

INTERPRETATION

Sewickley Presbyterian Church Newsletter

Summer 2022





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NEWSLETTER

If you would like to make submissions to the newsletter, 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 or are in need of prayer, please call the church office to let us know.

SOCIAL MEDIA



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THE STORY

READ THE STORY. EXPERIENCE THE BIBLE.

WE'VE DONE IT!

By Rev. Derek Davenport

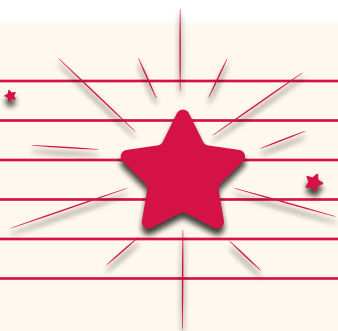
Over this past year, we completed a study of the entire Bible together as a congregation. In worship, Adult Ed, Children's and Youth classes, and even in our groups like Koinonia and Bible Basics, we have been reading the Bible together. We started in Genesis and we went all the way to Revelation.

After several years of separation, we've come back together with renewed gratitude for our congregation and fellowship. This past year, we have had so much fun being in the same room and on the same page -- even literally! We've also greeted new members and confirmands. We've celebrated a pastoral installation and baptisms. We've welcomed old and new friends as well as former pastors to lead us in worship. We've observed milestone anniversaries in our staff. We've celebrated the retirement of our beloved music director and said hello to a new pastor. We have done all of this while studying the Bible together. It's been a wonderful year!



As we wrap up the school year, we conclude our study and prepare for another summer together. And so much will happen this summer! For one thing, we will continue to welcome Rev. Emily Miller to our congregation (and keep wearing those name tags!). We will also enjoy a number of events from our children's ministry summer coordinators. As always, we've got some big things in store for our youth as well. We will cap off the summer with VBS and one of our favorite annual events, Day on the Lawn.

Coming back together has been such a blessing. I'm thankful that we have been able to spend this year reading the Bible together, and I look forward to the ways we get to explore what God is doing in our community next year as we make our grateful response, living our faith together.





WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS!



Dante Spinosi



Kelsey Spinosi



Malachy Whalen



Patty Whalen



Kate Binnie



Tracey Townsend-Jester



Nicole Quaka



Brittney Ellis



Brent Ellis



Erik Lindamood



Anne Lindamood



STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

Rev. Davenport & Mark Gensheimer, Personnel Committee

In 2002, the Redwings won the Stanley Cup. Over the summer, Spider-Man thrilled audiences, breaking box office records. The sound of Nickelback on the radio was occasionally interrupted by newcomer Alicia Keys. Millions of Americans sat down every Thursday to watch "Friends." These were welcome distractions as the nation reeled from the events of the previous fall, and President Bush worked with Congress to create the Department of Homeland Security.

Closer to home, Pennsylvania elected Ed Rendell as governor. The Pittsburgh Penguins fans enjoyed the comeback of Mario Lemieux, who also led Canada to a gold medal in the winter Olympics. A gallon of milk cost \$2.72, and a gallon of gas was about \$1.36.



While we were paying under six quarters for a tank of gas and watching Spidey, our church changed - a new staff member started. When she began a temporary position in March of 2002, Sharon Barber could never have guessed that she would be an integral part of our church for the next two decades. During that time, Sharon's dedication has blessed our children's ministry, music programs, youth, and, for the past several years, the ministry of our senior pastors.

Sharon's gifts have been particularly critical this year. Pastoral transitions can be difficult, but our experience has been surprisingly pleasant. That's not an accident; the secret is Sharon. In her role as Assistant to the Senior Pastor, she has quietly, patiently, and effectively enabled the pastoral ministries of our church to continue without interruption, regardless of transition. She's done a tremendous job

exemplifying Colossians 3:12 – "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." Congratulations on your 20th Anniversary, Sharon! We look forward to the next 20!

Our church has been blessed by many incredible staff members, one of them being Jennifer Johnson. Jennifer surpassed her 10th anniversary on November 1, 2021 of supporting our church family. In those ten years, as our Director of Communications, she has guided us through countless joyous and challenging moments, always helping us effectively and clearly communicate our mission, in whatever mediums are most appropriate, paper, email, video, Zoom, etc.



The challenge of the Covid pandemic accentuated Jennifer's creativity as she guided us through the initial development and now ongoing continual improvement of our on-line worship capabilities. Her willingness to try new ways to communicate to everyone in our congregation has benefited our church family in ways, a few years ago, we couldn't even imagine.

Jennifer, from every one of us in our church family, including our staff and congregation, we offer you a heartfelt congratulations and thank you from the bottom of our hearts, for your commitment and positive energy in supporting all of us through the years as well as your professionalism and expertise in keeping all of us more connected to each other and most importantly to our Savior, Jesus Christ. We are truly blessed to have you as part of our church family!

A BIG GRADUATION!



Mike Creamer, our Ministry Associate for Youth Young Adults, just recently graduated from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary with his Master of Divinity. He also is taking on new duties at SPC by focusing on our young adults and playing a bigger role in our worship services.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE



Since 2015, Elizabeth Szuba has been our Youth Ministry Coordinator, working closely with Mike Creamer to ensure our youth programs run smoothly. In April, Elizabeth's role changed to Director of Congregational Care. She is still working with Mike, but will focus on caring for our congregation as well.



SACRED SPACES

OCTOBER 22 & 23

ANTIOCHIAN VILLAGE

WOMEN'S RETREAT AT ANTIOCHIAN VILLAGE

RETREAT
SPEAKER & LEADER



Rev. Jean Henderson

Register today for a weekend designed to create a sacred space for women to connect with God and make a few new friends. A spiritual retreat of any kind provides the space to free ourselves from the distractions of daily life and turn our attention more closely to God.

Nestled amongst the Laurel Mountains, just 90 minutes east of Sewickley, the Antiochian Village provides a restorative setting for us to come away together. We hope you will be a part of this overnight trip!

Register by August 29:
sewickleypresby.org



JUSTICE MINISTRIES

by Ann Strong, SPC member

Justice Ministries, formerly known as the Anti-Racism Task Force, was formed during the pandemic in the fall of 2020 with the following Mission Statement and Purpose: To keep justice issues in our collective conscience and help us to continue moving forward in our awareness, learning, and acting toward racial reconciliation, as per Christ's mandate to love our neighbor as ourselves (Mark 12:31). Since then the committee has been reading and studying and discerning where God is leading us. Last summer more than 60 members participated in a study of *White Awake: An Honest Look at What it Means to be White*, by Daniel Hill.

In January our congregation generously contributed \$1,483 to the Pittsburgh Presbytery's Freedom Rising Fund. Freedom Rising is a pilot program of the PC(USA) to address the worsening plight of the African American male. It was initiated by the late Rev. Eugene (Freedom) Blackwell, who was a pastor in Homewood. Five Presbyteries: Baltimore, Charlotte, Western Reserve (Cleveland), New York City, and Pittsburgh, are participating in the pilot program. The goals are evangelism, discipleship, justice, reconciliation, and servant leader formation. Pittsburgh Presbytery offers grants for ministries or programs serving African American males in grades 1 through 12. Last year the Presbytery awarded grants to three programs: Infinite Lifestyle Solutions, a non-profit which serves youth and families affected by gun violence; Hope Diversion Program, which works with youth who are charged with non-violent crimes to keep them out of the criminal justice system; and Western PA Council of HBCU Alumni, which helps African American men enroll in Historically Black Colleges and Universities. The Justice Ministries Committee thanks all who contributed to this important ministry.

If you are interested in joining us on this journey toward justice for all, please contact Jane Shadle: jershadle@gmail.com.

DOLLARS & SENSE

By Laura Mikush, Business Administrator

Did you know? On Friday, April 29 and Saturday, April 30 we were part of the Child Health's 39th Annual Sewickley House tour. The Faith House served as the location to purchase and pick-up tickets, and the first and second floors were open for touring. We hosted around 1,200 people over the two days. As a thank you, the Child Health Association gave us a beautiful drawing (above; done by our member Melody Lockerman). It is hanging in the church office if you would like to see it.



GIVING AT SPC

We recently updated our [Give Online](#) page on our website. The new giving option allows you to pay the credit/debit card fee instead of the church paying it. This is a nominal fee, but it adds up!

If you haven't taken advantage of our digital giving options, visit our website and click [Give](#) at the top. It will direct you to a page that shows you how to give on our website, give via text, fill out a pledge card and you can also learn about Gifts of Security.

If you have any questions, please contact Laura Mikush in the church office: lmikush@sewickleypresby.org.



Current Summer Events

July 5 | YMCA Pantry Stocking
July 8 | Movie Night on the Lawn
July 12 | Can I Ask That? Summer Bible Study #3
July 19 | Can I Ask That? Summer Bible Study #4

Check our website out for more!

Another program year has come and gone, and with all the changes in the last few years it feels like time has both stood still and flown by. And yet, here we are and another class of students have graduated high school and a group of 10 confirmands have joined the church.

Some exciting things have happened over the last year. We were fortunate to explore and experiment with the evening worship service, which ended with a final service and food truck afterwards. It was so great worshipping together in a different space and time than usual, but what made those services so special was having the opportunity to hear from our teens as they shared their faith stories. If you haven't listened to these students sharing (or our other speakers),

I encourage you to check out those services on the church [YouTube](#) page or [Sermon](#) page. I want to specifically thank the teens who shared: Susanna Getty, Lizzie Szuba, Boo Earlewine, and Ellie Bates.

We also had an exciting run with high school breakfasts this spring before school, and a great opportunity to serve with the Quaker Valley Food Relief program in Leetsdale. While our normal program year has concluded, we are not done by any means! We're excited for some of our events coming up this summer, and we hope you'll join us for whatever you can. We look forward to seeing you soon!

-- Mike Creamer, Associate for Youth & Adult Ministries





MONTREAT 2022

From Sunday, June 19 through Saturday, June 25, nineteen members of our congregation attended the first week of this year's denomination's Conferences on Worship and Music at the national denominational conference center in Montreat, North Carolina. This group included Linda Benson, Jeanne and Olivia Bingman, Debbie and Steve Day, Susan, Craig, and Maggie Dobbins, Gail Gratton, Ellen and Mark Hitchins, Linda Liechty and Mark Zaitsoff, Ann Strong, Tina and Rob Thomas, Jan Wendt, and Yvonne and Don Zier.

In addition to classes and ensembles for singing and handbell ringing, the conferees participated in Bible studies, seminars on Justice Ministries, Children's Worship, Drumming, etc. Many group members also participated in glass making, jewelry making, and pottery classes offered by the conference center's crafts center.

-- By Craig Dobbins

WORSHIP & MUSIC UPDATE



Ray Blackwell has been a part of our church since 2002, when he joined the Chancel Choir as our Bass soloist and section leader. Ray will be leading our choir this summer.

For those of you who don't know, Ray is a well known vocal coach and accompanist, having been on the music staff at Pittsburgh Opera, Opera Theater of Pittsburgh, as well as having voice faculty appointments at Carnegie Mellon University, Slippery Rock University, Mercyhurst College, and Grove City College. He also has quite a reputation as a classical singer, having sung operatic roles locally with Pittsburgh Opera, Opera Theater of Pittsburgh, Microscopic Opera, and the Chatham University Concert series. His discography includes Leonardo Ballada's *La Muerte de Còlon* on Naxos Records and Seymour Barrab's *The Light*. He has a Masters degree in Opera from SUNY Binghamton, where he was a resident artist with Tri Cities Opera. His Bachelors degree is from his hometown school, the University of Delaware.

Another addition to our Sunday morning music is Robert Manuel who will serve as the worship organist from July 1 through mid-September. Robert grew up in Sewickley, and currently lives in Moon Township. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Music Education from Northwestern University,

Evanston, Illinois and a Masters in Music from the University of Miami, in Coral Gables, Florida. He has over 16 years' experience as an organist and worship leader.

Stop and introduce yourself to Ray (if you've never met him) and to Robert!

NATIONAL HONOR RECEIVED



At the concert which closed the first week of this year's denominational Worship & Music Conferences in Montreat, North Carolina, Craig Dobbins was made an Honorary Lifetime Member of the Presbyterian Association of Musicians. This honor acknowledges his many contributions to the organization both locally, regionally, and nationally, which includes having served as the organization's National President from 2002 through 2004. In addition, he served on the organization's Executive Board from 1997 – 2006, served as a director, faculty member, and committee member of many of the organization's national conferences, and was the chair of the Worship Committee for our denomination's General Assembly in 2012.



If someone would have told me last June that I would be a pastor at Sewickley Presbyterian Church the very next year, I would not have believed them. I did not think a change in jobs was imminent for me. But when God opens a door, sometimes you just have to walk through it! That is what I did when the Personnel Committee of SPC offered me the opportunity to be your Associate Pastor. And I am so very grateful.

I come from a long history of doing ministry in the church, both as a lay person and as a pastor. I have served in churches both large and small in Pittsburgh Presbytery, Washington Presbytery and, most recently, Beaver-Butler Presbytery. There, I brought two churches together into a partnership where we shared all aspects of ministry, except

for separate sessions and Sunday worship. It was a time of relationship building and growth. I will treasure my time there always.

But now God has opened a new door for me – a beautiful red door that leads into SPC. I even get to return to my roots in Pittsburgh Presbytery! Everyone has been so welcoming to me - thank you for that! In case you are not sure where you will see me at the church, my responsibilities include: worship leadership, pastoral care, deacons, mission, membership, fellowship and some discipleship. And please understand that my door is always open for you!

Blessings -- Pastor Emily



Please know that I was surprised and overwhelmed by the kindness and generosity of the congregation on my final Sunday, June 12, 2022. It was with some regret that in November 2021 I submitted the announcement of my plan to retire. However, at seventy-one, I am feeling God calling me to different ventures.

Thirty-five years is an amazing amount of time to serve one congregation and I am thankful that God didn't extend a call away from this congregation before now. This is a wonderful congregation and, as we'll be living in the area for the foreseeable future, Susan, Maggie, and I look forward to encountering church members from time to time.

Peace, love, and joy -- Craig Dobbins



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

AUGUST 8-12 • 9 AM-12 PM

Register today: sewickleypresby.org

IT'S SUMMER TIME!

In June, we welcomed our new Children's Ministry Summer Coordinators, Hanna Mellor and Julia Weicht. They have already organized two family events: Welcome Summer event and our Parents' Night Out. Hanna and Julia will be planning a few more events this summer and they are also busy getting Vacation Bible School ready for the second week of August.

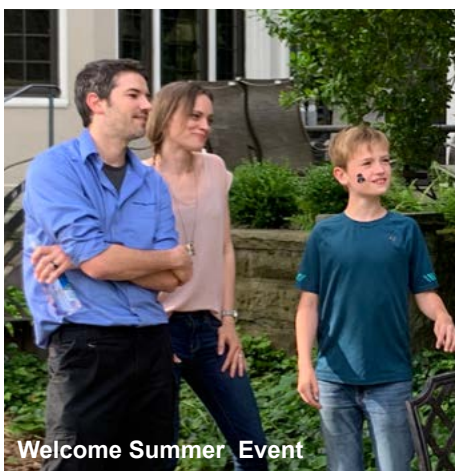
VBS registration is currently open! We NEED a lot of help so we are looking for volunteers for the week. Station leaders, Crew Leaders and Volunteers to help prepare are needed. If you are interested (and willing!), please visit our website to register to either attend VBS or to be a Volunteer (sewickleypresby.org).



Upcoming July Events

July 8 | S'mores & Movie Night | 7 - 9 PM
July 12 | Walker Park Nature Park | 4:30 - 6 PM

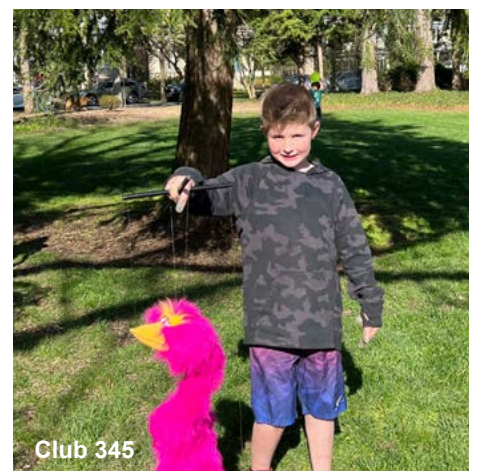
Check our website out for more!



Welcome Summer Event



Making cookies at Club 345



Club 345



CARING CONGREGATION MINISTRY

By Elizabeth Szuba, Director of Congregational Care

*My command is this:
Love each other
as I have loved you.*

John 15:12

I am sure we have all heard the message in scripture that it is better to serve others than to be served. But did you know that science actually proves what the Bible says. Research shows that those who focus on others are happier. When we show kindness and compassion it not only helps others but it increases our well-being. (Laurie Santos, Professor of Psychology at Yale University). When we care for one another, we are not only being the hands and feet of Christ, but we are living the abundant life God calls us to live.

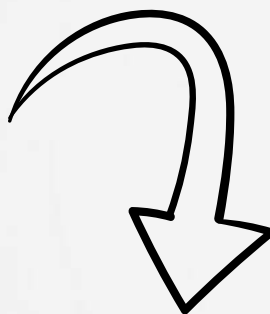
I am happy to report that the Caring Congregation Ministry (CCM) Planning Team at SPC has been hard at work structuring an appropriate care service for our congregation. The CCM Planning Team is a group of church members trained in 2019 by Karen Lampe, the founder of The Caring Congregational Ministry. Due to the Covid pandemic, progress was slow on building this ministry, but there is renewed energy and commitment now that we are back working and worshipping in person. The following is just a sampling of all that the team has accomplished this year:

- The CCM Planning Team assessed current care at SPC by interviewing the chairs of church groups and committees in an effort to build on the loving care we already provide at SPC.
- The team created systems and forms to provide care more effectively and better communicate with the pastors.
- We added an online Prayer Request Form to the church website so that there are multiple ways for members to reach out for care.
- The team reviewed procedures for the Prayer List which is now updated weekly and made available to church members in the Thursday email and in print in the Robinson Room and sanctuary on Sundays.
- Members of the CCM Team reached out to homebound members and those with on-going prayer needs to let them know we care and are available should they need help.
- The CCM Team created a Congregational Care Survey to assess the care priorities of the congregation.

This coming fall we will be offering a Congregational Care-Training to commission lay leaders to serve as Congregational Care Ministers (CCM). We are excited to launch this ministry so that we can better care for one another at SPC.



Backpacks IN July



Every year we collect backpacks filled with school supplies that we then give to the Center for Hope. The CFH distributes the backpacks to kids in need to be able to start their school year off on the right foot. This is a fun and easy mission project that anyone can be involved in.

Our website has a complete list of school supplies that are needed. Visit sewickleypresby.org for a shopping list and to sign-up to donate a filled backpack.

Once you have purchased both the backpack and school supplies, bring the filled backpack to the church. There is a large container near the church office door. It's that easy! Our Deacons will deliver the backpacks to the CFH in early August.

If you have any questions, please contact the church office. Thank you!

QUICK HOW-TO

Register Online
View Shopping List Online
Go Shopping!
Fill Backpack
Return to Church by July 31



Thank you!



WORK UPDATE

Dear SPC,

I wanted to share an update with you on our rebuild project in Les Cayes, Haiti. We're steadily working through home repairs and rebuilds for our families since the earthquake last August.

There are family members like Germaine, a waste collector who is a part of our network, and her family who were displaced after the earthquake and can now move back in and call their place a home.

"I was sleeping outside (after the earthquake). Then WORK came to Les Cayes, sent people to rebuild a beautiful house for me and my kids to sleep in now. I am so grateful to WORK and the people that think of me and my family. Thank you." - Germaine

Detailed Update:

- 21 out of 24 homes have been repaired for our collectors and their families, the final three home repairs are in process.

- 13 homes have been rebuilt

- 17 homes still need to be rebuilt

- relocations and rental support have been provided to our collectors while their homes are being repaired or rebuilt

Thank you again for your support.

Christina Marsico Shanafelt
Director of Engagement
WORK | www.dowork.org



DAY ON THE LAWN

SEPTEMBER 10 | 9 AM - 3 PM

Day on the Lawn is a massive rummage sale that we hold every year in September. Besides the size of the sale, the most impressive thing about "DOL" is that the proceeds from the sale (minus expenses) go to support missions. It's our biggest mission project and it takes help from everyone to make it go smoothly.

Besides tangible donations from our church family and from those in the community, we need volunteers who would give of their time for donation drop-off days, to help during Prep Week, and on the day of the sale.

Check out the details below and then visit our website to volunteer!

DONATION DROP-OFF DAYS

What to expect if you volunteer:

- _____ Receive donations from individuals
- _____ Sort donations
- _____ Take donations to different storage areas
- _____ Meet new friends
- _____ Eat snacks!

PREP WEEK

What to expect if you volunteer:

- _____ Take donations to appropriate areas
- _____ Help to set-up departments
- _____ Price items for sale

SALE DAY

What to expect if you volunteer:

- _____ Take payments from customers
- _____ Answer questions from visitors
- _____ Direct road traffic
- _____ Provide security

Sign-Up Today!

sewickleypresby.org





Sewickley Presbyterian Church

LIVE · GROW · SERVE

414 Grant Street
Sewickley, PA 15143
www.sewickleypresby.org

Dated Material
PLEASE EXPEDITE



HELP OUR NEIGHBORS in JULY

Our summer collection for Neighbors in Need is held in July and focuses on personal care items. The items listed below were specifically requested by our mission partners: Center for Hope, Sewickley Community Center, The Ladle, Sewickley Care Center, and the Sewickley YMCA's Little Free Pantries. As you do your shopping in the coming weeks, please take this list with you and pick up some of these items to share with our neighbors. There are baskets inside the church entrances to place the items. We also accept financial donations. Please visit our website for additional details. Thank you!

SHOPPING LIST (not travel size): deodorant, shampoo, conditioner, toothbrushes/toothpaste, toilet paper, feminine products, dish soap, bar soap

