



Sunset Hills

M E S S E N G E R

February 2023

In this Issue

Message From Pastor Laura	1-2
Music Notes	2
Notes from CE	3
Monts Malawi Mission	4
Days for Girls	5
One Great Hour of Sharing	6
Women’s Retreat	7
Session & Deacons 2023	8
Lenten Wednesday Nights	9
Japan Pilgrimage	10-11
February Information	12-13
Sunset Hills Book Club	13
Health & Wellness	14
Life Line Screening	15

Sunset Hills United Presbyterian Church

900 Country Club Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15228
(412) 561-6261

www.shupchurch.org

Church Office/Administrative Secretary
sunsethillschurch@gmail.com

Pastor Laura Strauss
revlaurastrauss@gmail.com

Beth Romig, Financial Administrator
shupfinance@gmail.com

Shelby Gracey, Music Director
sgracey@verizon.net

Taylor Strang, Christian Ed. Director
sunsethillsCE@gmail.com

Michelle Brumfield, Nursery School
sunsethillsnurseryschool@gmail.com

A Message from Pastor Laura

The Spirit confronts the disciples of Jesus with an irrepressible truth: God overcomes boundary and border. God touches first. God does not wait to be touched by us.
- The Rev. Dr. Willie J. Jennings



There is nothing like a good listener. And our God is a good listener. John tells us in his first letter that our God is a God who listens to us. The Lord listens to our confession, as well as our stories, our cries, our surprise, our anxiety, our laughing, our hope. We are blessed to have a Savior who has experienced the full breadth of human emotion, therefore understanding our emotion.

Consider what you feel like when you know that someone is listening to you. How do you feel in your soul during the prayers of the people, knowing God listens to your Sunday morning prayer? What happens in your body when a loved one gives you their full attention as you speak? Think about the emotions you feel after sharing your story, knowing your story has been heard.

This is a ministry every one of us can provide. This ministry is particularly needed by those whose stories are frequently ignored. In Acts this month, we encounter this need in both Cornelius and Peter. Cornelius, though a Gentile soldier, needs the Jesus-follower Peter to listen to his story of conversion. Peter, likewise, needs to share his unorthodox vision of the animals in the sheet with his peers - peers who will likely think he’s confused beyond reason. Cornelius and Peter have unfamiliar stories, stories no one wants to hear. But, these two men need to be heard. They need someone to listen.

Whose unfamiliar story are you listening to? Perhaps you need to hear the story of another generation. This may be the story on the heart of our too-often neglected senior citizens. It might be the stories of our misunderstood young people. We can hear these stories by reaching out to those whose generation is different than our own through whatever medium works best for them, whether it be a personal visit or a text message.

During Black History Month, it is worthwhile for all of us to hear the stories of what it is like to be Black in the United States. We can do this by reading

(continued on pg. 2)

A Message from Pastor Laura (continued from page 1)

books by Black authors and/or watching films about the Black experience. I recommend the books of Ibram X. Kendi and the films by Henry Louis Gates.

Whoever's story we listen to, we listen best by listening without thinking about what we're going to say in return. When we think about what we're going to say in response to what a person is saying, we are not

listening. The best response we can give, actually, is to say, "tell me more about..." related to something you've just been told. Thank the individual for sharing their story with you. Honor their story by not gossiping about or judging it. Instead, sit with their story, bringing their story before God in prayer. This is an act of true humility, in addition to an act of listening.

The act of listening to voices different from your own is a worthwhile discipline to consider for Lent 2023, if you do such things. Note that this discipline will be a gift to those you listen to, as well as a gift to you as you live into the ministry of the God in Christ who listens to you.

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Laura

Music Notes By Shelby Gracey

As we all know, February 14 is Valentine's Day, which we devote to sharing our feelings of love for others. For some people, this can be a very difficult day, especially for those who have lost loved ones. However, God's love never leaves us, no matter what. The old hymn, *O Love That Will Not Let Me Go*, assures us of the love of God.

"This text was authored by an esteemed Scottish minister who was totally blind and who described the writing as the 'fruit of much mental suffering.' Many conjectures have been made regarding the cause of this mental suffering. Fortunately, the author, George Matheson, did leave this account.

My hymn was composed in the manse of Innellan on the evening of the 6th of June, 1882, when I was 40 years of age. I was alone in the manse at that time. It was the night of my sister's marriage, and the rest of the family were staying overnight in Glasgow. Something happened to me, which was known only to myself, and which caused me the most severe mental

suffering. The hymn was the fruit of that suffering. It was the quickest bit of work I ever did in my life. I had the impression of having it dictated to me by some inward voice rather than of working it out myself. I am quite sure that the whole work was completed in five minutes, and equally sure that it never received at my hands any retouching or correction. I have no natural gift of rhythm. All the other verses I have ever written are manufactured articles; this came like a dayspring from on high.

A very popular account for the writing of this hymn, though never fully substantiated, claims that it was the result of the reminder at his sister's wedding of the great disappointment that Matheson had experienced just before he was to have been married to his college fiancée. When told of his impending blindness, she is said to have informed him, 'I do not wish to be the wife of a blind preacher.'

It is very possible that the lingering memory of this rejection from an

earthly lover prompted George Matheson to write this beautiful expression of an eternal love that will never be broken."

O Love that will not let me go, I rest my weary soul in Thee;

I give Thee back the life I owe, that in Thine ocean depths its flow may richer, fuller be.

O Light that followest all my way, I yield my flickering torch to Thee;

My heart restores its borrowed ray, that in Thy sunshine's blaze its day may brighter, fairer be.

O joy that seekest me through pain, I cannot close my heart to Thee;

I trace the rainbow through the rain, and feel the promise is not vain, that morn shall tearless be.

O Cross that liftest up my head, I dare not ask to fly from Thee;

I lay in dust life's glory dead, and from the ground there blossoms red, life that shall endless be.

("Amazing Grace: 366 Inspiring Hymn Stories for Daily Devotions," Kenneth W. Osbeck, Kregel Publications, 2002, p. 48.)

Notes from Christian Education

By Taylor Strang

*When your words came, I ate them;
they were my joy and my heart's
delight, for I bear your name, Lord
God almighty.*

-Jeremiah 15:16

Last month I started my journey into journaling. Every day I search for what I need within the scripture for that day and let the words appear on the paper. My first entry was inspired by Jeremiah 15:16 and yet it continues to be part of my everyday life. I have been surrounded by HIS word and I am so blessed to be able to be on the journey with this church to guide those toward it as well.

We are planning many events for 2023. In addition to our Lent programs, which are just a month away, we have already begun planning for VBS! I hope you are as excited as I am to see what this year will bring.

[Read about our Lent programs on page 9.](#)

VBS 2023



Spin the spinner, beat the clock, skip ahead, level up, and play to win! Your kiddos will need to bring their A-game for this VBS. Come on down to Sunset Hills United Presbyterian Church for *Twist and Turns* 2023. The evening games begin on July 17th and last until the 21st. More details to come!



Mehaffey Scholarship

Applications for the Mehaffey Scholarship are now available to 2023 High School Seniors.

The Mehaffey Scholarship was created by Sara Mehaffey Carter and her sister Barbara Mehaffey Jocoy in honor of their parents, Edgar and Rosabell Mehaffey. Edgar and Rosabell were active members of SHUP and public-school teachers. For these reasons, the Mehaffey Scholarship Committee awards the scholarship to graduating seniors who are active members of SHUP, active in service to the church and community, show good character, and demonstrate academic achievement.

If you would like an application to apply for the Mehaffey Scholarship, please contact Taylor Strang at (412)561-7997 or sunsethillsce@gmail.com.

All applications are due by April 2nd.



Monts Malawi Mission Update

The Mission Commission continues to support Rev. Chuck Monts and his team as they continue to do mission all over the world. You may remember meeting Rev. Monts when he stopped by to visit us while doing his cross-country bike ride to raise money for the Bowery Mission.

Their next mission will be in Malawi! Below is a letter from Deb Monts with an update on their progress. Please remember to keep the Monts family in your prayers.



Dear Friends,

Thank you for your financial and prayer support. Thank you for sharing in our upcoming exciting adventure of faith and service. Doing mission overseas has been a long-term dream of ours.

We've already experienced our first mini-miracle: Chuck has severe Restless Leg Syndrome (RLS), which requires a cocktail of four meds, including two "controlled-substances" his neurologist told us cannot be legally prescribed beyond a 3-month quantity. The problem is that the meds are not available in Malawi. Chuck was just going to have to grin and bear it and be resolved to be sleepless in Malawi for 8 months. But... low and behold...when Chuck picked up his meds yesterday, the Neurologist's office had mistakenly called in a year's worth of both meds and the Insurance company also overrode the limit and Chuck left the pharmacy with a year's worth of the very important RLS meds! What!?!

Now we will be praying we get through Customs without being arrested for drug-smuggling (we do have documentation we hope will help us get through Customs).

There are many Bible verses that are alive and active as we prepare for the Journey:

- *Ps 24:1: The Earth is the Lord's and everything in it.*
- *Ps 27:1-2: The Lord is our salvation, whom shall we fear?*
- *Ps 36:5-10 (paraphrase) Your steadfast love reaches the heavens, your righteousness is like majestic mountains, and your justice like the great deep. How priceless is your unfailing love.*
- *Romans 5:39: Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ.*

We are going forth in that love we will be giving and receiving, praying you will be upheld by this same love.

Days for Girls

Submitted by Mary Abbott

On Wednesday, January 4th, seven women from SHUP were blessed to participate in the “Days for Girls” (DfG) program at Third Presbyterian Church in Shadyside.

Mary Abbott, Ginny Bowman, Jody Colby, Karen Heim, Sandy Gill, Beth Romig and Pastor Laura spent the morning cutting fabric, sewing, and assembling reusable menstrual health bags. The finished bags will be distributed to women in Cuba who suffer from “period poverty”. In other words, they lack access to products used to hygienically manage their monthly periods.

Menstrual health and hygiene are critical factors in improving education opportunities and livelihood outcomes for menstruators worldwide.



[Days for Girls International](http://DaysforGirlsInternational.org)

Knowledge is power, especially when it comes to menstruation. Access to timely, accurate health information is critical to shattering the stigma around menstruation and building a more equitable world. That’s why DfG washable pads are always paired with comprehensive menstrual health education – for menstruators, families and entire communities.

Rev. Karie Charlton from Third Presbyterian’s chapter of DfG manages weekly volunteer opportunities at the church.

She also coordinates with many individuals who cut, sew, and assemble bags in their homes. During our time with Rev. Charlton, she explained to us how lack of access to proper period products affects women worldwide.

Most surprising to those who attended was that this is an issue right here in our own country. Women in prison often do not have access to sufficient personal hygiene supplies. Nor do government assistance programs, such as food stamps cover these products.

The morning was filled with fellowship and purpose. It was also eye opening and gave us all a renewed appreciation for our own blessings.



Please join us for the next mission day.
Sunday, March 12th
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Bring a bag lunch to enjoy after the worship service. After lunch, we will carpool to the West Allegheny Chapter of Days for Girls.



One Great Hour of Sharing



Join with Presbyterians worldwide in sharing God's love with our neighbors-in-need around the world by providing relief from natural disasters, food for the hungry, and support for the poor and oppressed. This Lenten season, please give generously to One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS).

Received during the season of Lent, OGHS is the single, largest way that Presbyterians come together every year to build God's household and welcome our neighbors in need around the world by providing help. Each gift to OGHS helps to improve the lives of people in challenging situations through three impactful programs:

PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE:

Works alongside communities as they recover and find hope after the devastation of natural or human-caused disasters.

PRESBYTERIAN HUNGER PROGRAM:

Takes action to alleviate hunger and the systemic causes of poverty so all may be fed.

SELF-DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE:

Invests in communities responding to their experiences of racism, oppression, poverty, and injustice and educates Presbyterians about the impact of these societal ills.



You can help sustain the important ministries and programs that are supported by One Great Hour of Sharing by making a donation to the cause. During the Lenten season, we will have envelopes for you to enclose your donation in the pews on Sundays. If you are not able to be here in person, you can mail your check to the church office or use our tithe.ly app (please write OGHS on the memo line). We will also have "Fish Banks" available, please see Taylor Strang if you would like one. You can use these banks to collect your loose change, every little bit helps.



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

SPECIAL OFFERINGS

HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

February 22 – April 9

Women's Retreat

Listening to God's Land

• A WOMAN'S CLIMATE-CARE
RETREAT
with Pastor Laura and Friends •

• SATURDAY, MARCH 18 •
9 AM – 3 PM

• SUNSET HILLS UP CHURCH •
900 COUNTRY CLUB DRIVE

**COST \$30.00 • BREAKFAST AND LUNCH
INCLUDED**

Register with Name and Dietary Restrictions by Saturday,
March 4 by emailing sunsethillschurch@gmail.com or calling
412-561-6261. Pay by check or at shupchurch.org/give.

Please contact Jody Colby at (412)656-7801 or Carla Robinson at (412)571-0838 with any questions.

Session & Deacon Members

Session

2023	2024	2025
Luke Obarsky (a)	Mary Abbott (b)	Jody Colby (b)
Carla Robinson (a)	Bev Knasko (b)	Ryan Gracey (b)
Lisa Ursitz (a)	Chip McCoy (a)	Tim Fako (b)
Keith Yanda (b)		Kara Yates (b)

Moderator: Carla Robinson
Administration & Personnel: Bev Knasko
Christian Education: Luke Obarsky
Communications: Ryan Gracey
Congregational Care: Mary Abbott
Facilities: Keith Yanda
Mission: Jody Colby & Chip McCoy
Neighborhood Outreach: Kara Yates & Lisa Ursitz
Nominating Committee: Kara Yates
Nursery School Board: Luke Obarsky
Stewardship/Finance: Tim Fako & Chip McCoy
Treasurer: Michael Berger
Worship & Music: Bev Knasko

Deacons

2023	2024	2025
John Ellis IV (b)	Mike Duffner (a)	Debbie Edwards (a)
Dottie Fleming (b)	Chris Gardner (b)	Pat Ellis (a)
Jenn Kennedy (a)	Carol Noonan (a)	Leslie Ney (a)
Christa Tang (b)	Amy Riley (a)	Pat Patterson (a)

Lenten Wednesday Nights

Every Wednesday during Lent, we will hold a soup dinner at 6:00 pm followed by a service/program at 7:00 pm. Below is a list of these events:

February 22nd - Ash Wednesday

6:00 pm - Pancake Supper Hosted by the Deacons
7:00 pm - Ash Wednesday Service with Communion and the Imposition of ashes in the sanctuary

March 1st

6:00 pm - Dinner Hosted by the Christian Education Commission
7:00 pm - "History of Sunset Hills" with Geoff Hurd
or
"Growing Micro-Greens" with Jody Colby

March 8th

6:00 pm - Dinner Hosted by the Choir
7:00 pm - "The Joy of Tidying Up" with Linda DeBor
or
"Theology Lessons" with Dave Petty

March 15th

6:00 pm - Dinner Hosted by Congregational Care
7:00 pm - "A Pilgrimage to Italy" with Tori Vernacchio
or
"Natures Role on Our Well Being" with Brienne Sembrat

March 22nd

6:00 pm - Dinner Hosted by The Mission Commission
7:00 pm - "Senior Self Care" with Don Tang
or
"What is TikTok?" with Taylor Strang

March 29th

6:00 pm - Dinner Hosted by Session
7:00 pm - "Sunset Hills Book Club" with Pastor Laura
or
"TBD" with Jeffrey Hinkelman



1 lb. regular or decaf for only \$10!

Sold after worship in Findley Hall (or stop by during office hours).

We appreciate your continued support of our ministry at the Border: Agua Prieta, Mexico, and Dougla Prieta, USA.

2024 Pilgrimage

Japan: An Interfaith Pilgrimage

Monday, April 22 - Thursday, May 2, 2024

Contemplate the Sacred within Nature

Journey on an interfaith pilgrimage with other women as we'll reflect on and nurture together our relationship with the Divine. Our reflections will take place with visits to Mt. Fuji, participation in Japanese arts, and three full days in the natural sanctuary of the Buddhist community at Koyasan.



Dwell in Spiritual Community

There are eight spots for this trip, enabling us to form an intentional community of prayer, support, and encouragement with one another.

Embrace a Simpler Life

We will be staying in Buddhist guest houses, known as shukubo. There will be shared bathing facilities and beds will be futons upon tatami floors, in keeping with Japanese tradition. All meals at the shukubo are vegetarian.

Discover Sacred Spaces

Our trip leaders, Rev.'s DePoe and Strauss will guide us through the sacred temples of Koyasan, providing Christian reflection on how this different tradition helps illuminate and enrich our own. While discussion will be dynamic, the pilgrimage will focus on respite, retreat, and spiritual growth that leads to renewal.

Itinerary, Deadlines, and Cost

Monday:	Depart from U.S. for Tokyo
Tuesday:	Arrive in Tokyo
Wednesday:	Free Day in Tokyo (Optional: Tokyo Disney)
Thursday:	Sacred Tokyo: Kintsugi Pottery
Friday:	Sacred Tokyo: Day Trip to Mount Fuji
Saturday:	Travel to Koyasan
Sunday:	Koyasan
Monday:	Koyasan
Tuesday:	Koyasan
Wednesday:	Travel to Tokyo
Thursday:	Depart and Arrive in the U.S.
<u>Cost:</u>	\$2500

The above includes daily breakfast in Tokyo, accommodations, train tickets to and from Koyasan, daily breakfast and dinner in Koyasan. Cost **does not** include airfare, public transportation, tax, gratuities, or meals not otherwise mentioned. We recommend budgeting \$1500 for roundtrip airfare.

COVID-guidelines set by Japan's government will act as the guidelines for this trip. These will be communicated to attendees as we grow closer to April 2024. Proof of vaccination is required.

A non-refundable deposit of \$500 is due by September 8, 2023 to reserve a spot for this trip. Spaces are first-come, first served. Passports must have six months left until expiration following May 2024. Contact Rebecca DePoe or Laura Strauss with questions.

February Information

Adult Sunday School

9:00 am - Library

The Sunday school class will continue to meet before worship in February.

Beginning February 26 and continuing through the Lenten Season (April 2), the class will focus on the study, *Seven Words* by Susan Robb.

Sunday Worship

10:15 am

If you are not able to join us in person, a video of the service will be posted to our YouTube channel on the Monday after the service: [Sunset Hills Church - YouTube](#). You can get a copy of the bulletin by clicking on the link on the homepage of our website www.shupchurch.org.

Fellowship Hour

11:15 am - Findley Hall

Fellowship hour will be held on the first Sunday of the month.

Jesus & Me (JAM)

Monday's - 11:30 am

Taylor will hold JAM for the pre-school in room 113 in February.

No JAM on February 6th or 20th.

Findley Hall Bible Study

Monday's - 1:00 pm

The Findley Hall Bible study will continue to meet in February.

If you would like to learn more about this study, please contact Jody Colby at jody.colby@verizon.net.

Wilson Hall Bible Study

Tuesday's - 1:00 pm

The Wilson Hall Bible Study class will continue to meet in February.

If you would like to learn more about this class, please contact Carole McCullough at: seamus1219@hotmail.com.

Campanile Bells

Tuesday's - 6:30 pm

Campanile Bells will continue to meet for rehearsal in the sanctuary.

Peanuts Square Dancing Club

Tuesday's - 7:00 pm

The Peanuts Square Dancing club will continue to meet in Crystal Hall in February. Everyone is welcome, no partner or previous experience is needed. There is a cost of \$5/class.

Chancel Choir Practice

Tuesday's - 7:30 pm

Chancel choir practice will continue to practice on Tuesday evenings in February.

Tai Chi

Wednesday's - 6:30 pm

Gurney Bolster, certified Tai Chi instructor, will hold beginner Tai Chi classes in Crystal Hall. If you are interested in learning more about these classes, please contact Gurney at: gurneybolster@gmail.com.



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February Birthdays

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Nancy Newman | 16 Jeffrey Stimmel |
| Marge Petty | 17 Jim Hudak |
| 5 Ginny Bowman | 18 Michelle Brumfield |
| 6 Bill Ney | 19 Brienne Sembrat |
| 7 Connor Brumfield | 20 Aiden Bryer |
| 9 Maralee Williams | 24 Bill Geary |
| 11 Jessalynn Ellis | Thomas Stacey |
| 13 Sean Daniels | 27 Luke Obarsky |
| 15 Harriet Ross | 28 Jess Weidensall |

Prayer List

Dee Borman



Prayer Circle

We ask that every week you take a moment and add these people to your daily prayers.

<u>Week of:</u>	<u>Praying for:</u>
Feb 5 th	Katie Jordan Thomas & Nancy Junker
Feb 12 th	Dave Kastner The Kennedy family; Nathan, Jenn, Drew & Ben
Feb 19 th	John & Bev Knsako Evelyn Lape
Feb 26 th	The Leenerts family; Tim, Kristin & Alex Linda MacDonald

SHIM Food Donations

February 2023

For the month of February, we will be collecting **Pasta and Sauce.**

We appreciate your continued support of this ministry.

Save the Date – March 18th

The Women's retreat will be held at SHUP on Saturday, March 18, 2023!

Sunset Hills Book Club

MEETING VIA ZOOM

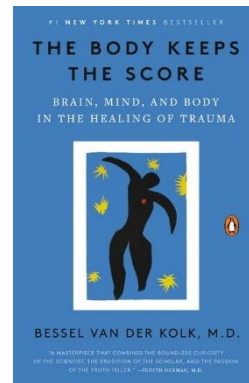
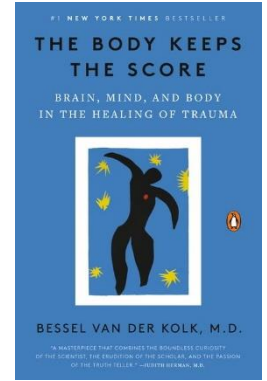
February Book of the Month

***The Body Keeps the Score* (Parts 1-3)**

By Bessel van der Kolk

Feb. 15th - 7:30 pm

*Trauma is a fact of life. Veterans and their families deal with the painful aftermath of combat; one in five Americans has been molested; one in four grew up with alcoholics; one in three couples have engaged in physical violence. Dr. Bessel van der Kolk, one of the world's foremost experts on trauma, has spent over three decades working with survivors. In "The Body Keeps the Score," he uses recent scientific advances to show how trauma literally reshapes both body and brain, compromising sufferers' capacities for pleasure, engagement, self-control, and trust. He explores innovative treatments—from neurofeedback and meditation to sports, drama, and yoga—that offer new paths to recovery by activating the brain's natural neuroplasticity. Based on Dr. van der Kolk's own research and that of other leading specialists, *The Body Keeps the Score* exposes the tremendous power of our relationships both to hurt and to heal—and offers new hope for reclaiming lives. (Amazon Book Description)*



March 2023

The Body Keeps the Score

by Bessel van der Kolk

(Parts 4 & 5)

Meeting on March 29th

at

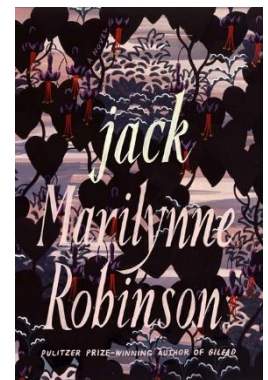
7:00 pm at the church

April 2023

Jack

by Maryilynne Robinson

Meeting on May 5th



Health and Wellness

RESOLVED TO MOVE MORE?

Join Social Square Dancing

(Caller: Shawn Brown)

EVERY TUESDAY 7 – 9:30 PM

Sunset Hills U.P. Church
900 Country Club Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15228

Everyone Welcome / No partner required
\$5 admission
(Inquire about Student & Family rates)
Courtesy of **Peanut Squares**

Beth: 412-680-4837

Nick: 412-667-0929



Life Line Screening goes beyond regular checkups to look inside your arteries for signs of plaque build-up



All 4 Screenings for \$149

Carotid Artery Disease:

An ultrasound is performed to screen the carotid arteries (a pair of blood vessels in the neck that deliver blood to your brain) for buildup of fatty plaque. This buildup, called atherosclerosis, is one of the leading causes of stroke.

Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD):

An Ankle-Brachial Index (ABI) test is performed using blood pressure cuffs on the arms and legs. It is important to screen for PAD because it increases the risk of coronary artery disease, heart attack, or stroke.¹

Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA):

An ultrasound is performed to screen the abdominal aorta for the presence of an enlargement or aneurysm. AAA can lead to a ruptured aortic artery, which is a life-threatening medical emergency.

Atrial Fibrillation :

A 6-lead electrocardiogram (EKG) is performed by placing sensors on the arms and legs to screen for Atrial Fibrillation. AFib can lead to blood clots, stroke, and heart failure, and other heart-related complications.²

We will be in your neighborhood soon on Saturday, February 18, 2023 at Pittsburgh - Sunset Hills United Presbyterian Church

Get your special Community Circle pricing!

Three ways to register and receive the special discount:

Call toll-free: **1-800-679-5191**

Online: **LLSA.SOCIAL/HC**

Text: the word **circle** to **216-279-1607**



Getting Screened is Simple!
Painless, non-invasive, keep your clothes on.



¹ <https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/peripheral-artery-disease/about-peripheral-artery-disease-pad>
No single screening can detect all risk factors for all conditions, such as and including the presence of coronary artery disease.

² <https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/atrial-fibrillation>

Screening results are provided to you in about 14 days. We direct all participants with abnormal results to take the report to their physician. Appropriate modification of risk factors (including high blood pressure, smoking, heart disease, diabetes and poor diet) is also necessary for cardiovascular disease prevention. Our screenings cannot detect all forms of stroke risk or cardiovascular disease. All tests are for screening purposes only. You should consult with your personal physician regarding your screening results. Price does not include any applicable review fees. Insurance Note: Life Line Screening does not participate in the Medicare program and the cost of our screening services is not covered or reimbursable by Medicare. Life Line Screening does not file insurance claims nor provide referrals to any physician's group or hospital. If you are unable to attend the screening for any reason whatsoever, we will issue a gift card for the full amount to be used by you, or anyone you choose, for future screening services.