



May 2023

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A Message from Pastor Laura

Joy was never meant to be a crumb.

- Mary Oliver



Spring surprises me every year. One would think I'd be used to it by now. One would think I'd be accustomed to the sun shining later into the evenings, the polka-dot of green emerging into the landscape, and the sounds of birds claiming their territory in the early morning with song. But, somehow, even after 38 springs, I forget that this is how it works: joy pouring upon our communities like a late spring rain.

That is how joy often is for me. I forget what it feels like. This happened during the pandemic. To quote Ron Weasley, *I felt like I'd never be cheerful again*. Millions of people were dying, our church was grasping at Holy Spirit-given straws to be faithful in the midst of calamity, and I never knew if I was making the right decision - should I wipe down the box of Honey Nut Cheerios or not? I began relying on the quote from Frederick Buechner, "Terrible and wonderful things will happen. Do not be afraid. I am with you." God's presence was all that could carry me.

But then, like spring, joy returned. It didn't return as a regular state of being. Life is waves, and joy and sorrow take their turns. Life is complicated, and this joy and sorrow sometimes even get caught up in one another's turns! Even so, joy returned. There was joy in the celebration of Lucy Tang's confirmation, joy in the birth of Amelia Yates and Lorelei Obarsky, and joy in Beth and Jody's photos from the Holy Land. The lesson we can learn was best said by poet Mary Oliver: *joy was never meant to be a crumb*.

Beloved in Christ, grasp joy when joy comes to you. Do not take joy for granted. Linger with your neighbors late into the evening on your porch. Pick out your favorite red article of clothing for Pentecost worship (May 28) - the more outlandish, the better. Read the Scriptures that comfort you, that feel like a fresh cup of lemonade to your soul. Joy was never meant to be a crumb and joy is most appropriate in the month of May, the season of Easter.

In Christ's Love,
 Pastor Laura

Music Notes

By Shelby Gracey

Many thanks to the Chancel Choir and Campanile Bell Choir for our special Maundy Thursday and Easter Sunday music! Many hours of rehearsals go into the beautiful music that is presented to the glory of God, especially during the Easter season! The Campanile Bell Choir will ring in worship again on Sunday, May 14, before concluding their spring season. I want to thank all of the dedicated bell ringers for their beautiful music this year (and thanks to Cheryl Ursitz, who stepped in temporarily to fill Sarajane Obarsky's time away for maternity leave!)

One of the tunes that the bells played

On Easter Sunday is an all-time favorite of mine, since a classmate in high school played a trumpet descant on the tune while we sang it on Easter Sunday. The text for *Crown Him with Many Crowns* is the combined effort of two distinguished Anglican clergymen, each of whom desired to write a hymn of exaltation to our suffering but now victorious Lord.

"The version by Matthew Bridges first appeared in 1851 with six stanzas. Twenty-three years later Godfrey Thring wrote six additional stanzas.

The hymn's present form includes stanzas one, two, and four by Bridges and the third verse by Thring. The

tune, *Diademata* (the Greek word for crowns), was composed especially for this text by George Elvey, a noted organist at St. George's Chapel in Windsor, England, where British royalty attend Easter Sunday service and royal occasions.

"Each crown in this hymn text exalts Christ for some specific aspect of His person or ministry: stanza one for His eternal Kingship; stanza two for His love demonstrated in redemptive suffering; stanza three for His victorious resurrection and ascension; stanza four as a member of the triune Godhead ever worthy of worship and praise."



*Crown him with many crowns, the Lamb upon his throne.
Hark! how the heavenly anthem drowns all music but its own.
Awake, my soul, and sing of him who died for thee,
and hail him as thy matchless king through all eternity.*

*Crown him the Lord of love; behold his hands and side,
rich wounds, yet visible above, in beauty glorified;
no angels in the sky can fully bear that sight,
but downward bends their burning eye at mysteries so bright.*

*Crown him the Lord of life, who triumphed o'er the grave,
and rose victorious in the strife for those he came to save;
His glories now we sing, who died and rose on high,
who died eternal life to bring, and lives that death may die.*

*Crown him the Lord of years, the potentate of time,
creator of the rolling spheres, ineffably sublime.
All hail, Redeemer, hail! for thou hast died for me;
thy praise shall never, never fail throughout eternity.*

("Amazing Grace: 366 Inspiring Hymn Stories for Daily Devotions," Kenneth W. Osbeck, Kregel Publications, 2002, p. 141.)

Notes from Christian Education

By Taylor Strang

I was asked recently “Why do you live where you are?” and I did not have an answer. Most of my life I did not question it, I lived with my parents and Brookline is where I always lived. Did my parents pick where we lived because of the schools around it? Did they want to be close to their family?

Why do you live where you are? Is it to be close to your church? Is it because you fell in love with the back patio at the house you were touring? Is it because you enjoy the quiet suburbs or the noise of people in the city?

As I sit here and think about why, I come up with another question. Have I been called by God to live where I do now? Was this in His plan for me? Did God call me to live with who I live with now? Was the plan always to put me one street away from my favorite independent bookstore? On a busy street with people always outside? I’d like to think it was to put me in a place where I could meet new people and live with someone who would become one of my best friends.

Please join me and the youth of SHUP while we explore this question and learn about the different people we encounter on our journey in Children’s Church.

Graduation Sunday

Please join us for Graduation Sunday during worship on June 4th. We will be presenting our high school graduate with the Mehaffey Scholarship and blessings for his journey onto college. This year, our graduate is:

Benson Kennedy

Ben will be attending Ohio University with a major in Business Marketing.

VBS 2023 – Brought to you by *Direct Ministries*



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!



VBS Needs You!

July 17 – 21st

5:00 – 8:00 pm

We need volunteers to help with snacks, mission, crafts, recreation, bible study, music and more!

If you would like to volunteer, please contact Taylor at sunsethillsce@gmail.com or sign up on the sheet outside of Findley Hall.

Clearances required by July 10th.

Odyssey of the Mind

Since September, seven students from Howe Elementary, and their teachers have been using Crystal Hall to develop a solution to a multi-faceted problem to prepare for *Odyssey of the Mind*. *Odyssey of the Mind* (www.odysseyofthemind.com) is an international extracurricular program that challenges teams of kids to solve complex problems in unexpected ways.

The team won the nod from trained judges with their solution to "Problem 1 - Pirates and the Treasure" (the Vehicle Design Problem) at both the Western PA Regional and PA State Tournaments. They scored **2nd Place** in Division 1 (Grades 3-5) at PA State Finals. For the solution, the team designed and created a pirate ship that can hold the weight of two team members, traverse a path from the Queen's kingdom, fight a sea monster, retrieve a stolen treasure, and return to the kingdom bearing the Queen's lost



treasure.

The team also wrote the script for an eight-minute-long skit, created characters, designed costumes, sewed a Pirate character doll by hand and created a skit background, all from recyclable materials. This year while preparing the solution they not only

honed their problem-solving skills, but also learned valuable real-life skills which included safely operating power tools, managing a stringent budget, time management, and self-organizing virtual meetings. Some of them even braved public speaking!

They are now the first Mt. Lebanon team since 2018 to travel to Odyssey of the Mind World Finals which will be held at Michigan State University from May 24-27, 2023 and will be competing against winning teams from all over the world. For each Problem and Division, only the top 2 teams in the state are invited to the World Finals. Worlds is the highest level of competition available in this program, and this is only the **9th time since 2006** that Mt. Lebanon has sent a team to the World Finals.

We would like to congratulate these students and their teachers and wish them luck when they go to Worlds this month!



Graduation Celebration

***Congratulations
Rev. Dr. Laura Strauss!!***

***Time to Celebrate
Pastor Laura's Graduation***

Sunday, May 28th

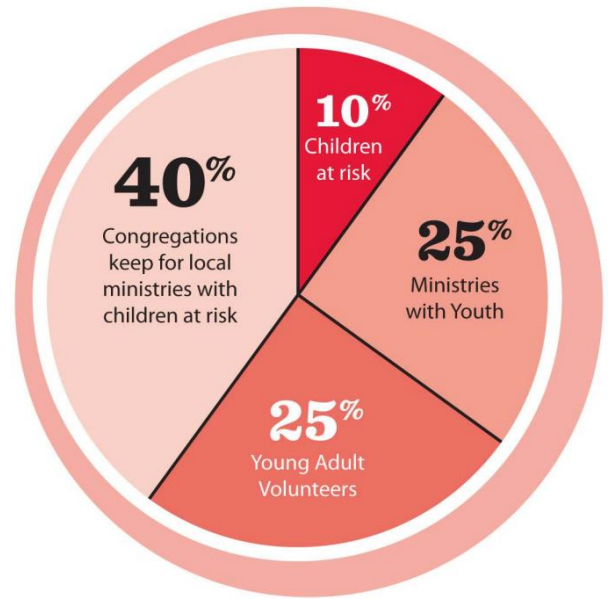
Special Guest Worship Leader:

Rev. Dr. Clint Cottrell

***Join us in Findley Hall
after the worship service
for coffee and cake!***

Pentecost Special Offering

With a foundation in faith built in the early years, our youth can teach us something about leading movements for change in their own communities and in the world. Gifts to the Pentecost Offering are helping to provide opportunities for young people to grow and share in their faith in Christ. The gifts we share will help young people learn important lessons about life and faith. And children, youth, and young adults can teach us new things and help us shape our faith, too.



A tri-presbytery event, called “Belonging Together,” brought together a diverse group of sixth to 12th graders across the Commonwealth of Kentucky. This event served to lift up the Matthew 25 vision “to demonstrate as people of God we have a true calling to address division, exclusion and all that goes against the love of Jesus Christ in our world.”

“All our events build up the body of Christ in our worship, keynote, small groups and table fellowship,” said Leslee Kirkconnell, a ruling elder in the Presbytery of Western Kentucky. “This event emphasized the very real bonds we have as humans, as Christians, as Presbyterians. We learned these bonds must be nurtured and encouraged — that relationships are so important.”

Empowering God, help us to encourage all of your children to connect with us, one another and you, that they may grow, thrive and take part in building up the body of Christ.



AMEN.

WAYS TO GIVE —

-  Through your congregation
-  Text **PENTECOST** to 91999 to support these vital ministries
-  Give online at pcusa.org/donatepentecost



PENTECOST
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
 CHILDREN AT RISK • YOUTH • YOUNG ADULTS

April 10 – May 28

Personal Notes from Members

By Bev Knasko

Dear SHUP family,

Thank you to the Deacons for the delightful Easter basket and for Pat Patterson’s delivery and visit. Also, thank you to everyone who helped create a beautiful Easter service. From Pastor Laura’s sermon to Shelby Gracey’s music choice for the bells and choir and GPM, you could feel God’s spirit with us!

In Christ’s love,

Meg MacDougall



Dear friends,

It was such a nice surprise to receive the beautiful Easter basket, filled with many interesting items (especially the fuzzy Easter bunny).

Many thanks to all who made these pretty baskets. They are much appreciated.

Happy Easter!

Dear Deacons,

Many thanks for the Easter basket. Your thoughtfulness is most appreciated. In particular, I am enjoying the “Word Finds” booklet.

Sincerely,

Lynne Blanning

Dear Deacons,

Thank you very much for the special Easter basket and to Jennifer for delivering it.

That was very kind.

Sincerely,

Carol McCallum



A few months after my mother died in 1999, I awoke one morning with these strong thoughts in my mind, and I was compelled to write them down immediately. I would like to share them with you on the occasion of celebrating Mother’s Day.

Lee Cepits

“Mother”

Most everything I do or think that is kind and righteous, fair and tolerant, good and generous is because my mother taught me that way by word and deed. My failings and shortcomings are not because I was not taught well, but because I failed to learn.

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.

May Information

Adult Sunday School

9:00 am - Library

The Sunday school class will continue to meet before worship in the Library. They began their study of “Signs and Wonders” by Amy Jill Levine on April 30th. This study will continue until June 4th.

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.

Jesus & Me (JAM)

Monday’s – 11:30 am

Taylor will hold JAM on May 1st and May 8th.

Findley Hall Bible Study

Monday’s – 1:00 pm

This study will continue to meet every Monday.

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

Yoga

Tuesday’s – 9:15 am - Crystal Hall

If you would like to sign up for classes offered by BreathIn2It, please visit their website at: [Online Stress Management & Anxiety Relief Programs \(breathein2it.com\)](#).

Wilson Hall Bible Study

Tuesday’s – 1:00 pm

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

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

The last rehearsal will be held on May 9th.

Peanuts Square Dancing Club

Tuesday’s - 7:00 pm

The Peanuts Square Dancing club will meet in Crystal Hall. Everyone is welcome, no partner or previous experience is needed. There is a cost of \$5/class. (See flyer on page 15 for more information).

Chancel Choir Practice

Tuesday’s - 7:30 pm

Chancel choir practice will continue to practice on Tuesday evenings. Their last rehearsal will be held on May 30th.

Tai Chi

Wednesday’s – 6:30 pm

Gurney Bolster, certified Tai Chi instructor, will hold beginner Tai Chi classes in Crystal Hall. New Session begins on May 3rd! If you are interested in learning more about these classes, please contact Gurney at: gurneybolster@gmail.com.

Yoga

Thursday’s 6:45 pm - Crystal Hall

If you would like to sign up for classes offered by BreathIn2It, please visit their website at: [Online Stress Management & Anxiety Relief Programs \(breathein2it.com\)](#).

Nursery School – Last Day

The last day of SHNS will be held on May 18th.

Nursery School – Summer Camp

The Nursery School will hold “Camp” from 9 am until noon on May 23rd – 26th and May 30th – June 2nd.

Office Closed

The office will be closed on Monday, May 29th.

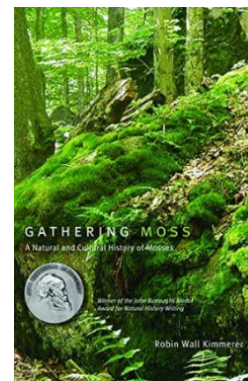


May Birthdays

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 Jason D'Amico | 14 Heather D'Amico |
| 5 Jenn Kennedy | 15 Michael Comstock |
| Rosalie Pillitteri | 16 Kelly Dawson |
| 6 David Greenfield | 18 Riley Farabaugh |
| 8 Christopher Tang | 19 Kylie Bryer |
| 10 Nathan Enterline | 24 Karen Heim |
| 12 Lindsey Wingold | 27 Drew Kennedy |
| 13 Karen Comstock | Phyllis Moore |
| Ian Ney | 30 Bob Shetler |

Sunset Hills Book Club
May Book of the Month
Gathering Moss
By Robin Wall Kimmerer
May 31st – 7:30 pm

Drawing on her diverse experiences as a scientist, mother, teacher, and writer of Native American heritage, Kimmerer explains the stories of mosses in scientific terms as well as in the framework of indigenous ways of knowing. In her book, the natural history and cultural relationships of mosses become a powerful metaphor for ways of living in the world. Gathering Moss will appeal to a wide range of readers, from bryologists to those interested in natural history and the environment, Native Americans, and contemporary nature and science writing. (Amazon Book Description)



Prayer List

Dee Borman



June 2023

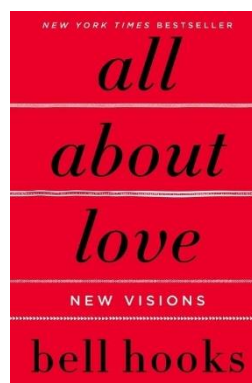
Britt Marie Was Here
 by Fredrik Backman
 Meeting on **June 28th**



Prayer Circle

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

Week of:	Praying for:
May 7 th	Rosalie Pillitteri Susan Pochek & Ryan
May 14 th	Harriet Rickard Amy Riley
May 21 st	Mike & Carla Robinson Beth Romig
May 28 th	Rosemary Romig Harriet Ross



July 2023
All About Love
 by Bell Hooks
 Meeting on **July 26th**

SHIM Food Donations

May 2023

For the month of May, we will be collecting **Personal Items.**

We appreciate your continued support of this ministry.

Pentecost Sunday
May 28th
 Don't forget to wear your **red** on Pentecost Sunday!

Health and 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



Introductory Classes, Wednesday 6:30–7:30pm
May 3 - June 21, 2023

Fees: 8 class series, \$110 Single class \$17

Please register online: www.taichiforhealthpittsburgh.com/in-person

Payment can also be made by cash, check or Venmo upon arrival to class.

No experience or equipment needed. Masks are optional.

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.

TaiChiforHealthPittsburgh.com

412 480 4492

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

Save the Date



SUNSET HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD CLEAN-UP

SUNDAY, MAY 21

**MEET AT SUNSET HILLS UP CHURCH ON CORNER OF
COUNTRY CLUB ROAD AND KENILWORTH DRIVE**

11:30 A.M. Picnic

12:00 P.M. Clean-Up

Please Wear: Gloves and Closed-Toe Shoes

Pack a Lunch. Ice Cream will be Provided.

Summer Job Opportunity



SPEND A SUMMER AT CHAUTAUQUA

The Presbyterian House at Chautauqua (presbychq.org) is looking for summer employees. The House has 36 rooms and accommodates approximately 60 guests for each of the nine weeks of the season. Three meals a day are served, and the House operates as a small hotel/inn.

The Presbyterian House is hiring young adults (those who will graduate from high school in 2023) and college students, couples, or older adults. We ask for a 10-week commitment; however, often workers need to leave early for school or other reasons and we understand and can accommodate those needs. We are flexible and will entertain half summer commitments as well. One need not be a Presbyterian to work at the House.

There are a variety of positions, and each includes a salary (plus tips), room and board, a gate pass and parking pass. There is also a good deal of flexibility allowing employees to attend lectures, concerts, religious services and other events available at the Institution (chq.org).

If you are interested in learning more and/or seeing job descriptions, please contact Jo Wolfe at wolfe4evergreen@gmail.com (814 558-5115) or Kathy Taylor at kathy@presbychq.org (203 605-1544)