



First Presbyterian Church of Harborcreek

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September Newsletter Volume 2025, Issue 7

Church Leadership

Pastor.....Rev. Mike Wilson
Music Director.....Chris Thomas
Organist.....Joyce Kriner
Secretary.....Mary Stewart
Custodian & Librarian.....Eileen Kriner

Committee Chairs—2025

Co-Clerks of Session.....Gil and Marlene Long
Membership Care &
Development.....Brian Griffith
Mission/Outreach.....Ann Nesgoda
Nominating & Training.....Don Duckett
and Marlene Long
Personnel.....Sue Kellerman
Property.....Dave Maille
Spiritual Formation.....Jennifer Wedzik
Stewardship & Finance.....Dave Maille
Worship.....Scott Shunk
and Chris Thomas
Recording Secretary.....Cindy Skladanowski
Treasurer.....Gil Long

Deacons

Chairperson.....Bill Nesgoda
Vice-Chair.....Nancy Way
Secretary.....Linda DeAngelo
Treasurer.....Peggie Smith
Caring Tree.....Nancy Way
and Bill Nesgoda
Correspondence.....Linda DeAngelo
Flower Coordinator.....Sue Resinger
and Nancy Way
Funeral Dinners.....Sue Beighley
and Deacon of the Month
Greeters/Liturgists.....Deacon of the Month
Prayer Chain.....Pat Feddersen
and Sue Resinger



First Presbyterian Church of
Harborcreek



My friend Shaun, who is the music director at the church I served in Pittsburgh, recently shared with me an email thread he engaged in with a woman whose grandmother and aunt had – more than 50 years ago – crafted some needlepoint cushions for a pair of chairs that sit on either side of the communion table. It seems this granddaughter/niece, who was never a member and is not well-known to anyone at the church, is insisting that chairs be returned to her family because the church hosts yoga classes in the sanctuary. “The sanctuary is for worship. It’s not a gym!” she wrote.

A bit of background: Some years before my arrival in 2005, the church removed about 10 rows of pews in the front, creating a more flexible space that could be utilized for all kinds of purposes and events on Sunday and beyond. The open space and the church’s fine acoustics made it the perfect home for the Edgewood Symphony Orchestra, which holds two concerts there annually, plus rehearsals. A local barbershop group rehearses there. Shaun, a high school choral music teacher, brings local and state choir festivals and competitions there and his own high school choruses perform there regularly. The church’s primary musician, Sunny Sakai, is an accomplished classical and jazz pianist and brings her group there. I used the space to create all kinds of dramatic worship experiences. The week-long VBS we did always used the sanctuary for decidedly un-solemn activities. And every time we used that remarkable open space, the communion table and the chairs were carefully moved well away from any possible danger. That same care is exercised for the yoga group which, contrary to the objecting woman, is a perfect fit for a large, beautiful and contemplative space like the sanctuary.

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And it's worth noting that, while the objecting woman insists that the chairs, "should actually be in a museum or collector's gallery," the whole church is historically significant. It was designed by Ralph Cram, one of the best-known and most prolific church architects of late 19th and early 20th centuries, whose work includes the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. The church's windows are among the last few remaining examples in the U.S. of a style called grisaille. The organ chest is a majestic and priceless hand-carved masterpiece. So those two chairs, while nice, are far from the only museum-worthy aspects of the church. And while I was there, they were never pointed out as particularly significant.

I think the objecting woman makes at least two errors. First, she does not understand the nature of a gift. Once given, a true gift no longer belongs to the giver and the recipient is free to do with it what they wish. If strings are attached, if there are conditions applied to its use or display, if gratitude is made mandatory, it may be many good and generous things, but it is not really a gift and is more like a transaction. Only when the giver relinquishes all claims and expectations does something become a gift. This is how we can call God's grace a gift, how we can call Jesus's life, surrendered on a cross, a gift. Because while those things are freely given to all people, we are free to accept, reject or ignore them. We are not required to say thank you to receive their benefits. God does not measure out God's love in proportion to our church attendance.

The second error made by the objecting woman is made clear in her additional strident question, "So do you intend it to be a church or a community center?" I'm not quite sure why she would object to any space in the church being used by the larger community for any good purpose.

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In my experience, sessions, who are responsible for authorizing facilities' use, can be trusted to make good decisions about what is and isn't appropriate. Far too many of our sanctuaries are used only a few hours a week. I would argue that any group using a sanctuary for any purpose that promotes community along with spiritual and physical wellness; that celebrates creativity; that brings people together to hear good music or enjoy an informed lecture or watch a good movie is in keeping with our understanding of sacred space. That is, no space is inherently sacred. We make it sacred not only through our worship, but by using it in a variety of ways that deepen our connection to creation, each other and the Divine. That deepening may happen through a symphony concert, a high school choral performance, an art exhibit, or a yoga class.

And a corollary may be found in the woman's objection to the church having worship somewhere other than the sanctuary. Like many congregations, this one worships in a smaller but still spacious, air-conditioned, room for a few months in the summer. Apparently, she believes that's inappropriate. But when we put limits on where worship happens, we risk limiting our image of the One we worship. Certainly, I understand the importance of our sanctuaries, right down to why we sit in the same place every week. The need for continuity, connection and stability in a changing world, the ease with which we can flow into the worship experience if things are familiar – these are important reasons for coming to the same place at the same time every week. At the same time, those very real needs may drift into a complacency that might be mitigated by changing things up.

As part of her screed, the woman writes, "If you care so little about the sanctuary, we want our chairs back." I know this church and I know they care very much about that sanctuary. I was privileged to lead worship there for seven years and the history I recounted above I did from memory (except the spelling of grisaille; I had to look that up). And I might suggest that it is precisely their care and love for the sanctuary – its beauty, history and sacredness – that compels them to open it and share it with as many people as possible in as many ways as possible.

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Now I don't know if the woman is going to get those chairs back. And I'm glad it's not a decision I have to participate in (but I sure do want to know what gets decided!) This story might prompt all of us entrusted with caring for sacred spaces to see them as true community centers and that any activity that brings people together for any kind of rejoicing, celebration, physical and spiritual well-being, education, music, art or exercise – anything that elevates us, heals us, broadens us, and brings us together – is sacred.

Grace and peace,

Mike

♫Choir Begins♫

As our summer draws to an end, Chancel Choir will continue practicing on Wednesdays at 6:00, with Handbell practice immediately following at 7:00.

The first Chancel Choir practice for the season is scheduled for Wednesday, September 3 at 6:00, and we'll sing for worship on September 7.

Handbell Choir practices won't resume until Wednesday, September 17 at 7:00.

Attention to those who love to sing or ring a bell, but are hesitant to join the chancel or bell choirs. Many feel that way at first, but with the support of our choir director and other singers and players you will love it! Give it a try!

Worship News

September 2025

Worship Leaders

Liturgists

Greeters

Sun., Sept. 7	Kyle Foust	Tracy Connors & Ava
Sun., Sept. 14	Tiffany Kephart	Alisabeth Goetsch & Pat Feddersen
Sun., Sept. 21	Nancy Way	Mulvin Family
Sun., Sept. 28	Dave Maille	Izzy and Jim Lyon



Lectionary Readings – September 2025

Below are the readings suggested by the Revised Common Lectionary for September.

Sunday, September 7, 2025

13th Sunday after Pentecost

Semicontinuous

Jeremiah 18:1–11

Philemon 1–21

Complementary

Deuteronomy 30:15–20

Philemon 1–21

Psalm 139:1–6, 13–18

Luke 14:25–33

Psalm 1

Luke 14:25–33

Sunday, September 14, 2025

14th Sunday after Pentecost

Semicontinuous

Jeremiah 4:11–12, 22–28

1 Timothy 1:12–17

Complementary

Exodus 32:7–14

1 Timothy 1:12–17

Psalm 14

Luke 15:1–10

Psalm 51:1–10

Luke 15:1–10

Sunday, September 21, 2025

15th Sunday after Pentecost

Semicontinuous

Jeremiah 8:18–9:1

1 Timothy 2:1–7

Complementary

Amos 8:4–7

1 Timothy 2:1–7

Psalm 79:1–9

Luke 16:1–13

Psalm 113

Luke 16:1–13

Sunday, September 28, 2025

16th Sunday after Pentecost

Semicontinuous

Jeremiah 32:1–3a, 6–15

1 Timothy 6:6–19

Complementary

Amos 6:1a, 4–7

1 Timothy 6:6–19

Psalm 91:1–6, 14–16

Luke 16:19–31

Psalm 146

Luke 16:19–31

More Worship News

**DEDICATION OF THE NEWLY
RENOVATED LOUNGE
AND HONORING THE MINISTRY OF
THE REVEREND
SHELDON (TIM) LOGAN
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2025**

Join us after worship on for a potluck lunch and the dedication of the "Logan Lounge." We will be blessed by the attendance of some of the Logan Family.

There is a sign up sheet at the back of sanctuary for attendance and food donations.

Over the last several months our downstairs lounge has been entirely repaired and remodeled and we are naming it in honor of Pastor Emeritus Sheldon "Tim" Logan who served this congregation from November 2, 1969-June 31, 1982 and as interim in 2014.

**Worship and Sunday School
time change
Beginning
Sunday, September 7th
Kid's Sunday School
9:30 a.m.
Breakfast and a Movie
9:30 a.m.
Worship
11:00 a.m.**



**CELEBRATING OUR
LONGEST-STANDING MEMBERS**

We are honoring our **Longest-standing Members** with a celebration during worship at 11 a.m. with a luncheon to follow on September 21st. We hope to see you there!

72 years

Marjorie Suter

67 years

Linda DeAngelo

66 years

Esther Noonan

63 years

David Maille

67 years

Nancy Brown

62 years

Nancy McNally

61 years

Jack Mosier and James Stewart

60 years

Mary Ellen Flowers and Eileen Kriner

59 years

Peggy Nelson

58 years

Elisabeth (Betsy) Roseto

55 years

Kathy Stewart

54 years

Jacque Foust

52 years

Bonnie Duckett, Karen Foust, Bob Kellerman,
Sue Kellerman, Carol Mulvin

50 years

Dale Claypoole, Barb Griffith,
David Roseto, Peggie Smith

49 years

William Stewart, Nancy Way

We tried to be thorough in finding all members who are 49 years and more. If we missed you, please call the church office (814-899-1031) and we will add you to the list.

Up-Coming Study...



COFFEE, TEA & GOD

*Exploring the Word of God
Through the Psalms of Ascent
Psalms 120 to 134*

We are exploring a new journey of faith. First Presbyterian Church of Harborcreek will be hosting a community Bible study with Emmanuel Presbyterian Church of Erie.

Beginning Wednesday, September 10, 2025
and every other week for 6 sessions.

We will gather at 9:30 a.m. for coffee tea & Krimpets,
with study from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

First Presbyterian Church of Harborcreek

6724 Buffalo Road, Harborcreek, PA

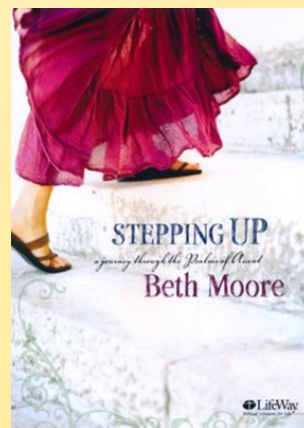
Registration is required. Workbooks are \$13.00

Please Email: Marlene Long at Pinkribbongal@comcast.net

COME JOIN US!!

A peek at what to expect:

Wed. Sept. 10	Session 1	Where Will My Hope Come From
Wed. Sept. 24	Session 2	Our Eyes Look to the Lord
Wed. Oct. 8	Session 3	Great Things for Us
Wed. Oct. 22	Session 4	A Fruitful Vine
Wed. Nov. 5	Session 5	My Hope Is in the Lord
Wed. Nov. 19	Session 6	Blessings from Zion



Church Office Hours

Pastor Mike is usually in the office on
Mondays and Wednesdays
around 9:00 a.m.

If you have a pastoral emergency, please call Mike
at 412-298-9196.

The secretary's regular office hours are: Monday,
Wednesday and Friday mornings from 9:00 a.m.
to noon.

There may be times that the hours may be
changed; please call the church office to verify.

Church Office Phone number:
814-899-1031

Email Address: office@hcpresbyterian.org
Website: hcpresbyterian.org

**WORSHIP TIME CHANGES
TO 11:00 A.M.**



**BEGINNING
SUNDAY,
SEPTEMBER 7TH**

**SEE YOU AT
11:00!!**

Membership, Care and Development

LONGEST STANDING MEMBER CELEBRATION



On **September 21st** we will celebrate those members who have been a part of our church for the most years with a special tureen luncheon after **11:00 worship**. Look for a sign-up sheet to be posted in the back of the church to indicate your plan to attend along with what side, salad or dessert you care to bring. Rumor has it that we will be serving our delicious Swiss Steak as the main course! You can also contact the church office with your plans. We need a head count so please let us know as we plan to honor these pillars of the church.

BREAKFAST AND A MOVIE

Your favorite Sunday morning activity (eating!) returns **September 21st at 9:15 a.m.** when our fabulous chefs will cook/bake many delights to tantalize your taste buds before we show our first movie of the fall season. This adult discussion group will watch about 30 minutes of a movie and then discuss what they saw. Now is a great time to try this out as we will return to our original movie, first suggested by Rev. Tim Logan, "Oh God!". This group has been gathering since before Covid and it promises to be another fun time for fellowship. Please consider joining us.



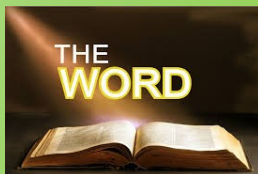
ALL MEMBER VISITATION



The officers of the church (and some helpers) will pay a short visit to every member's household on Sunday afternoon, September 28th. The purpose is just to keep in touch with everyone and find out any joys or concerns you may have. We will give you a printed survey (very short) that you can complete and mail back to the church at no cost to you. Please try to be available that afternoon for this short but important event in the life of your church. We look forward to seeing ALL members on the 28th!

WINE AND THE WORD

The "Word" is coming back....but not right away. With the beginning of the Bible Study class every other week it makes sense not to overburden you with TOO much to read and discuss, so W & W will debut in January, keeping the every other Sunday night at 6:00 time slot on Zoom. More details will follow in December and early January so you won't miss it. **STAY TUNED!!**



*Beloved, let us love one another,
because love is from God;
everyone who loves
is born of God and knows God.
1 John 4:7*



**Reuse
Recycle
Repurpose**

We are still receiving donations for special mission projects. This is an easy way to make a big difference in the lives of people in our community and around the world! Just collect and drop off at church.

♥**Aluminum Cans** for the Dick Smith Fund to benefit community members with emergency needs.

♥**Travel Size Personal Care Products** to be given to the homeless at The Upper Room.

♥**Cancelled Stamps** The Mission Committee is again saving cancelled postage stamps for a great cause. Please place your **cancelled stamps** in the box provided at the back of the sanctuary and they will be given to the Trinity Lutheran Church in Erie for processing. The stamps will be trimmed and sent to an organization who sells them to buy bibles in other languages.

♥**Used Greeting Cards** to be sent to be sent to St Jude's **Ranch** for them to repurpose and sell in their gift shop and on their **website**. Please do not cut cards or change cards in anyway. They need them whole for them to be transformed.

Church Family News...



DEVOTE YOURSELVES TO
Prayer.
COLOSSIANS 4:2

Prayer List:

For the Lake Erie Presbytery & its leaders; for our pastor, Mike Wilson, for church members, family & friends, we pray.

If someone can be removed from the prayer list or if you have someone to add, please call or email the church office with the information.

Barb Bemis
Claudia Brown
John Brown
Margaret Crider
Robin Cuneo
Linda De Angelo
Dave English

Family of Bill Fannin
Pat Feddersen
Mary Ellen Flowers
Ron Flowers
Joan Graham
Sue Haynes
Morgan Johnson

Joyce Kriner
David Lyon
Dick May
Mellish Family
Chris Mosier
Peg Nelson
Ann Nesgoda
Esther Noonan

Rich Smith
Sandy Spangler
Carl Steiner
Marge Suter
Ron Washe
Tina Wasiela
Lee Woodard
Zanita Zacks-Gabriel



September Birthdays

- 14 Dena Barker
- 28 Christine Schrimper
- 29 Larry Resinger

September Anniversaries

- 4 Jeremy & Annie Stewart
- 6 Jim & Linda Erickson
- 7 Laura & Jeremy Rockwell
- 11 Dave & Sue Beighley
- 13 Michael & Christine Schrimper
- 14 Kyle and Casey Foust

Remember Our Homebound

Some of you have asked about what you can do to keep connected to those who struggle to come to worship or participate in church activities. Listed below are some of those you could send a card or a note of encouragement.

Margaret Crider
Twinbrook Room 212
3805 Field Street
Erie, PA 16511

Jessie Dennison
C/O The Palms of Mount Pleasant
937 Bowman Road AL #146
Mount Pleasant, SC 29464

Jacque Foust
8467 East Lake Rd.
Erie, PA 16511

Dick May
6568 Iroquois Avenue
Harborcreek, PA 16421

Esther Noonan
7554 McGill Road
Harborcreek, PA 16421

Peggy Nelson
2 Gibson St. Apt. 102
North East, PA 16428

Sandy Spangler
227 W. 22nd Street Room 9
Erie, PA 16509

Carl Steiner
c/o Heather Steiner
4847 Tamarlac Lane
Erie, PA 16505

Ron Washe
Brevillier Village
Barnabas North Room 409
5416 E Lake Road
Erie, PA 16511



As our tradition has been for the
past few years,

We will be changing worship
times with our sister church,
Emmanuel.

**Our worship time will be at
11:00 a.m.**

**with our Sunday School
classes before worship.**

Emmanuel's worship will begin
at 9:15 a.m.





September 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Please note that Sunday School and Worship times have changed!	1 Women's AA 5:00 p.m.	2	3 Preschool Open House 9–11:30 a.m. 12:30—3 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal 6:00 p.m.	4	5 Preschool Officially Begins	6
7 11:00 a.m. In-Person & Live Stream Worship New Lounge Dedication and Pot Luck Luncheon	8 Deacon's Meeting 1:00 p.m. Session Meeting 6:30 p.m. Women's AA 5:00 p.m.	9	10 Coffee, Tea and God 9:30-11:30 a.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal 6:00 p.m.	11	12	13
14 11:00 a.m. In-Person & Live Stream Worship	15 Women's AA 5:00 p.m.	16	17 Chancel Choir Rehearsal 6:00 p.m. Handbell Rehearsal 7:00 p.m.	18	19	20
21 Breakfast begins at 9:15 a.m. Adult S.S. Movie Kids Sunday School begins 9:30 a.m. In-Person & Live Stream Worship 11:00 a.m. Longest-Standing Member Luncheon Following Worship	22 Women's AA 5:00 p.m.	23	24 Coffee, Tea and God 9:30-11:30 a.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal 6:00 p.m. Handbell Rehearsal 7:00 p.m.	25	26	27
28 Breakfast begins at 9:15 a.m. Adult S.S. Movie Kids Sunday School begins 9:30 a.m. In-Person & Live Stream Worship 11:00 a.m. Afternoon Home Visits by Church Leadership	29 Women's AA 5:00 p.m.	30	Elder of the Month Sue Kellerman 717-586-8357 Deacon of the Month Sue Resinger 814-323-0716			