

September 2020



First Presbyterian Church E-News

Connect with First Presbyterian Church

August Session Highlights

The Session of First Presbyterian Church met virtually at 7:00 PM on Thursday, August 20, 2020 for its stated monthly meeting. The Rev. James Young served as Moderator. Jeff Getty served as Clerk.

The Session took the following actions:

- Approved the Membership Records as of August 19, 2020.
- Approved the Stewardship Campaign Committee's recommendation for the 2020 Stewardship Campaign based on Jeremiah 29:11. "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."
- Approved and sustained the examination of Kristina Hall to Session Class of 2023.
- Approved the recommendation from the Worship and Music Committee to serve communion in the current manner through the rest of the year.
- Approved the purchase from Sights and Sounds the production of

Queen Esther to be shown at the church on September 4, 2020 at 7:00 PM

In addition the Session heard:

- Finance Committee reported collections are going well. In addition, the collections and expenses are in line with the 2020 budget.
- Rev. Young reported that attendance in the church for worship on Sundays has increased over the last two weeks to an average of about 40 people which has included visitors.
- Session discussed whether to resume live Session meetings in September and decided to conduct the September meeting virtually and revisit the subject on an on-going basis.

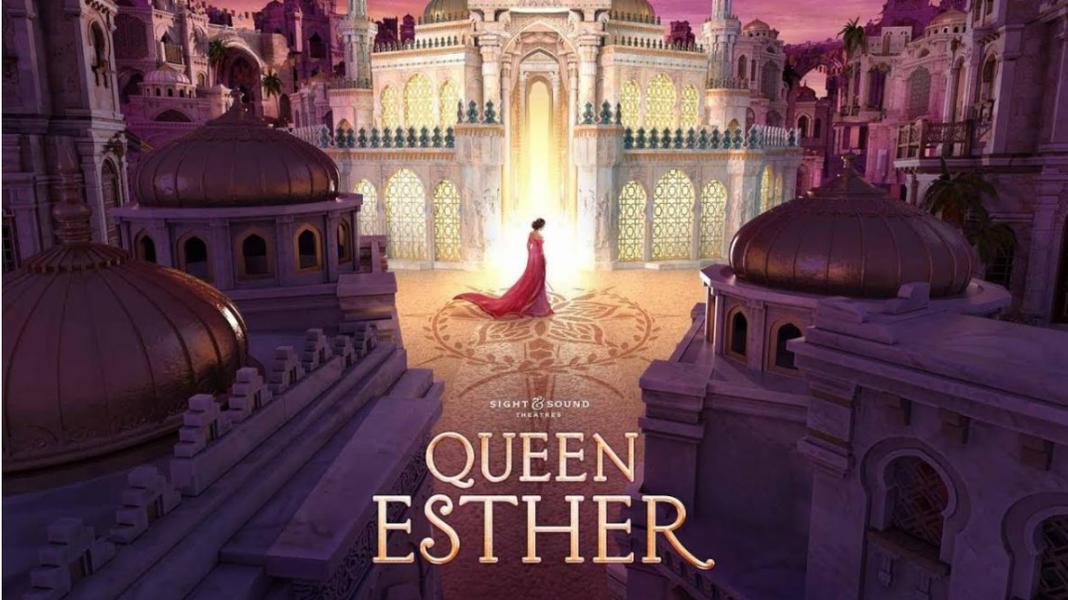
If you have any questions, please contact the Clerk or the Moderator.

Pastor Nominating Committee Update

The Pastor Nominating Committee would like to thank all of you for the input you provided on the survey sent out a few months back. Your thoughts and comments were invaluable in our work. From the information we received from that survey, as well as the work previously done by the committee tasked with reviewing our church's mission, the PNC was able to develop the congregation's "Ministry Information Form." This form is essentially the "job posting" for our search and lets pastor candidates know what we are looking for. The PNC invested substantial thought and prayer into making sure our ministry information form reflected who we were as a congregation and what we were looking for in a pastor. From there, the form was submitted to the Session for discussion and approval. With session's approval we were finally able to submit to the Baltimore Presbytery Committee on Ministry and upload the form to the denominations employment service, the Church Leadership Connection. We have since received a number of candidates who were matched with our congregation, as well as some who have seen our information and submitted themselves for consideration. The PNC is hard at work reviewing each candidate and discerning God's call. This is where the PNC has to go dark though. As we are reviewing the candidates, not much else can be disclosed. However, we will update you on our progress once we are able.

I am grateful for the other members of the PNC and their diligent work in this search process, and I am grateful for you, the congregation, for your involvement in the search process. I ask that you keep the PNC in your prayers as we work to discern the direction God is calling us. It is a challenging task, but we are comforted in the faith that if we trust and follow God, he will not lead us astray for as it says in Psalm 37:5, "*Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act.*"

Thank you,
Joshua Gilhart - PNC Secretary



The Congregational Care and Outreach Committee invite you to attend the simulcast of Queen Esther on **Friday, September 4th, at 7:00 PM** at the church. Face mask will be required and proper social distance measures will be in place. There is no cover charge, and all voluntary donations will be sent to the Sight & Sound Theatre who made this possible due to Covid restrictions. Refreshments will be provided during the 30 minute intermission.

THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE
CLOSED on Monday, September 7th
in observance of Labor Day.

We will be **CLOSED**
TO OBSERVE
Labor
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
DAY

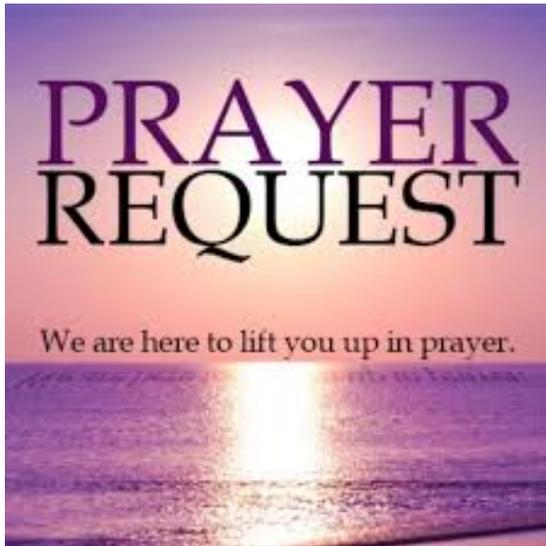
Nurture



Joys and Concerns

September Birthdays

Betty Lange 1-Sep
Tim Workmeister 8-Sep
Amy Workman 9-Sep
Jim Mooney 11-Sep
Jim Williams 12-Sep
Kaitlyn Kauffman 13-Sep
Penny Campbell 14-Sep
Becca Medina-Guess 14-Sep
Robert Gamble 17-Sep
William Fritz 20-Sep
Mike Weddle 20-Sep
Ernie Casseday 21-Sep
Betty Luger 21-Sep
Elva Berry 22-Sep
Phil Nelson 24-Sep
Carol Morgan 25-Sep
Cindy Corley 30-Sep



If you have prayer requests that you would like to add to First Presbyterian Church's prayer chain, please contact the church office or you can now submit your prayer request on the FPC website under the nurture tab.

Learn and Grow

WHITE PRIVILEGE

let's talk



The Faith Formation Committee began its study of exploring racism together on Monday, August 31st via Zoom.

We are utilizing a curriculum created by the United Church of Christ called "White Privilege: Let's Talk. A Resource for Transformational Dialogue." This program is separated into 6 sections, which we will explore over a number of weeks. The study will continue on Monday, September 14th & 28th and will conclude on Monday, October 12th from 5:30-6:30 PM each night.

If you are interested in participating in this program please follow this link (<http://www.fpc-cumberland.org/education/bible-study/>) and fill out the form with your name and contact information.

We hope to continue this group beyond this class as well and explore other ways of educating ourselves about racism and social justice.



The Book Of Revelation

Bible Study with Jim Young

Resuming:
September 10th

Thursday Evenings
In the Sanctuary
5:30pm

Masks Required

Rev. Dr. Jim Young will be resuming the weekly Bible Study on The Book of Revelation on **Thursday, September 10th at 5:30 PM** in the Sanctuary.

Given the concerns of COVID-19, we will be maintaining appropriate social distancing and masks will be required. This class will take place weekly and likely carry us through to the end of October. We hope to see you there!

Worship With Us

A Note from our Director of Music Ministries

Dear Friends,

Shortly before we returned to in-person worship, you heard or read a message from me explaining why there would be no singing in church during the pandemic. This decision was not made lightly, but was reached quickly and unanimously by FPC's ad hoc committee on reopening the church. The risk posed by singing was simply too great. Sadly, in the months since then, nothing has changed. Almost weekly a new study or report is made available which confirms what is already known: aerosols that are emitted when we sing have the potential to be so-called superspreaders of the virus. Aerosols travel much farther from the body (up to 20 feet or more) than droplets emitted while speaking, or even sneezing or coughing. Furthermore, aerosols linger in the air much longer than droplets. (A recent article in *Time* by a chemistry professor from the University of Colorado at Boulder, described the behavior and longevity of aerosols to be akin to that of smoke. Imagine one person smoking a cigar in the sanctuary for the duration of a hymn or anthem. Imagine a choir or the entire congregation lighting up.)

As we returned to worship in June, I felt fear and trepidation, not for our safety but for a potential loss of spirit and energy in worship amid the new safety protocols. And while things are most certainly changed, our worship has remained inspired and meaningful and we as a congregation are gaining new, valuable perspectives. Several times in the Psalms we are given the mandate to sing to the Lord a *new* song. Humming softly, following along silently, giving intimate attention to text and poetry, virtual participation, pre-recording, seeing and hearing in new ways, and being open to new ideas- I think these are the new songs we are called to sing in this time.

I am grateful to you as a congregation for your support and patience as our music ministry continues to navigate into this new era, and I know you all join me in giving thanks to the numerous musicians in our congregation and community who helped enrich our worship during the summer months with their heartfelt performances, both live and virtual. Special thanks are due to Eric and Joe for their technical expertise. Without them, the virtual musical offerings we have enjoyed this summer would not have been possible.

As we approach autumn (and before long the seasons of Advent and Christmas) we will be trying out several new ideas and suggestions for music during worship, but in the meantime and for as long as this situation continues, I encourage and challenge you all to sing every day as you are able. Sing at home or outside. Sing to (or with) those in your quarantine circle or alone in the car. Sing *Happy Birthday!* to a friend over the phone or a favorite lullaby or silly song to your grandchildren over a video call. Sing every day. And of course, if you think of any songs you would like to share with our church family and friends in an upcoming FPC Playlist, please send them my way!

If you have any questions or concerns, ideas or suggestions, please feel free to reach out to me at anytime at (814) 442-4168 or bryan@bryanlohr.com

Wishing you peace and safety,

Bryan Lohr,
Director of Music Ministries

A Note from the JoyBells

JoyBells ringers joyfully came together this summer to ring in church on August 16th. You can go to YouTube and hear our group ring about 28 minutes into the service. It was a delight to participate in worship creating music together.

The consensus is there are ringers who wish to continue with rehearsals and ringing in worship this fall while other ringers are continuing to quarantine or take care of family at this time. We would like to begin our fall rehearsal schedule with an invitation to others who might like to join us this fall. If you have never tried ringing we can expand our space to include you! We also have some other instruments in our church that could compliment the

JoyBells - Orff instruments and xylophones - which could be fun to add to an anthem or to an occasional hymn.

On Wednesday, September 9th, we will have a polish and parlay session and look at some music for this fall. We will meet at 6:30 PM and wear masks as well as spread out as we work. The following week, Wednesday rehearsals will begin at 6:30 PM for about an hour. Two pair of clean gloves will be provided to every ringer and it will be their responsibility to take them home and keep them clean/washed. Any suggestions for music, safety, techniques, distancing, etc will be entertained and appreciated so that every participant will feel safe at rehearsals and during worship. Please let Julie Courtney know if you can attend on September 9th.



We will return to our Fall Worship Schedule on Sunday, September 13th with worship beginning at 11:00 AM.