



April 2022

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Presbyterian Church**

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A Message from Pastor Laura



Dr. Owens, professor at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and interim pastor at Fox Chapel Presbyterian Church, argues that all of humanity is born with an inherent, core longing for God. We are each born with a compass in our beings, a compass that desires to point the individual to the divine. To use the language of Augustine, we are born with hearts that are restless until they rest in God. As some interpret Augustine, we come into this world with a God-shaped hole in our hearts that

can only be filled by Godself.

This truth is sometimes difficult to believe in the 21st-century West, in which Nones are the fastest growing religious group. Nones are not atheists. Nones are not agnostics. Nones are not believers in any religion. Nones are generally people who simply don't think very much of the divine. The divine is simply not on their radar.

And, so how can Owens and Augustine and all kinds of other theologians make the claim that we have a restlessness that might be a nascent cry for God? Let's talk about the ice cream from the quote on page 2 of my article.

Owens quotes Lauren Winner who writes of a period of crisis in faith following the death of her mother and the breakup of her marriage. Winner's faith crisis came in the form of loneliness: she couldn't bring herself to pray, her desire for God disappeared, and she would do anything to avoid her feeling of divine abandonment. Her avoidance tactics included retail therapy, overexercise, too much drinking, oversleeping. She indulged in her excessive equivalent of 11:00 p.m. ice cream.

Do we not see these kinds of avoidance tactics in our world? Do we not see avoidance tactics sometimes within ourselves? God feels far, God has allowed us to arrive at a difficult juncture, God doesn't feel present, God hasn't provided what we desire, God looks as though God's plopped us in the valley of the shadow of death (even though that is never the actual case), and we avoid Him.

Our world avoids God because life lived in God is harder than a life lived with distraction. And we do the same.

(Continued on page 2)

Pastor Laura Message (Continued from page 1)

“We are invited to put the distraction down, friends, and to sit with our inherent longing. Even when it means sitting with the grief, with the hard feelings, with the pain, our hearts are longing beyond words for us to stop avoiding God - and to sit with God, to rest in God. What might sitting with the God we long for look like? Owens suggests two ideas. First, he suggests talking with a pastor (hello!) or friend in the faith - someone who will sit with you and listen to you. In Owen’s words, “someone who won’t blush or run from the room when you finally say those words: *I think I want God. More than*

anything, God.” Second, Owens suggests that we RUN to God, sharing all that we are thinking, feeling, and experiencing, telling God all. Again, do not walk to God, RUN!

Owens is right in saying that we all long for God. Augustine, with whom I do not always agree, is right in saying our hearts are restless until they rest in the Lord. Whatever we are using as avoidance tactics, they will never do for us what God does. They will never even compare.

In Christ’s Love,

Pastor Laura

“Sometimes the urge to eat ice cream at 11:00 p.m. is simply a desire for ice cream; sometimes though, it’s a way to escape or distract ourselves from a restlessness that might be a nascent cry for God. It helps to know the difference.”

- L. Roger Owens

Lenten Wednesday Nights & Holy Week

Our last “Lenten Wednesday Nights” event will be held on April 6th.

6:00 pm - Dinner, hosted by the Young Adults in Findley Hall

7:00 pm - Adult Lenten Programs

“Tea Tasting” with Pastor Laura

or

“An Introduction to Phone Apps” with Tori Vernacchio

The children will go with Taylor to the Children’s church to finish their lesson, “24 Hours that Changed the World.”

Deacon Brunch

Palm Sunday - April 10th

The Deacons will hold a brunch after worship service in Findley Hall.

Maundy Thursday

Thursday, April 14th

6:15 pm: Dessert & Coffee - Findley
7:00 pm: Tenebrae Service

Easter Sunday Service

April 17th - 10:15 am

Join us for Easter Sunday worship at 10:15 am in the sanctuary.

Music Notes

By Shelby Gracey

After two long years of the pandemic, we're so happy that we've been able to sing hymns and share choir anthems throughout the season of Lent this year! It will also be a joy to be able to join in the singing of "The Palms," at our Palm Sunday processional and service on April 10. We'd like to invite ANYONE who would like to join in the processional that morning to grab a palm frond and wave it jubilantly as we come down the aisle welcoming Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem! Following the service that morning, the Deacons will host a brunch in Findley Hall.

During Holy Week, we'll be



bringing back the Maundy Thursday Tenebrae service, which will be held in the sanctuary on Thursday, April 14 at 7:00 p.m. This service was often a favorite of many people, and a very moving time of scriptures, hymns, holy communion, and candlelight, as we remember the Last Supper of Christ, and His trial and crucifixion.

The Maundy Thursday service will be preceded by dessert and coffee in Findley Hall, starting at 6:15 p.m., before we move up to the sanctuary for this special service of remembrance.

It will be so wonderful to sing our traditional Easter hymns on Easter Sunday, April 17, at our 10:15 a.m. worship service. The choir will offer a special anthem, and the Campanile Bell Choir will also ring that morning.

Let's all come out to celebrate the most important time in the church year at our Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, and Easter Sunday celebrations!

Ringold Community Band



Join us for an evening of Dessert and Music on Monday, May 9, 2022

6:45 pm - Dessert and Coffee in Findley Hall
(prepared by Chancel and Bell Choirs)

7:30 pm - Concert by Ringold Band in the Sanctuary

The Ringold Community Band is comprised of approximately 30 members from the surrounding communities, who will play a variety of favorite music. This is the longest, continually performing community band in Western Pennsylvania, named after its first director, John Ringold, 1909.

There will be no charge for the evening, but donations will be accepted for the band concert, with the proceeds given to the band for their continued work in the community.

Notes from Christian Education

By Taylor Strang

The programming for Lent is going wonderfully. It has been amazing to talk to everyone during the Lenten dinners and then having lessons with the children after. I want to thank my volunteer helper Madison for everything she has done to make the lessons possible. I am enjoying teaching the children the meaning of Lent and the love that Jesus has for us.

There will be no programming on

April 13th during Holy Week. Kid's Club will return the following Wednesday, April 20th. All children in grades K-5th are welcome to join me for our next journey where we will learn about the brave men and women of the Old Testament. This is an exciting lesson due to the theme that stresses the importance of trust and the value of making hard choices. We will finish up Kid's Club on May 25th for summer break and begin

meeting again in September.

Memory Night for the young adults is going to be moved to June 5th. All young adults from the class of 2008 through 2021 are invited to come to the church to share memories and to learn how they can become more involved in the church. You can stay up to date by checking our events on Facebook at: [\(7\) Sunset Hills United Presbyterian \(SHUP\) | Facebook](#)



Pet Blessing & Spring Festival

Sunday, May 1st

4pm - 7pm

Save The Date!

Be sure to join us for our Pet Blessing and Spring Festival next month. We will have food trucks, games and more!

Don't forget to bring the pet members of your family for a blessing from Pastor Laura.

Going Viral!

Our own Taylor Strang has gone viral (in a good way) on TikTok. Her video has reached over a 2.5 million views and counting. Congratulations Taylor!



To watch Taylor's video, click the link listed below:

[Reply to @noodlesand sausage I prefer the stay in your seat method but whatever works \(tiktok.com\)](#)

Letters to SHUP

Dear SHUP,

As I listen to our choir or the bell choir, I always think that each note sung or rung alone is beautiful on its own. However, when the notes are combined, one with the other, voice or bell, the music becomes an experience that is transformed into a message shared with all who hear it.

I believe our congregation is like the choirs. Each of us on our own is beautiful and meaningful in our own right. But together, we ring out in a chorus of love, compassion and care for each other and our community.

This is especially true as we have navigated the last few years. We have weathered a change in spiritual leadership, a pandemic, and a financial breach of trust. Plus, we face other issues shared by churches far and wide.

I would like to express my thanks to SHUP for bringing music in all forms to me and all those I am privileged and blessed to have support me on my journey with Christ, today and every day.

From a Blessed Member of SHUP

Thank you from the Mayfield Presbyterian Church family for your generous donation after the devastating tornado. With your gift and God's help we are helping others and making plans for the future of our church.

God Bless you for your kindness.

The Mayfield Presbyterian Church

Dear SHUP Friends,

Thank you so much for the lovely chancel flowers from Sunday worship service. I have divided them into 2 arrangements, one in the dining room and one in the living room. They remind me of the warm, caring people of SHUP while providing me comfort as I mourn the loss of my only sister.

SHUP has been and continues to be a comfort and an anchor in my life. What a blessing to be a part of such a caring church family.

Gratefully,

Betty Coffey

Many thanks for the beautiful altar flowers, cards, and calls while we recovered from COVID.

They made our isolation much less dreary!

Ray & Ginny Bowman



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.

Received during the season of Lent, One Great Hour of Sharing (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 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.

PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE:

Works alongside communities as they recover and find hope after the devastation of natural or human-caused disasters. To date PDA has sent support to several of the PCUSA's reformed and orthodox partners to help those who have been affected by the war in Ukraine. They are:

- Community of St. Egidio in Ukraine
- Hungarian Reformed Church in Ukraine & Hungary
- Hungarian Interchurch Aid in Ukraine & Hungary
- Lutheran World Federation in Poland
- International Orthodox Christian Charities in Romania

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 tithe.ly at [Church Giving: Mobile App, Online & Text Giving for Churches | Tithe.ly](#) (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

Through April 17

Youth Group Fundraiser

EGG MY YARD!

Toy/candy filled eggs can be hidden in your yard
for Easter morning!!

Great gift idea for grandkids or busy parents!

25 eggs = \$20

50 eggs = \$35

Order deadline SATURDAY, April 9th

Payment types: Cash, Checks (made payable to Sunset Hills U.P.-Youth
Fundraiser in memo line) or through Tithely app

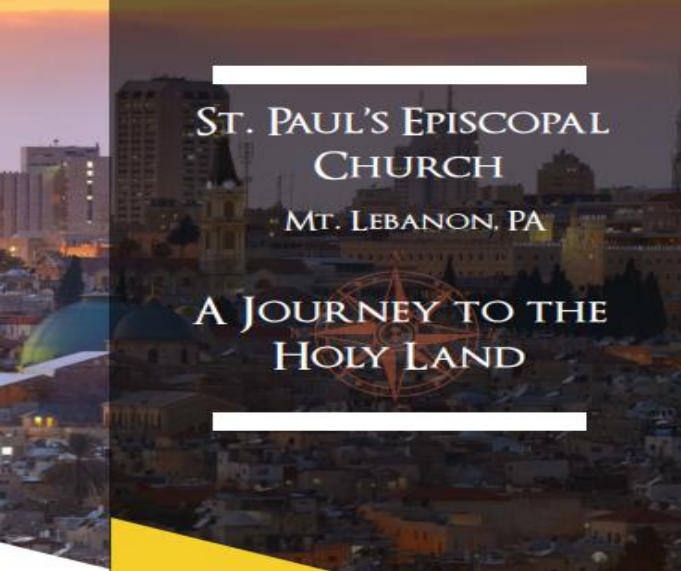
Call (412) 561-6261 to sign up or visit shupchurch.org/eggmyyard
for more information or to fill out the sign-up form online.

Egging in Mt. Lebanon, Castle Shannon, Bethel
Park, & Dormont



Journey to the Holy Land

On March 27th, Geoff and Pat Hurd from St. Paul's Episcopal Church joined us after worship to talk about their past visits to the Holy Land and to invite SHUP members/friends to join them on their next trip in 2023. Please see the flyer below for more information about the trip.




ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL
CHURCH
MT. LEBANON, PA

A JOURNEY TO THE
HOLY LAND

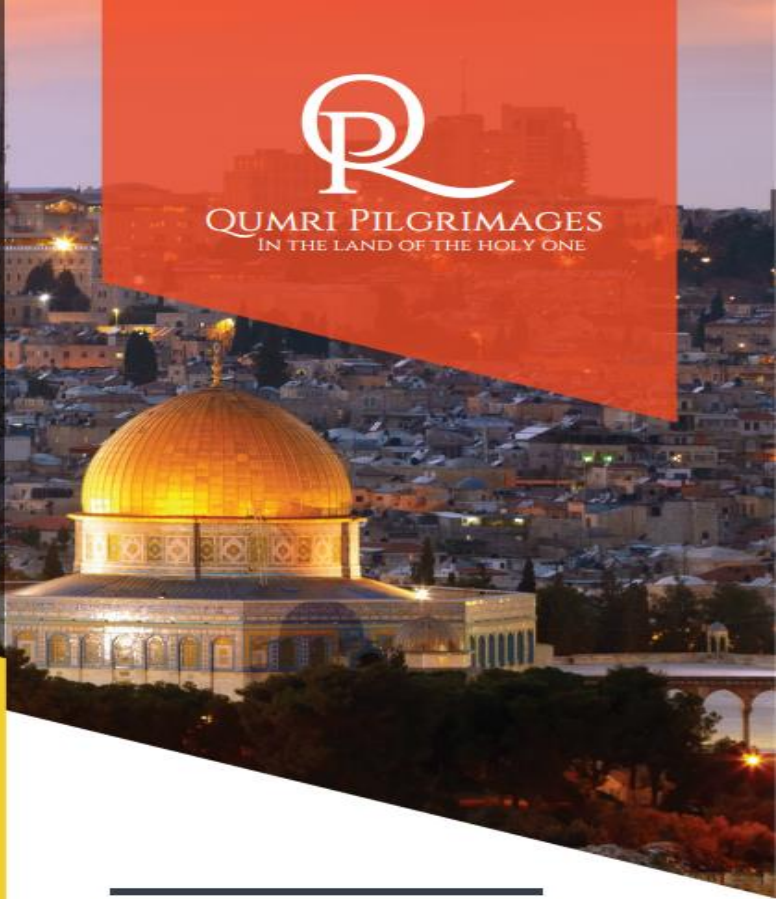
12-Day Pilgrimage
Jan. 31 – Feb. 11, 2023


Led by
The Rev. Noah H. Evans

Local Guides
Canon Iyad Qumri
& Rami Qumri



Please use your
smartphone's rear camera
to scan the QR code






QUMRI PILGRIMAGES
IN THE LAND OF THE HOLY ONE



You are invited to join other pilgrims from St. Paul's Episcopal Church as we walk in the footsteps of Jesus. Together, we will visit the places of his birth, life, ministry, death and resurrection. Our experienced personal guide Iyad Qumri, will lead us in exploring ancient places, vibrant markets, and modern museums in a land that is suspended between East and West, past and present.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION
PLEASE CONTACT
OUR COORDINATOR**



The Rev. Noah H. Evans
Rector and Chaplain

PHONE: (412) 531-7153
MAIL: noah@stpaulspgph.org

Qumri Pilgrimages

April Information

Adult Sunday School

8:30 am

Pastor Laura will continue the study of the series entitled: *The History & Archaeology of the Bible* using videos from National Geographic Historian, Jean-Pierre Isbouts.

This class will continue using Zoom.

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:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeEpiQYSD_9My9tb5GEhVRA

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

We are bringing back Fellowship Hour on the first Sunday of every month! Everyone is invited to join us for fellowship in Findley Hall on April 3rd.

There will be a sign-up sheet in Findley Hall if you would like to host a Sunday going forward.

Youth Group

Sunday - 11:30 am - Findley Hall

Youth Group will begin meeting after worship services on Sunday. They will meet on April 10th & April 24th this month.

Findley Hall Bible Study

Monday's - 12:45 pm

On March 7th this class will continue their study of part 2 of "The Chosen." The class meets in person in Findley Hall and via Zoom.

12:45: "The Chosen" Movie

1:45: Discussion of the movie and book

Please contact Evelyn Lape at: heyve7@verizon.net to learn more about this class.

Yoga

Tuesday's - 9:15 am - Crystal Hall

Instructors from BreathIN2IT will continue to hold classes of Hatha 1 Yoga through April 26th. If you would like to sign up for the class, please visit their website at [Online Stress Management & Anxiety Relief Programs \(breathin2it.com\)](http://OnlineStressManagement&AnxietyReliefPrograms(breathin2it.com)).

Wilson Hall Bible Study

Tuesday's - 1:00 pm

To learn more about this study please contact Carole McCullough at seamus1219@hotmail.com

Campanile Bells Rehearsal

Tuesday's - 6:30 pm

Campanile Bells will continue to meet in the sanctuary in on Tuesday evenings at 6:30 pm.

Chancel Choir Practice

Tuesday's - 7:30 pm

Chancel Choir will continue to meet on Tuesday evenings at 7:30 pm.

Kid's Club

Wednesday's - 4:30 pm

Kid's Club will begin to meet again on April 20th.

If you would like to learn more about Kid's Club, please contact Taylor at youthandfamilyshup@gmail.com.

Tai Chi

Wednesday's - 7:00 pm

Gurney Bolster, certified Tai Chi instructor, will begin a new session of classes on April 6th. To learn more, please see the flyer on page 11 of the Messenger.

Nursery School Closed

April 14th - 18th

The Nursery School will be closed for Easter break from Thursday, April 14th through Monday, April 18th.

Office Closed

Monday, April 18th

The office will be closed on Monday, April 18th.

Pastor Away

Sunday, April 24th

Pastor Laura will be away on Sunday, April 24th. We will be led in worship by Eddie Willson, Chair of the International Partnership of the Pittsburgh Presbytery. Please see more information about Eddie Willson on page 13 of the Messenger.

Memorial for Richard Moore

Saturday, April 30th - 11:00 am

The family of Dick Moore will hold a memorial service in the sanctuary followed by a reception in Findley Hall.



April Birthdays



4	Mackenzie Barnes	11	Bill Gracey
	Bailey Farabaugh		Judy Phillips
5	Don MacDougall	12	Richard Hoffman
10	Ali Daniels	14	Matt Sembrat
	Linda DeBore	19	Michael Duffner
	Sean Matson	20	Jan Paulsen
	Vince Vernacchio	22	John Ellis IV
		29	Charles Mullen

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>
Apr. 3 rd	Phyllis Moore
	Nancy Newman
Apr. 10 th	Ian Ney
	Bill & Leslie Ney
Apr. 17 th	Carol Noonan
	Luke & Sarajane Obarsky
Apr. 24 th	Bill & Laura Oknefski
	Pat Patterson

SHIM Food Donations

April 2022

For the month of April, we will be collecting **Baby Food**.

Shim is asking form specific donations for refugees and immigrants. These items are:

- Dried Beans
- Lentils
- Rice
- Flour
- Cooking Oil
- Sugar
- Spices (S&P, Garlic & Chili Powder & Turmeric)
- Disposable Diapers

We appreciate your continued support of this ministry.

Sunset Hills Book Club

April Book of the Month

Home

By Marilyn Robinson

April 27th - 7:30 pm

A 2008 NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FINALIST

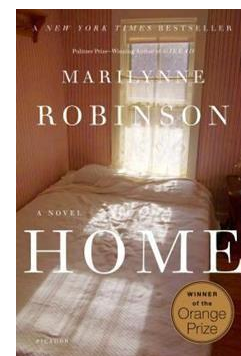
A New York Times Bestseller

A Washington Post Best Book of the Year

A Los Angeles Times Best Book of the Year

A San Francisco Chronicle Best Book of the Year

Hailed as "incandescent," "magnificent," and "a literary miracle" (Entertainment Weekly), hundreds of thousands of readers were enthralled by Marilynne Robinson's *Gilead*. Now Robinson returns with a brilliantly imagined retelling of the prodigal son parable, set at the same moment and in the same Iowa town as *Gilead*. The Reverend Boughton's hell-raising son, Jack, has come home after twenty years away. Artful and devious in his youth, now an alcoholic carrying two decades worth of secrets, he is perpetually at odds with his traditionalist father, though he remains his most beloved child. As Jack tries to make peace with his father, he begins to forge an intense bond with his sister Glory, herself returning home with a broken heart and turbulent past. *Home* is a luminous and healing book about families, family secrets, and faith from one of America's most beloved and acclaimed authors. (Amazon Book Description)



May 2022

Book of the Month

The Midnight Library

By

Matt Haig

Meeting on May 31st

Tuesday Night in May!

June 2022

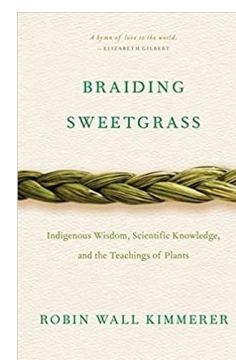
Book of the Month

Braiding Sweetgrass

By

Robin Wall Kimmerer

Meeting on June 29th



Health & Wellness

TAI CHI QIGONG CLASSES

Taught by Gurney Bolster, Founder, Tai Chi for Health Pittsburgh

Sunset Hills United Presbyterian Church
900 Country Club Dr., Mt. Lebanon, PA 15228

Tai Chi Qigong is a moving meditation integrating mind, body and breath through mindful movement and stillness. Reflecting the patterns of nature, Tai Chi Qigong can help you attune to your own natural rhythms to feel more centered, confident and resilient. Listen to the wisdom of your body. Nourish harmony, purpose and joy.

Regular practice of Tai Chi Qigong can help:

- > Quiet your mind & reduce stress
- > Improve sleep & nurture your health
- > Improve balance & mobility
- > Strengthen immunity & circulation
- > Manage chronic illness & pain
- > Restore vitality & lift your spirits



8-week beginner series, Wednesday evenings 7-8
April 6 - May 25, 2022

Fees: 8 class series, \$90 Single class \$15

Please pay by check or cash upon arrival to class

No experience or equipment needed. Masks are optional.

Questions, Registration: Contact Gurney

All classes taught by Gurney Bolster, MA., Dance Movement Therapy;

Certified Tai Chi Instructor, Tai Chi for Health Institute;

Certified Qigong Instructor, Center for Taiji & Qigong Studies and Holden Qigong.

Gurney.bolster@gmail.com

412 480 4492

www.tchpgh.com

Neighborhood Garage Sale

Buy a space, fill your trunk, set up shop, and sell everything you've got!

**Sunset Hills United Presbyterian Church
900 Country Club Drive
Mt. Lebanon, 15228**

1 Spot: \$15

2 Spots: \$20

SATURDAY April, 23rd 2022

9am - 12pm

YOUR THINGS - YOUR PRICES - YOUR PROFITS



Eddie Willson - Guest Leader - April 24th

Eddie Willson has been the moderator for the International Partnership between the Pittsburgh Presbytery, the Blantyre Synod in Malawi, and the South Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church for more than two years now. Initially, Eddie went to Malawi as a youth mentor and leader, since he works in education. He quickly fell in love with the country and the people of the 'Warm Heart of Africa'. Eddie is a resting elder from East Liberty Presbyterian Church, and he has a daytime job as the Director of Curriculum & Grants for the Woodland Hills School District. Eddie and his wife, Jen, have two children, Ellie and Nate. They reside in Forest Hills

and are both active in the Facing Systemic Racism team at ELPC.

International Partnership

The International Partnership Ministry Team of Pittsburgh Presbytery exists in order to help strengthen and encourage the church for faithful and fruitful discipleship in Pittsburgh Presbytery, the Synod of Blantyre, the South Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church and beyond. Specifically, this ministry team is charged with coordinating the relationship between the ecclesial bodies known as Pittsburgh Presbytery (Presbyterian Church USA), the Synod of Blantyre (Church of Central Africa:

Presbyterian), and the South Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church as well as individual congregations within those expressions of the church.

Each party in this Partnership has gifts which, when shared with the other, will enrich the life and witness of the other. Second Corinthians 8:13-15 is one key to understanding this. We in Pittsburgh stand in need of the Malawian Church's gifts of joy, faith, love, music, simplicity and Spirit. The gifts we offer the church in Africa include administration, money, music, love, faith and Spirit. The gospel calls us to build each other up...to be mutually encouraged by each other's faith.

Easter Flowers

It's time to place orders for:

EASTER FLOWERS

Please fill in the information below and return it to the church office no later than Monday April 11th. Please include your check made payable to SHUP and remember to put "Easter Flowers" on the memo line.

Flower Selection

Lilies _____ @ \$12 each

Tulips _____ @ \$8 each

Daffodils _____ @ \$8 each

Flowers will be available for you to take home after worship service on Easter Sunday.

Presented by: _____

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

Enclosed is my check for: _____

Thank you to Chapons Greenhouse, chosen for their expertise and quality.