



Sunset Hills

M E S S E N G E R

July 2022

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A Message from Pastor Laura

God is closer to us than water is to a fish.

- Catherine of Siena, 1347-1380



She was one of the pope's favorite preachers. She is one of only four women named a doctor of the Roman Catholic Church. Much of her is buried in Rome, the city where she died. The rest of her remains are buried in Siena, the city where she was raised. Her theology of suffering, Jesus Christ, and Christian community continue to inspire

conversation amongst the faithful more than 600 years after her death. She is Saint Catherine of Siena, and she is one of the "lady saints" Tori Vernacchio and I sought in our May pilgrimage to Italy.

There are three purposes behind Tori and I's pilgrimage, along with seven other Presbyterian women. First, we made a pilgrimage to Italy for the sake of community. Going to a foreign land with a foreign culture became a crucible in which relationships amongst female followers of Christ could bond. These bonds enabled us to see ourselves more clearly for who we are, to engage in intentional spiritual self-examination, and to hear from our sisters new ways of seeing the work of God in our lives.

Second, we went to Italy to encounter those sisters in the faith who have gone centuries before, seeking the lessons they continue to hold for us as women of faith today. This was a set apart time where we might sit quietly within Christ-centered spaces to hear from the communion of saints.

Third, we traveled to Italy to learn a new way of being a follower of Jesus. Witnessing Christians from around the world engaging in the Christian faith in a way foreign to ourselves helped each of the pilgrims to examine their own manner of faithfulness. It also opened the doors of our hearts to the myriad of ways the Holy Spirit works through the Spirit's people.

(Continued on page 2)

**Pastor Laura Message
(Continued from page 1)**

Tori and I did not go to Italy to sight-see, though there was a little bit of that along the way. We went to Italy because the Lord opened a door for us to grow in a unique relationship with Christ and with one another. We cannot wait to share the stories of our pilgrimage with you in the weeks and months to come, and we pray that such a door may open for you where you also may have a quiet time set apart to be with Jesus and his people.

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Laura



Music Notes

By Shelby Gracey

Over the years, the choir has sung an anthem called “Revive Us Again.” While we’ve never sung it as a congregational hymn, it was actually written over 200 years ago. Whenever we turn on the news these days (which can be accessed 24/7 in this generation!), the news can make us believe that life has never looked bleaker. However, since the beginning of time, every generation has struggled with the same issue of falling away from God. Thus, the story behind this hymn. (And the story was actually written in 2002 – 20 years ago!):

“The most desperate need of our day is a spiritual and moral renewal. This revival must begin with God’s people, you and me – the Church. It must be more than a mere increase in church membership and attendance. There must be an individual resurgence of God consciousness, moral righteousness, and Christlike

living. It must include the elements of humbling ourselves and turning from our wicked ways (2 Chron. 7:14). Although spiritual renewal cannot be “worked up” by human effort, we can prayerfully desire and seek it. We can ask God sincerely for a fresh touch of His love and the desire to represent and serve Him more effectively.

“The author of the ‘Revive Us Again’ text, William Paton Mackay, was a Scottish

Presbyterian minister. After his education at the University of Edinburgh, he practiced medicine for a number of years before being called to the Christian ministry in 1868. Written in 1863 but revised four years later, this hymn text was based on Habakkuk 3:2: ‘Lord, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, O Lord. Renew them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy.’

*We praise Thee, O God, for the Son of Thy love,
For Jesus who died and is now gone above.*

*We praise Thee, O God, for Thy Spirit of light,
Who has shown us our Savior and scattered our night.*

*All glory and praise to the Lamb that was slain,
Who has borne all our sins and has cleansed every stain.*

*Revive us again – fill each heart with Thy love;
May each soul be rekindled with fire from above.*

Chorus: Hallelujah, Thine the glory! Hallelujah, amen! Hallelujah, Thine the glory! Revive us again!

(“*Amazing Grace: 366 Inspiring Hymn Stories for Daily Devotions,*” Kenneth W. Osbeck, Kregel Publications, 2002, p. 306.)

Reminder

Men and Ladies of the congregation – Everyone is invited to join us for singing on one of the following Sundays:

Men’s Chorus will rehearse after worship on July 3 for singing on Sunday, July 10.

Ladies’ Chorus will rehearse after worship on July 10 for singing on Sunday, July 17.

We’ll also meet at 9:30 prior to worship on the day you’re singing. If you’re not able to make the rehearsal the previous Sunday, you can still join us at 9:30 to practice on the morning your group is singing. Thank you!

Notes from Christian Education

By Taylor Strang

Vacation Bible School at SHUP is in full swing and I am so blessed and blown away from the help I have received from my volunteers to make this happen. This month from the 18th to the 22nd from 9:00 am to 12:30 pm the church will be transformed into a castle. The castle is home to the Knights of the North and the children will help them armor up with God. We are still accepting registration until the 18th so if you are interested sign up via this link:

<https://forms.gle/UEUcoQayqWR6>

[2kraA](#) or visit our website at:

shupchurch.org/vbs

With Vacation Bible School approaching, the Christian Education Department is searching for donations or items we can borrow! We are looking for the

following items:

- Knight and/or Medieval Decorations
- Snowflake Decorations
- Blue, White and Purple Streamers
- Paint Supplies such as Paint Brushes and Washable Paint
- Stone Backdrops
- Any form of fiber stuffing (fake snow)
- White Christmas Lights
- Purple Rectangle Table Covers (to cover walls)

We would also like to see anyone donating their time to help us decorate on Sunday July 17th following worship. There will be pizza and I hope you can make it! There will be a volunteer meeting on July 10th immediately following worship in Wilson Hall.

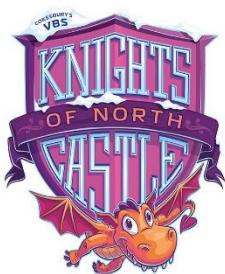
Back to School Blessing

Mark your calendars for the blessing of students and educators going back to school. The blessing will be held on August 28th during the children's message. There will be a fellowship hour immediately following worship.

Youth Mission Trip

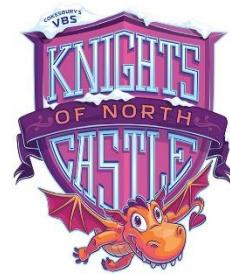
The youth mission trip was a success! They served at multiple community gardens, a children's mission and worked at Manna Kitchen. They also got to see the Liberty Bell, Independence Hall and ate authentic Philly cheesesteaks. The entire Christian Education committee and all of SHUP would like to put Jennifer Kennedy in the spotlight for chaperoning the boys and making the drive. We could not have done it without you Jennifer, thank you!

DON'T FORGET TO REGISTER OR VOLUNTEER FOR VBS!!!



VBS

July 18th - 22nd



Registration now open: <https://forms.gle/UEUcoQayqWR62kraA> or visit our website at:
shupchurch.org/vbs

\$25/week payable in cash, check or [Church Giving: Mobile App, Online & Text Giving for Churches | Tithe.ly](#)

Volunteers needed: Please contact Taylor at sunsethillsCE@gmail.com to offer your help!

WELCOME SHUP MEMBERS...

SUBMITTED BY LEE CEPITS



I recently had a very uplifting conversation with one of our newest church members, **Jim Hudak**, who grew up in the Squirrel Hill-Greenfield area and now lives in Overbrook. He had been a member of Brentwood Presbyterian Church. He is a devoted husband to Terri, and the proud father of a son, Chris, a student at Duquesne, and a daughter, Jess, who studies at Gannon University.

Jim worked for many years as the maintenance man at St. Edmund's Academy. He now is the sexton-custodian of our church—involved in anything that needs to be cleaned, fixed, or maintained. He eagerly told me about his job here. He said the church is God's house and he treats the building like it's alive. He feels he's doing God's work. Jim said, "If you see it as work, it tires you out; but if you're doing it for God, it energizes you."

Even when worldly concerns and personal life issues weigh him down, Jim feels light when he enters our church. He attributes the positive energy and friendly atmosphere he feels with his church family within our church walls to the Holy Spirit, and everything flows better because of that.

Jim said he loves everybody in our church and enjoys working with them. He added, "You can even laugh and have a good time fixing a toilet with someone like Dick Fleming."

In his free time, Jim enjoys walking, hiking, and biking any trails around water—creeks, rivers, lakes. Ohiopyle is a favorite spot.



I also have enjoyed getting to know another new member of our church, **Marla Bruschi**. She grew up in Baldwin and was a member since seventh grade at the Whitehall Presbyterian Church. While her own children were growing up in that church, Marla was active with

their Christian education programs. She also enjoyed ringing bells there. (Shelby has already recruited her for our Campanile Bell Choir.)

For years Marla was an avid softball player in both women's and co-ed leagues and met her husband, Paul, when a friend invited him to join their team. They have a daughter, Kellie, who also plays softball and will be a freshman at Penn State, and a son, Paul, "P J," who is a volunteer fireman for Whitehall Borough.

Marla worked for thirty years as a computer programmer and manager of programmers for U. S. Steel Company.

She continues to be interested in sports, exercise, fitness, and playing pickleball.

Marla knew Pastor Laura as a teenager when her father was the minister at Whitehall Presbyterian Church, and they have been Facebook friends. She said SHUP reminds her of earlier years at Whitehall as a very friendly, active church.



AND FRIENDS!

SUBMITTED BY GINNY BOWMAN

Linda DeBor joined us as a “Friend,” a Presbyterian Church designation she learned about when she lived in Ohio. An advocate for Tai Chi, Linda was instrumental in bringing beginner classes to SHUP. She subsequently attended worship services and was impressed with Pastor Laura’s ministry and sermons and the friendliness of SHUP members.

Linda worked in health care administration in Cleveland prior to returning to her hometown, Pittsburgh. She has many relatives and friends in this area. While living in Cleveland Heights, she attended Fairmont Presbyterian Church.



Linda currently serves on the Finance Committee at South Hills Interfaith Movement (SHIM) which SHUP has long supported. She also volunteers at SHIM’s food pantry. Since 2012 Linda has served as a management consultant for the Bayer Center for Nonprofit Management, Robert Morris University, Executive Service Corps, offering her expertise to many start-up nonprofits. Linda met Shelby Gracey from her work at the Bayer Center and has enjoyed working with her. She is a member of the SHUP Book Club, an American History Book Club, and a Centering Prayer Group which focuses on quiet meditation.

Happy 99th Birthday By Lee Cepits



Rev. Robert Abrams was the Associate Pastor of SHUP from 1967-1977. Frank and I enjoyed delightful visits with Bob at his home this past November and March. He is truly a remarkable, nice man. With his permission during a recent phone conversation, I am providing his contact information for those who would like to wish him a happy birthday on July 31. He will be 99 years old! He remarked to me, “I’m grateful to be remembered.”

Rev. Robert Abrams

9104 Coventry Lane
Louisville, KY 40219

Phone: (502)458-2018

email: bobabrams2000@gmail.com

July Information

Adult Sunday School

8:30 am

The Adult Sunday School class will be on hiatus for the month of July. They will continue their studies via Zoom on August 7th.

On September 4th, the class will begin meeting in person.

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

Everyone is invited to join us for fellowship in Findley Hall on July 3rd.

Volunteers Needed

If you would like to sign-up to host a fellowship hour, please contact the church office at (412)561-5251 or sign up on the sheet outside of Findley Hall.



Chancel Flower Dates Available

- July 3rd
- July 31st



This is a wonderful ministry that allows your generosity to be uplifting for not only those who attend worship each Sunday, but also to the recipients of those flowers.

Please contact Karin in the church office to make your donation today!

Tai Chi

Wednesday's - 7:00 pm

Gurney Bolster, certified Tai Chi instructor, will finish the first summer session on July 20th. The second summer session will begin on August 3rd and continue through September 21st. If you are interested in learning more about these classes, please contact Gurney at: gurneybolster@gmail.com.

Pastor Away

July 10th - 16th & July 24th - Aug 6th

Pastor Laura will be out of the office to continue classes for her Doctor of Ministry the week of July 10th - 16th. She will also be out of the office from July 24th - August 6th. If you have a pastoral emergency outside of office hours, please contact Bev Knasko at (412)563-7154.

Guest Leaders

While Pastor Laura is away for her studies, we will have guest leaders for our worship services:

July 10th - Ryan Gracey

July 24th - Luke Obarsky

July 31st - Dave Petty

July Birthdays

1	Angela Ellis	18	Lynne Blanning
	Dave Petty	20	Becky Rickard
7	Carole McCullough	23	Lucy Tang
8	Tristan Zeglin	24	Lorryn Ernst
9	Eliza Duffner		Sara Ernst
10	Sallie Beaumariage	29	Ben Kennedy
	Harriet Rickard	30	Lynda Hoffman
13	Tom Duffner	31	Lyssa Allison
14	Carol Noonan		Dee Borman
			Pamela Enterline

Prayer List

Dee Borman



Prayer Circle

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

Week of:	Praying for:
July 3 rd	The Stimmel family; Jeff, Joanna & Hanna
	The Stuart family; Eric, Kim, Ethan, Ryan & Kara
July 10 th	The Tang family; Don, Christa, Christopher, Robert & Lucy
	Diane VanHoutte
July 17 th	Tori Vernacchio
	Vince & Debbie Vernacchio
July 24 th	Kay Walker
	The Weidensall family; Bill, Jessica, Ainsley & Lily
July 31 st	Maralee Williams
	Keith & Wendy Yanda

SHIM Food Donations

July 2022

For the month of June, we will be collecting Shelf Stable Milk/Juice.

We appreciate your continued support of this ministry.

Sunset Hills Book Club

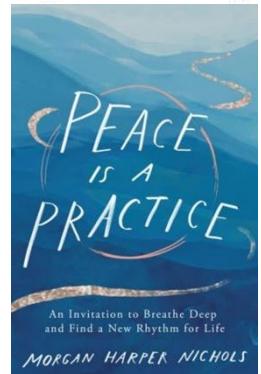
MEETING IN PERSON

July Book of the Month

Peace is a Practice

By Morgan Harper Nichols

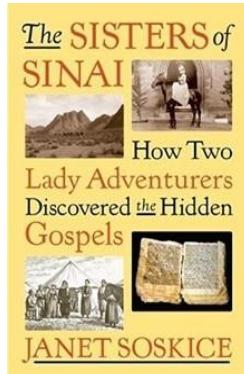
July 20th - 7:30 pm



When you breathe in all the grace available to you and release everything that is outside of your control, you'll discover peace that surpasses your circumstances. All it takes is practice. If you feel overwhelmed with anxiety about the future, you're far from alone. For many of us, when we're not worrying about what is to come, we find ourselves wrestling with things from the past. Where does that leave us today?

Morgan Harper Nichols has learned the answer to this question. She has examined stories from her own life and the lives of people around the world and noticed a common thread: we all long for peace. We're all seeking light and life. But these things don't happen passively. *Peace Is a Practice* invites you to become a peacemaker in your own life, starting right where you are, and in some of the most unexpected places. As these words and images inspire you to take daily steps toward peace.

In every moment, there is something as deep and boundless as a winding river waiting to be found--a true peace that flows, beckoning you to rest . . . and be still. (Amazon Book Description)



August 2022 Book of the Month

The Sisters of Sanai

By

Janice Soskice

Meeting on August 31st

September 2022 Book of the Month

Lila

By

Marilynne Robinson

Meeting on September 28th

