online FriendShip class times. Guest story readers have been welcomed as they have popped in to join the children.

Sara Hoagland has continued with monthly Bible Story and lessons for the students. The Fern Hollow Nature Center will be providing a nature lesson to the FriendShip 2 and Pre-K children later in May as their scheduled visit to FHNC was cancelled.

Andrea Croft, Edgeworth Elementary School kindergarten teacher, will be reaching out to our PreK children to introduce kindergarten and going to a new school in the fall. Progress Summaries, a slight adaptation from our End of Year Evaluations, will be sent home to each family with availability for phone conferences. The ongoing connections have been important so the children are able to still see and hear their beloved teachers and other familiar faces!



There are multiple ways to continue to support our church while we aren't able to gather together in person. If you have any questions or have any issues with accessing our giving avenues, please contact Laura Mikush at lmikush@sewickleypresby.org or 412.741.4550.

Please visit our website and choose the **"GIVE"** tab for easiest access to the following:

Give Online: You can give a one-time donation or set-up recurring donations here.

Mail a Check to SPC: Sewickley Presbyterian Church
414 Grant Street
Sewickley, PA 15143

Give Via Text:

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

Thank you for your generosity and continued support.



GROWING IN CHRIST DURING THE PANDEMIC

By Jane Shadle, Discipleship and Spiritual Formation Committee Chair

As you all probably know, we've been having inspiring on-line worship services since mid-March. And you have been receiving daily videos and reflections from members of the staff, as well. But what about our discipleship programs? Has anything been happening with Children's Ministries, Youth Ministries, or Adult Education? The short answer is YES! Read on for highlights of each of these areas.

In Children's Ministry, director Sara Hoagland has had weekly email and phone conversations with approximately 55 families, some of whom contact her regularly. Some projects that were initiated as are: donating nearly 300 hygiene kits for homeless and various shelters; sharing a devotional via video; mailing Easter crafts to all families-including a recipe for "resurrections rolls!" Additionally, Bill Sutherland and Deborah Murdoch have led a weekly Zoom Sunday School class for the 4th and 5th grade class. Also, Sunday school children sent cards and letters to members of the congregation as well as medical professionals.

The Youth Ministry has been actively ministering to and with teens and their families, as well. Prior to the March shutdown, Mike Creamer, director, was the emcee for the Presbytery-wide program, "The Event," which our youth attended with middle and high schoolers from the Pittsburgh area. A highlight showing God's timing was that the Spring Confirmation Retreat was held on March 8, rather than its customary date in April. The Confirmation students were able to have this time together to reflect on their faith prior to the shutdown. The Confirmation process is continuing over Zoom, with some at-home videos/readings. Confirmation Sunday will be held in the fall. Since March, the Pittsburgh Kid's Foundation offered Mike's talks online. These 4 videos were viewed 200-300 times each! Online Sunday school classes have been offered over Zoom, as well as a hang-out for college students on April 8.

Finally, many of you may be aware of the adult education programs that Derek Davenport, our Parish Associate in charge of Discipleship and Adult Education, has been creating. Since we can't meet in person, Derek has created and presented online two weekly programs for discipleship. One is a short intergenerational Sunday school lesson, focusing on themes seen in the Bible in multiple places. He encourages at-home reading of the Bible story as well as discussion within families or self-reflection.

Derek has also recently begun presenting a series called "Stretchers, Scandals, and Unsubstantiated Scuttlebutt." These short videos feature figures mentioned in the Bible and legends that have developed from and around them. An upcoming series will be a study of some well-known and beloved hymns. Derek will prepare a presentation of background and significance of the hymns. Also, lyrics for the hymns will be provided, along with recorded piano accompaniment, so that people at home will be able to sing or listen along with the hymns in their living rooms or kitchens. Be sure to access any of these from the church's website under the "Worship and Online Resources" tab, clicking on "Video Library" under the heading of Christian Education, and then choosing the title and date. There are currently 12 videos available.

A final note, staff members are keenly aware that these online offerings are not a substitute for regular in-person gatherings to study God's word, offer a word of encouragement to a friend or classmate, or just be together. However, the discipleship programs being continued by our children's and youth ministries, and adult education provide an avenue for connection during these unusual times. Check them out for your family!

Women's Retreat

UNREVEALED UNTIL ITS SEASON • SOMETHING GOD ALONE CAN SEE

October 24 & 25

Antiochian Village

Double room \$109 | Single room \$146
scholarships available

registration begins
8.1.2020

GIFTS FROM DEPARTED SAINTS

Recently, SPC received bequests from several members of our church family who have now gone on to the Church Triumphant where they are part of that great cloud of witnesses who surround us: Kathy Sprouse, Rod Gartner, and Lannie Gartner. While we miss their presence terribly, we are so grateful for their generosity and thoughtfulness of putting the church in their wills so that even after they were gone, they would still play a major role in helping our church carry out its mission to faithfully proclaim and faithful live the gospel of Jesus Christ in grateful response to God's love. Thank you Kathy, Rod and Lannie!

Have you put SPC in your will?



Rod & Lannie Gartner



Kathy Sprouse



Praying during our weekly Sunday School class.

THOUGHTS FROM OUR YOUNGEST CHURCH MEMBERS

SPC Kids

"We are staying busy by going to school online, coloring, playing with toys and Legos, watching movies and playing outside as much as we can."

"I am thankful for my family, sleeping friends (imaginary friends), my stuffies, my teachers, and my sister Sophie (my Cabbage Patch doll)."

"I am thankful for my school."

"We have learned that we want the coronavirus to stop!"

"I have discovered butterflies, caterpillars, and ladybugs!"

"Our favorite thing we have done is drive in movies in our backyard with our neighbors. Everyone can stay in their cars and say hi from a great social distance. It allows us to see each other without being tempted to play!"

THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who sent in photos for our Mother's Day celebration video and for our Teacher Appreciation video. Both videos can be found on our website if you'd like to see them again.



MIDDLE SCHOOL LOCK-IN

Our annual middle school lock-in went great again this year, filled with games of wolf, musical chairs, ice cream sundae competitions, and a trip to the movies. The best part of a lock-in is that at a certain point everyone gets so tired that everything becomes hilarious. It's been one of our favorite events the last few years and always makes for a great night of bonding. A huge thank you to Caryn Doege and Hadley Driscoll for being our fearless leaders through the night.

CONFIRMATION RETREAT

We were grateful to have Derek Davenport lead us at our confirmation retreat again this spring over at the Faith House. One of the main components of the retreat is thinking about what it means to see your faith lived out in your everyday life. How does a stuffy "statement of faith" have any impact on how we actually live? A statement of faith is only helpful if it actually states what you believe, and so the primary focus of the retreat is having students explore what it is they believe and the kinds of statements they want to construct. It was a great evening, and I am grateful to all the mentors that came out to participate!

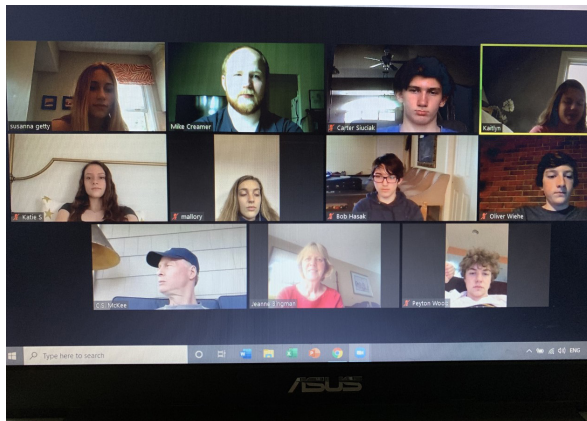


PKF SPRING SESSION

This year we were excited to begin a new tradition with the PKF with a one-day spring retreat, but because of shelter-in-place protocol it turned into a week-long online retreat. We were pretty excited that we still got to participate, and hope that next year we can build on this to make it even more special!

MOVING FORWARD. . .

We will be having weekly meetings over zoom for students in 6th through 12th grade. You can find links to those meetings on the youth web page. We would love to have you join and catch up with us!



Photos: Youth volunteering on World Vision Day and Youth Group via Zoom.



MAKING DELIVERIES

By Sara Heres, SPC member

On Wednesday, April 29, Becky Senior and I loaded our cars with the incredible donations everyone had given. Later in the day, I delivered my items to the men's shelter at the Northside Common Ministries located on California Ave. on the Northside. The shelter has about 25 men staying there. They continue to feed 40-50 people on a daily basis handing out lunches at the front door. The donations from SPC are ideal for these bag lunches.

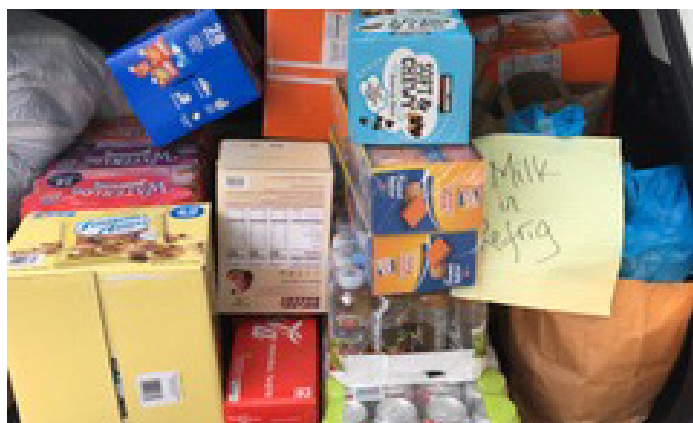
Besides the food donations, I also brought along 60+ hygiene kits. These kits were assembled by our younger church members. Jay, the executive director, said he gives these to clients in the shelter who are using their bathrooms and showers during their stays.

And best of all, I handed Jay 40 masks made by church member Debbie Day! Jay was appreciative for the box of disposable masks as well as for the cloth ones. I also brought another dozen masks I had sewn for the volunteers who continue to serve the 800 monthly clients to the NCM food pantry.

On May 1, Ann Strong and Becky Senior delivered single serving snacks and beverages to Bethlehem Haven. Their car truck was completely packed with donations! They also delivered over 70 cloth masks made by Debbie Day, Stephanie O'Kane and her mother, Dolly Simmons. Bethlehem Haven will continue to accept homeless women during this period.

During this unfortunate and stressful time brought on by the COVID-19 virus, it is uplifting to be part of such important mission work.

Thanks to everyone!





ADDITIONAL WAYS TO HELP

Donate the items below to help our local mission partners.
Please deliver donated items to:

233 Linden Court
Sewickley, PA 15143
-- Place items on the covered side porch --

DONATION DAYS

May 18-20

June 1-3

NEEDED ITEMS

Kid-Friendly Cereal

Ramen noodles

Soup

Single Serving Snacks: granola/candy bars, crackers

Juice Boxes

Bottled Water

Canned Fruit & Fruit Cups

Canned Meats/Tuna

Pasta/Pasta Sauce/Canned Pasta

Laundry Detergent, toilet paper

Mac & Cheese

Applesauce

Peanut Butter

Bar soap, toothbrushes, Toothpaste, shampoo



Deborah Murdoch, SPC Member, delivering donated items to the Sewickley Community Center

MAKE CLOTH MASKS

For those of you gifted in sewing, will you consider making a handful of cotton masks to pass along to our local mission partners for their clients?

We have some mask material kits if you're interested. Please contact Becky Senior: beckysr6@verizon.net / 412.741.7274 if you'd like a kit.





THE LADLE THANKS YOU

By Carol Weir, SPC member

On Monday, May 11 SPC served our quarterly meal at The Ladle. I want to thank all of you for your monetary donations which were used to purchase 150 take out meals of fried chicken, mashed potatoes, broccoli, rolls and cookies from Safran's. Typically we serve between 70 and 80 people at the Ladle. Clearly, the need has increased tremendously.

Because we raised more than we needed, the extra funds will help supplement Ladle meals over the next few months. Our next scheduled serving date is September 21.

Thank you again for your generosity during this difficult and unusual time and for your continued dedication to this important local ministry. The food is much needed and so appreciated. Let us all pray and remember that God will continue to guide us and provide.

10 YEARS OF SERVING AT THE CENTER FOR HOPE!

By Gretchen Burnham, SPC member

Although the Anniversary Dinner Celebration was not what we had pictured three months ago – it was a wonderful evening of fellowship shared with our SPC volunteers, Center for Hope staff and families we were able to serve.

Post Office Catering prepared, delivered and assisted us with distributing 240 hot dinners! Thank you to all who made cash donations to support March and April's Grab and Go dinners.

We are all so grateful for Center for Hope and their mission of helping our Ambridge neighbors with love, compassion and understanding. Blessings to all of you for being part of SPC's mission with Center for Hope. Here's to the next 10 years serving at/with Center for Hope.





Sewickley Presbyterian Church

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Dated Material
PLEASE EXPEDITE

This newsletter is published by
Sewickley Presbyterian Church