INTERPRETATION

OVITH

Sewickley Presbyterian Church Newsletter

August 2023

Surf City Middle

I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

Vacation-Bble School End of Week Send-of

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SOCIAL MEDIA



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Summer is a time of rest - or at least we think of it that way sometimes.

Even as a congregation, we sometimes consider summer a time of rest.

We move from three services to one. Many of our Bible studies and fellowship groups go on hiatus. We imagine summer as a time of slowdown, calm, and maybe even laziness. Unless you look more closely.

If you stop and think about what has actually happened this summer, it may surprise you. Even the last few weeks have been pretty packed. We collected backpacks for our area schools. We welcomed a class of new members. Our youth went to Surf City. Our children gathered for Vacation Bible School. Our community gathered for a picnic and community worship service. We held our Connect service. We prepared for a monumental event in the life of our church - the ordination of Mike Creamer (which is an event too big to cram into this brief article!). That's all on top of regular worship services, committee meetings, and of course, preparation for Day on the Lawn.

Hundreds of children, youth, and adults have come through our facilities over the past few weeks. Many of them consider our church home. Many of them may be new to our church. Either way, everyone had a chance to experience the love of Christ through our ministries this summer.

Whether it was through a shared meal on the Faith House lawn, gathering in the sanctuary, or learning from the volunteers at VBS (including an astronaut with an uncanny resemblance to the pastor), our church has been packed over the last few weeks.

As we head into fall, we know that there are new adventures around the corner. A year ago, we used "The Story" to guide our entire congregation in a study of scripture. Throughout this coming year, we will use "Follow Me" - a curriculum created by our denomination. It focuses on practices and commands from the life of Jesus and what it means to follow Him. This curriculum is different from the story in that it isn't a year-long study. Instead, "Follow Me" will take place over several modules with breaks in-between. It's a great opportunity for our entire church to explore what it means to follow Christ.

Thank you for a summer filled with faith, fun, and outreach to our community! I look forward to the new adventures headed our way this fall!

Women's Retreat October 21 & 22 DEADLINE LINE TO REGISTER: August 27

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inder Presbyterian Church Women's Performen's Performents

Enjoy a quiet, relaxing and spirit filled night away at our fall retreat! We hope you will consider joining us in fellowship, learning and prayer on Saturday, October 21 and Sunday, October 22. Our guest spreaker is Rev. Barb Kennedy.

Register by August 27 to claim your spot!

Get all the details on our website: sewickleypresby.org





Another new school year is just around the corner! Our new school year will begin on Tuesday, September 5. As always, we can't wait to welcome our students back to school.

Over the summer, we made a few improvements to our playground:

· Our bike track had seen better days. The rubber tiles had become warped, and the seams were pulling apart. Overall, it had become unusable with our riding toys, and more importantly, it was unsafe. In July, we had a new track put in using poured-in-place rubber. It looks so much better, is safer, and will be great for our riding toys!

A second gate has been installed at the end of the playground near the shed. This new gate offers a second egress for our classes and playground visitors if needed. We are also hoping that it will cut down on the temptation for older kids to climb over the fence in that area. This has been a common occurrence in the past few years and over time has damaged the fence. We hope the new gate will be appreciated by all who enjoy our playground.

On another note, while we have many things to look forward to in the new year, the start of this year is also bittersweet as we say goodbye to our long-time Children's Corner Classroom Assistant Sharon Liberty. Over the summer, Sharon made the difficult decision to retire after approximately 28 years at FriendShip! She began her tenure in Children's Corner around 1995 when she, her husband Tom Liberty, and their two sons moved to Sewickley after Tom was hired as the head football coach at Quaker Valley where he coached for many years. Sharon has been a part of the lives of so many children in our community, some of whom are now adults and bringing their children to FriendShip! We are sad to say goodbye, but grateful for her many years of service to FriendShip. We're also happy that she will get to spend more time with her family, especially her four granddaughters!



OLLARS & SENSE By Laura Mikush, Business Administrator

Did you know during the month of July all of the black wrought iron railings around the church building were sanded and repainted? The cost of the project was \$6,500. Thanks to all the painters from RMS Painting who spent many hours sanding and hand painting each of the railings.

Not only did we update our railings, we also have a brand new floor installed in the kitchen of the main church building. We had a water leak last December which damaged the kitchen and dining room floors. After working with our insurance company, finding flooring, waiting for it to arrive, and having it installed, we are happy to announce that the kitchen floor is installed. We are still waiting for the dining room floor to be completed.

And finally, the elevator in the main church building has been inoperative since early June. We do not have a specific date as to when it will be repaired, but we are hopeful that it will be repaired within the next month.



WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS!

"I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart; I will recount all of your wonderful deeds. I will be glad and exult in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High."



Kristin Ehrenberger



Angela Fochtman



Linda Michael



Sarah Michael



Alex Simone

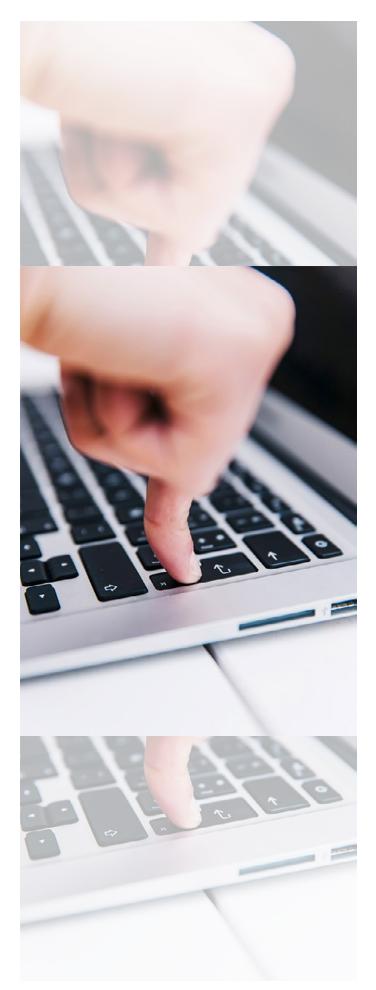


Molly Stater



Abigail Stater

INTERESTED IN JOINING OUR CHURCH? Contact Sharon Barber: 412.741.4550/sbarber@sewickleypresby.org



AN OPPORTUNITY

By Jennifer Johnson, Director of Communications

If you have a finger, can use a smart phone, computer, and/ or mouse then this opportunity is for you! If you can read and listen, then you can do this! If you attend church on Sundays then it means that you can do this! Ninety-nine percent of our congregation can do this!

What does this involve you might be asking? We need two individuals each Sunday beginning September 17 (9 AM and 11 AM services), to sit in the back of the sanctuary, follow along with the order of worship, and press a button to lead people through the slideshow. We ask that you arrive 30 minutes before the service begins to do a service run through with our pastors and staff. And that's it!

You've most likely heard that Stephanie Smith, who used to help on our Tech Crew, moved earlier this summer to be with family in North Carolina. You might have also heard that Noah McAdams, who worked with us (as Stephanie's replacement) for the past two months as part of the Tech Crew, went back to school and is working remotely to prep our bulletins and ProPresenter (aka slideshow) for our worship services.

Both Stephanie and Noah ran our slideshow(s) during worship from the back of the sanctuary.

Without them here, we need YOU to help on Sunday mornings. Technology can be overwhelming, but running the slideshow is the least overwhelming thing you could be a part of.

This might seem like a simple task, and it is, but the impact is great because it helps us all to be able to take part in worship.

We offer training -- though it's a super easy task -- and for those who are really interested, you are more than welcome to commit to both services on any given Sunday.

There is a sign-up sheet on our website under the Events/ Sign-Ups page called "Sunday Tech Crew." When you sign up, I will contact you and set-up a time to run through the process.

I have committed to being here one Sunday a month to help until we get a group of people who are willing to also commit to helping. Please consider this as a way to serve and also consider committing along with me.

Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you!

TOGETHER ON THE WAY

Pastor Emily Miller, Ann Strong, and Charlene and Joe Beck traveled to Olomouc, Czech Republic, in July for the triennial partnership conference, "Together on the Way". Sixty people attended, including 21 Americans representing five churches and Columbia Theological Seminary. Olomouc is located on the Morava River, about 120 miles southeast of Prague. The sixth-largest city in the Czech Republic, the 100,000+ population grows by over 25,000 when Palacky University is in session. Most of the international travelers convened in Prague and made the 2-1/2 hour train ride to Olomouc together.

The conference began with worship and dinner on Sunday, July 9, and continued through Thursday evening with closing worship and a picnic. Each day began at the local ECCB church with a half-hour devotion presented by US & Czech partner churches. Teams of Czech and American ministers then delivered presentations on the theme "Together", on successive days relating to the family, the church, society and the world. Participants then broke out into pre-assigned groups to discuss that day's focus.

After a hearty lunch in the church social hall, each afternoon was filled with opportunities to experience the city of Olomouc and its environs. There was a tour of the historic city hall, where conference participants were officially greeted by the deputy mayor of Olomouc. Other activities included coach trips to an ancient castle, a Catholic basilica, archbishops' palace, and the local zoo. One of the trips included a stop at the ECCB Church of Prerov, SPC's partner congregation, where Pastor Marek Zikmund, his wife Marta, daughter Jana and other church members hosted a reception. Back at the church for devotions and dinner, evening events included a concert of ancient music and instruments, a Taize service and a Czech film.

Although we plan to share more information about the conference and our Czech partners at an Adult Ed session this fall, here are some impressions about this experience:

Ann: It was wonderful to return to the Czech Republic after visiting there with a larger group of SPC members in 2018.

I saw old friends and met new ones. The four SPC travelers met in Prague a few days before the conference in Olomouc. There we were greeted by Eva Grollova, the retired head of the Diakonie, who has visited SPC several times and is a friend to many in our congregation. It was wonderful to see Eva again, and she was a wonderful host in Prague. The first person I saw in the train station when we arrived in Olomouc was Marek Zikmund, the pastor of our sister church in Prerov. He and his daughter Jana attended the conference as did Hanna Slamova, who visited SPC last summer, and her mother Lucie who visited in 2019. As well as greeting old friends, I met new ones including two women who are refugees from Ukraine and told harrowing stories of their escapes from Ukraine, as well as heartwarming stories of the kindness and support they have received by the ECCB church in Olomouc.

Joe: Charlene and I enjoyed a Diakonie workshop hosted by Lucie Slamova, director of foreign relations, and Dan Zarsky, who manages facilities in the Vsetin area, where there is a concentration of Romani (Roma or "gypsy") people. Nomadic and social outcasts, they are in need of services beyond that which the government provides (basic housing). That's where the Diakonie steps in with schools and job training to help the Roma better integrate into Czech society. We saw this first-hand five years ago with a visit to a Roma camp in Vsetin, and it was good to meet Dan this time. On the lighter side, he also taught us a traditional Roma song, plus had the men dancing (!). We also learned that SPC is the only PCUSA church to support both the Diakonie and a partner ECCB congregation.

Charlene: A poignant moment for me came at the end of opening worship when we sang "We Shall Overcome." Although commonly associated with the civil rights movement in this country, I can only imagine what the spiritual meant to our ECCB friends who struggled to practice their faith until the fall of Communism there in 1989. Today they are a very small minority in one of the least religious countries in the world, so it is important that we remain "Together on the Way" with them.



FALL KICK-OFF 55 YEARS OF AGE & OLDER FELLOWSHIP GROUP

Hubble's Universe in the 1920s

Presented by SPC Member John Orndorff

Thursday, September 21 1:30 - 3 PM | Ansby Hall

How big is the universe? How old is the universe? These questions seem beyond the scope of human understanding. Yet astronomer Edwin Hubble's in the 1920's made observations which began to answer these questions and galvanized the science of cosmology.

*Cookies and punch following the presentation

RSVP: sewickleypresby.org or 412.741.4550

DAY ON THE A MAN is almost here!

PREP WEEK

September 2 - 8

So much goes on the week leading up to the sale that it can't be fully explained in a short paragraph. The church is constantly filled with many people that week. If you've signed up to work in a specific department, you'll soon be contacted about getting ready for the sale day. If you haven't volunteered yet, please consider adding your name to a department! Sign-up sheets ca be found our on website: <u>sewickleypresby.org</u>.

SEPTEMBER 9 | 9 AM - 3 PM

DAY OF SALE

September 9 9 AM - 3 PM

At 9 AM, on the day of the sale, the security tape is cut from around the trees lining the church property and the floodgates of shoppers are opened! It's an incredible sight to see as people rush to different areas to find good deals. Being a part of DOL is an experience worth having. Much help is needed on the sale day whether to help with security, to work in a department, to help people carry their purchases to their vehicles and for many other tasks. Sign-up to help -- you'll be glad you did!

DONATION DROP-OFF

A MARINE

September 2 9 AM - 12 PM

There is only one more Donation Drop-off Day left! Take advantage of dropping off items from your home that are taking up space and that you don't need or use anymore! Help is always needed on Drop-off Days as well, so signup today if you have a few hours to spare!



ALL HANDS ON DECK September 5

5:30 PM (dinner), 6 - 8 PM (working)

All Hands On Deck gives those who work during the day the chance to volunteer at Day on the Lawn. Meet at 5:30 for a pizza dinner and then plan on working (sorting, pricing, etc) from 6 - 8 PM. Childcare is available for the evening. Join in on the fun!

> /P to Amy Szuba at <u>amyszuba@yahoo.com</u> or <u>sewickleypresy.org</u>

UNDERWRITING

There are upfront costs necessary to host Day on the Lawn. Every department needs basic supplies; the event needs to be promoted with advertising; tents, tables, storage and disposal containers are rented in advance -- it all adds up. DOL proceeds benefit local, regional, national and international mission, but expenses must be covered first. That's what underwriting means to DOL – YOUR financial contributions offset the expenses, and MORE MONEY GOES TO MISSION! Please consider underwriting a portion of DOL expenses; it will make a BIG difference in an already BIG Day.

Donations can be made at the church office. Thank you!



COMMUNITY OUTDOOR WORSHIP SERVICE & PICNIC

By Rev. Emily Miller, Associate Pastor

What do you get when you put together six pastors, lots of musical talent, and a beautiful afternoon? You get our Community Outdoor Worship Service and Picnic!

We had a wonderful afternoon gathering with brothers and sisters in Christ on the Faith House lawn on Sunday, August 13. This event was sponsored by our Justice Ministries Team and Fellowship and Hospitality Committee. Guests came from Sewickley United Methodist Church, St. Matthews AME Church and St. Paul's Lutheran Church. More than 150 worshipers, young and old, met on the lawn for great music, scriptures, prayers, and a back-to-school blessing for our children and teachers. After the service, we had plenty of hamburgers and hot dogs to go around. I can't thank everyone enough for pitching in to make this event so special. We truly show the spirit of the church when we welcome all to worship and fellowship. Stay tuned both this year and next for more events with our partner churches. There is so much more that unites us than divides us. As the Apostle Paul so beautifully wrote, "There is one body and one Spirit . . . one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all" Let's be One with our neighbors!

Loving our neighbors with you,

Pastor Emily





YOUTH ADVENTURES By Mike Creamer, Ministry Associate for Youth & Young Adults

It's been an exciting summer with the youth as we've been doing our best to take advantage of all the sunny days here in Pittsburgh! We kicked things off with our annual church picnic where we shared some good food and laughs celebrating Pastor Emily's one-year anniversary. And after that we were off to the races. From paintball and mini-golf to hiking and Surf City, we've been having a blast!

We capped off the summer with our first trip back to Surf City in three years, and we were ecstatic! We missed those Michigan sand dunes, and loved every minute of tubing, blobbing, laser tag, and club that we could get. While we are home from camp and missing all the new friends we made, we're also excited to get things started this fall here at church.

So mark your calendars now! Our youth kickoff will be on September 17! A mailer will be going out soon with information about everything coming this fall, but you can keep your eyes peeled for things like:

> Sunday School Youth Group Confirmation Class (9th grade and up) **Fall Retreats Bible Studies** And plenty more!









"Don`t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity" 1 Timothy 4:12

SPC KIDS NEWS By Hanna Mellor, Children's Ministry Coordinator

What a time we have been having in Children's Ministries this summer! My personal school schedule has been more taxing this season with the start of graduate school but I have not let that stop me from having a fun filled summer! We focused on two bigger events this summer, the pool party for kiddos and the whole congregation, and the *out-of-this-world* Stellar VBS that just concluded. Both events were very successful and brought lots of fellowship and smiles to our congregation members and friends! I would love to do a pool party again next summer and I, along with Erin Leghorn, already have ideas flowing on what to do better to include more kiddos and youth next year in our programming.

We also welcomed some new but familiar faces in our childcare room on Sunday mornings. Miss Emma Leghorn has almost been with us for a year now and Miss Hadley Hoehl has just joined us. Both of these girlies are wonderful additions for our smallest and they do great work. If you have a 5 year old or younger, please have them stop in and say "hey!" during services.

As the summer comes to a close, we look forward to scheduling and planning new events for our kiddos and families to enjoy. We are looking at both on campus and off-campus ventures. We also want to let you know to keep an eye out for information regarding our highly anticipated Christmas Pageant. We will need lots of little actors and actresses to make another wonderful show as last year's brought.

We also are changing the day of the week we do Club 345! My graduate school classes fall on Monday and Wednesday nights this year so we will be having our typical fun and fellowship on Thursday afternoon's from 3:45-5:15 PM. If you are in grades 3, 4, or 5 please sign up online and join us on Thursdays starting September 21, 2023 in the Faith House Lounge!

We are always looking for more volunteers and the start of a new Sunday School year and Children's Church era is the time to get involved! Please reach ou7 to me at <u>hmellor@sewickleypresby.org</u> or call the church office so we can work out the nittie gritties of volunteering with kiddos if you are willing and interested; we would love to have you. Thank you!







SEPTEMBER 17

Worship Services 8, 9 & 11 AM

Adult, Kids & Youth classes 10 AM

Mark your calendars for the start of our fall season! We can't wait to see everyone!

INTERESTING ITEMS IN THE CHORAL ARCHIVE By Michael Hammer, Choir Director

As I settle into my job at SPC, one of my tasks this summer has been to make the choral archive searchable by scripture and topic, musical forces needed, and so on. For example, this morning I typed the word "light" into the spreadsheet while planning a service this fall whose scriptures all reference light shining in darkness, and out came a half dozen anthems that either have the word "light " in their title, or whose words reference light in some important way.

This project has taken many hours so far, both of my time and that of my excellent choral librarian, Tina Thomas, but it is already showing signs of cutting down on my time spent searching for the right anthem and the likelihood that I will find one that fits the service.

However, along the way there have been several very interesting finds. At some point, every member of the staff has been the 'victim' of my need to share these findings, and now I share some of them with you.

For example, did you know that there is a piece in our archives that is scored for alto and soprano xylophone and a chorus of whistlers?

There is also an anthem whose accompaniment is marked for either organ or for "spinet." I wonder why they felt the need to specify a particular model of upright piano to play the accompaniment on? Also, the organist is instructed to play "piano" -- the full word being written out in front of the staff and not within it, where it would normally appear, conventionally abbreviated as "p" (at least I assume they mean the dynamic marking for "soft), but it does look a little confusing to tell the organist to play piano!

A few of these inspired odd trains of thought. One of them, an anthem written for the royal wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana, mentioned the date of the royal wedding as being on a Wednesday. Who but the royal family would be married on a Wednesday, I wondered? Most of the rest of us settle for the weekends, when guests can more easily come, not having the option of shutting down the entire country for an official holiday. Then there is a "prayer for peace" with the copyright date of 1939. That one made me feel sad.

Of course, the point of this project is to be able to find anthems for particular occasions, scriptures, themes, and sermons. This means word choice is important. Let's say the scripture for the morning is Psalm 42, whose opening may be familiar: "As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul longs for you, O Lord." There is even a popular song titled "As the deer." Our archive has a piece based on the same Psalm, only its title is "Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks." A bit on the fancypants end of the lingual spectrum, I think! It may mean the same thing as the plain English version of Psalm 42, but I doubt I could easily find it.

Some of the anthems from a hundred years ago show a marked difference in their approach to language. And even then, one wonders what their composers were thinking. There is one, not to be confused with a mere anthem (!) which calls itself "a religious characteristic in the FORM of an anthem."

So far, I've found at least eight settings of Psalm 100. Some of them are titled Psalm 100, some have Latin titles (Jubilate Deo), some are sneaky and don't mention the 100th Psalm at all until you start reading the words.

And there are at least six settings of the hymn "Built on a Rock" – two of which were set on the eve of the second World War (like the "Prayer for Peace" above).

Because of careful record keeping by former and present choral librarians, some of the anthems have special notes on their performance. They may have been sung for pastoral ordinations, installations, special services in the life of the church, or dedicated by members. These have added meaning to the lengthy task of looking at each anthem and entering key words into a spreadsheet. It can be a repetitive task, but sometimes along comes an anthem that inspires either mirth or reflection.



THANK YOU FROM MALAWI

Dear Sewickley PC,

Greetings from Chonde CCAp in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It has taken along time without communicating with you through the church email. Chonde CCAP is fine and all the members are fine too.

May you extend our greetings to our brothers and sisters of Sewickley PC.

We are glad to thank Sewickley PC for the money you assisted in 2019 that we sued in the construction of the new manse with missionary Andrew Machinjiri brought during his visit in 2019.

We are also glad to tell you that the construction of the new manse has therefore been completed and the manse will be officially inaugurated on August 20, 2023.

You are therefore invited to the ceremony if possible. Chonde CCAP is wishing Sewickley PC all the best.

May God almighty bless you abundantly,

Zikomo kwambiti (thank you very much),

Nedson Kohka 1st Session Clerk Thuchila Presbyery Chonde CCAP, Luchenza



I am thrilled to report that we had another very successful backpack drive this year. We delivered 114 backpacks to the Center for Hope! That is 14 over our goal of 100. We were also able to present the Center with a check for a little over \$800 from member donations! Sue Otto was so thrilled as she said they have such a big need for food right now so that check could not have come at a better time.

Rev. Emily as well as deacons Eric Fulmer, Suzanne Morrison, Joanne Canaan and her husband, Gretchen Burnham and I helped transport and distribute backpacks.

Thank you to you all for your support with this project! This mission is such a blessing to the children and families at the Center for Hope in Ambridge.

DINNER IS SERVED!

Did you know that throughout the year we provide and serve dinner once a month at the Center for Hope in Ambridge? We also serve five times a year at the The Ladle, in Ambridge.

These dinners help to feed those in need in the Ambridge community. It's a small thing that has a great impact. You are always welcome to become involved. You can take part as a single individual, with friends, or with your family.

Volunteering takes many forms: prepare parts of the meal, deliver food to location, set-up for the meal, serve the meal, and clean-up afterwards. You can help with just one thing or all of them! No help is denied.

You can learn more about the history of each organization in relation to our church AND find out how to volunteer on our website. Please visit <u>sewickleypresby.org</u> to learn more about these great missions.



Serving dinner at The Ladle in February, 2023



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

Dated Material PLEASE EXPEDITE

This newsletter is published by Sewickley Presbyterian Church

Join us for Mike Creamer's Ordination Service

August 27 · 2 PM

