



# Sunset Hills

M E S S E N G E R

October 2023

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 Presbyterian Church**

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**A Message from Pastor Laura**

*Prayer is an earnest and familiar talking with God.* - John Knox, Founder of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, 1514-1572



Reformation Sunday is coming! We celebrate this church holiday every year on the last Sunday of the month. It marks the anniversary of the monk, Martin Luther, pounding his 95 theses onto the door of the church in Wittenberg, outlining each of his qualms with the Roman Catholic Church. While we often say this is the start of the Protestant Reformation, it had actually begun many years ago with Jan Hus in Prague. Regardless of the history, the last Sunday of October is the day we celebrate our Reformation heritage.

For the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), our Reformation heritage is centered in Scotland. That’s why we have shortbread for communion! (Praise be to God!) Our story begins with John Knox traveling to Switzerland to study under John Calvin. Calvin had already formulated his Institutes, or doctrines of the Christian faith. His writings taught much of what our denomination affirms: the sovereignty of God, the authority of the Scriptures, and the necessity of grace through faith. Knox carried Calvin’s teachings with him back to Scotland where he sought to convert the nation to Protestantism.

Though further study reveals that Knox was a problematic historical figure, his influence is profound in Western Pennsylvania. Knox’s Presbyterian theology took hold in Scotland, influencing the English Puritans. The Puritans, of course, carried their faith across the Atlantic to Plymouth. The Presbyterians of Scotland also traveled across the Atlantic, carrying their faith with them, settling in our region in the mid-late 1700’s. The wave of Presbyterian immigrants from Scottish is evident in Pittsburgh today as one can barely drive anywhere in this city without passing a Presbyterian Church.

To celebrate the Presbyterian Church’s heritage, and to have a little bit of fun remembering where our particular flavor of Christianity came from, we will celebrate Reformation Sunday on October 29. Feel free to wear plaid, bring a dish for our potluck luncheon, and get ready to belt out our favorite Celtic hymns to the glory of God. It doesn’t matter if you’re of Scottish heritage (I’m not) - it only matters that you’re here!

In Christ’s Love,  
 Pastor Laura

## Music Notes

By Shelby Gracey

As we welcomed back the Chancel Choir in September after their summer break, we're so happy that one of SHUP's newest members, Jeff Allison, has joined the choir. Welcome to the "choir family," Jeff!

While we're always grateful for the beautiful anthems that the choir presents each Sunday in worship, it's so important that ALL of us join in song as we worship God.

"A New Testament church should always be a singing church, for sacred song is the natural outpouring of joyous Christian hearts. Of all the world's religions, only Christianity is a singing faith. But singing should not be limited to the church services; rather, it should become the Christian's normal daily lifestyle.

"Singing God's praises provides many important benefits to

Many important benefits to believers. There is the awareness that God is pleased when the voice is lifted in praise; he who offers praise honors God (Psalms 50:34). Then we learn many important spiritual truths and concepts when we sing. For many of us, our first awareness that God loves us and that He loves all the children of the world was gained through a song sung at our mother's knee or in the Sunday school nursery. Singing will also provide encouragement and comfort in times of need. Often when we are experiencing periods of discouragement and despondency, a simple hymn will come to mind and will be used of God to mend our fragile emotions. Also, singing is one of our best preparations for heaven. The Bible teaches that we will enjoy giving praise and singing throughout eternity.

"The hymn "Come, Christians, Join to Sing," was originally "Come, Children, Join to Sing." It first appeared in 1843 in a collection *Sacred Melodies for Sabbath Schools and Families*, edited by the author of this text, Christian Henry Bateman. Bateman served the Congregational churches in Scotland and England and then was ordained in the Anglican church."

"When tempted to complain or feel despondent, determine to sing a song of praise. It is one of the best ways to experience calm and contentment when life becomes bleak."

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



*Come, Christians, join to sing – Alleluia! Amen! Loud praise to Christ our King – Alleluia! Amen! Let all, with heart and voice, before His throne rejoice; praise is His gracious choice: Alleluia! Amen!*

*Come, lift your hearts on high – Alleluia! Amen! Let praises fill the sky – Alleluia! Amen! He is our Guide and Friend, to us He'll condescend; His love shall never end: Alleluia! Amen!*

*Praise yet our Christ again – Alleluia! Amen! Life shall not end the strain – Alleluia! Amen! On heaven's blissful shore His goodness we'll adore, singing forevermore, "Alleluia! Amen!"*

## Notes from Christian Education

By Taylor Strang

### *Falling Into the Pages*

I have caught myself recently reading through all of the children's books I find. It could be a new book such as "The Serious Goose" written by Jimmy Kimmel or a book from my childhood like "Corduroy" by Don Freeman. I am relearning all of the skills and lessons that reside in these books. Every Sunday after the children's sermons I am reading children's books with the littlest friends in our congregation and sharing the lessons and memories that I still have. Our volunteers are essential to those memories, in fact I still have memories of being taught by various members of the congregation. It is a core impression that continues to motivate me and our volunteers to continue our work and dedication.

While our Sunday School does not involve children's books and stories of creation, it brings us deeper into each book of the bible. We are able to fall into those pages and memorize what books go where and create a timeline. I am able to assist in the memories of learning the books of the bible. Somewhat like how I have a very specific memory of Shelby Gracey teaching me to sing a song on the order of the books of the bible. In transparency, I still sing this song to myself when I am in need of it.

Falling into the pages of these stories and these books are key to the education of the children of our congregation. And while they are learning, our volunteers and I are allowing our inner child to come to light. We are allowing ourselves to

relearn these stories from a different point of view.

If you are ready to fall into the pages, please contact Taylor or Luke Obarsky to learn more on how to volunteer for Children's Church.

### **URGENTLY LOOKING FOR CHILDREN'S CHURCH VOLUNTEERS**

Help lead the youngest members of our church (birth to 2nd grade) with children's books and play. Volunteers are rotated every 6-8 weeks.

Taylor can be contacted at:

[sunsethillsce@gmail.com](mailto:sunsethillsce@gmail.com)

Luke can be contacted at:

[l.obarsky@gmail.com](mailto:l.obarsky@gmail.com)

## Movies with the Minister



## Sunday, November 12<sup>th</sup>

### *The Marvels*

Join Pastor Laura for an afternoon at the movies! We will also meet after the showing to discuss the movie. Showtime and gathering place will be announced during the Nov. 5<sup>th</sup> worship service.

*Attendees are responsible for the purchase of their ticket and dinner.*

**Harvest Festival Bake Sale****HARVEST FESTIVAL****BAKE-SALE****SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14<sup>TH</sup>****11 AM - NOON****FINDLEY HALL****Donations accepted****Friday, October 13<sup>th</sup> from 6-8 pm****and****Saturday, October 14<sup>th</sup> starting at 10:00 am**

*Please wrap all donations individually (2-4 per bag) and mark them if they contain peanuts, peanut butter, tree nuts, etc.*

**Mission Opportunity****Blankets for the Homeless****Sunday, October 22**

Once again this year, the Mission Commission will hold a blanket-making Sunday. This blanket drive is organized each year by St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church & St. Raphael the Archangel Parish in Carnegie. (Last year we joined their effort to make blankets that were sent to the Ukraine.) Our blanket-making Sunday this year will be on October 22.

Following worship, we'll meet in Findlay Hall to work on these easy-to-make, non-sewing blankets (cutting strips and tying knots). Many hands will make the work go quickly! If you have some good fabric scissors, please bring them along (with your name clearly marked on them.) This year, all blankets will be donated to local homeless shelters. Please join us for this important mission!

## Teen & Mental Health Series at Westminster



Beginning on September 27, The Teen and Parent Mental Health Speaker Series will meet the final Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. All are welcome and are highly encouraged to invite anyone who may benefit from valuable conversation and support for both young people and families. This fall we are excited to introduce our theme, "Stories to Learn From":

- **October 25** – Dan Colussy and Nick Shea with Bruce and Nancy Shea – *Addiction and Recovery*
- **November 29** – Eric McElvenny – *Embracing Challenges and Resilience*

*We look forward to learning together! For any inquiries, please feel free to contact Ed Sutter.*



### Ed Sutter

Senior Director of Christian Education  
412-835-6630x221



Violins of Hope



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH VIOLINS of HOPE GREATER PITTSBURGH

Hope in the South Hills

Join us for an extraordinary evening, as we gather with the South Hills community to embrace the power of music and remembrance.

Presented by Violins of Hope Pittsburgh in partnership with SHIM, JCC's Center for Loving Kindness, and other valued South Hills partners, this event is open to all and free of charge.

Music by the renowned Clarion Quartet Readings and performances by local students.



Register Today!

Go to: bit.ly/45RFQOB



November 13 | 7pm Upper St. Clair High School



## October Information

### Adult Sunday School

**9:00 am - Library**

The class will continue studying The World's Greatest Churches using the work of Dr. William R. Cook of the State University in New York. This study form the Great Courses will look at astounding and historical church structures from Turkey to Iceland, Spain to Ethiopia, and much more!

### 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](http://www.shupchurch.org).

### New Members Class

**Every Sunday in October**

**11:15 am - Library**

If you are interested in becoming a member of SHUP, Pastor Laura will be holding a New Member's Class every Sunday in October. Class will be held after the worship service in the Library.

### Findley Hall Bible Study

**Monday's – 1:00 pm**

The Findley Hall Bible Study will continue their video study of "The Chosen" season 3.

If you would like to learn more about this study, please contact Jody Colby at [jody.colby@verizon.net](mailto:jody.colby@verizon.net).

### Wilson Hall Bible Study

**Tuesday's – 1:00 pm**

The class will be studying the Epistles, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians. They will be using the bible study series from Dr. J. Vernon McGee offering sound biblical scholarship and down-to-earth suggestions for applying the principles of scripture to everyday life. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Carole McCullough at (412)343-5758.

### 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.

### Campanile Bells Rehearsal

**Tuesday's - 6:30 pm**

Bells will have practice in the sanctuary.

***No Bells on October 10<sup>th</sup>.***



### Chancel Choir Practice

**Tuesday's - 7:30 pm**

Chancel choir will have practice in the choir room.

***No Practice on October 10<sup>th</sup>.***

### Yoga - Morning

**Wednesday's – 9:15 am - Crystal Hall**

To sign up for the classes or to learn more about the program, please visit their website at: [Online Stress Management & Anxiety Relief Programs \(breathein2it.com\)](#).

### 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](mailto:gurneybolster@gmail.com).

### Yoga - Evening

**Thursday's – 7:00 pm - Crystal Hall**

To sign up for the classes or to learn more about the program, please visit their website at: [Online Stress Management & Anxiety Relief Programs \(breathein2it.com\)](#).

**October Birthdays**

- |                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 2 Jonathon Fako    | 26 Mary Abbott     |
| 5 Marla Bruschi    | 28 Randy Farabaugh |
| 11 Susan Pocek     | Ali Vernacchio     |
| 14 Tori Vernacchio | 29 Julianna Ellis  |
| 18 Kara Yates      | Bill Weidensall    |
| 21 Pat Patterson   | 31 Beverly Knasko  |
| 23 Alecia Ney      | Ryan Pocek         |

**Prayer List**

Dee Borman



**Prayer Circle**

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

<b>Week of:</b>	<b>Praying for:</b>
Oct 1 <sup>st</sup> .....	The Dawson family; Terry, Lisa, Ryan & Kelly Linda DeBor
Oct 8 <sup>th</sup> .....	The Duffner family; Chris, Carrie, Elizabeth, Michael & Catherine Savy Dunlevy
Oct 15 <sup>th</sup> .....	Debbie Edwards Larry & Jackie Elborne
Oct 22 <sup>nd</sup> .....	Jessalynn Ellis The Ellis family, John, Angela, Julianna & Jacey
Oct 29 <sup>th</sup> .....	John & Pat Ellis The Enterline family; Eric, Carol & Nathan

**SHIM Food Donations**

**October 2023**

For the month of October, we will be collecting **Boxed Dinners.**

**Sunset Hills Book Club**  
**October Book of the Month**

**In Deep Waters**

**By Talitha Amadea Aho**

**Oct. 25<sup>th</sup> - 7:30 pm**

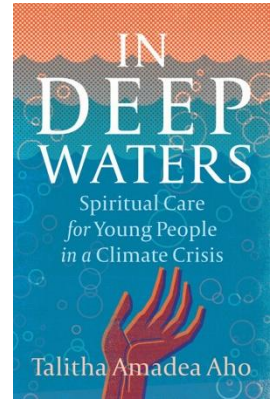
*The starting point for In Deep Waters: Spiritual Care for Young People in a Climate Crisis is not news: the world as we know it is shifting. Several millennia of climate stability have come to an abrupt end.*

*But, observes Talitha Amadea Aho, the young people of today do not remember stability. They see the world through crisis-colored glasses. Climate change is creating a spiritual emergency that is hitting their generation harder than any other.*

*Today's climate crisis calls people of faith to a communal spiritual practice of care, especially for those who are more vulnerable because of their youth--the children, youth, and young adults of Generation Z. We must learn how to offer spiritual care that is informed by the spiritual-ecological crisis of their generation.*

*This book will help you keep young people at the center of your community and listen to the troubles they have to share. Whether you are a Gen Z peer or a caring adult of any other generation, In Deep Waters will show you how to offer ecologically informed spiritual care.*

*We all need to do it today; we cannot wait until one of today's youngest generations grows up. (Amazon Book Description)*



**November 2023**

**The First Ladies**

by M. Benedict

&

V. Murray

Meeting on **November 29<sup>th</sup>**

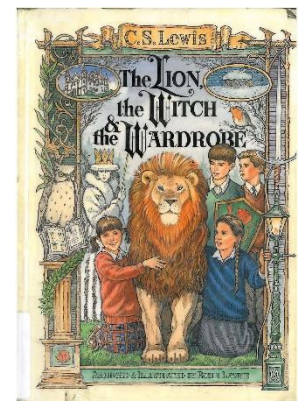


**December 2023**

**The Lion, the Witch & the Wardrobe**

by C.S. Lewis

Meeting on **December 27<sup>th</sup>**





*Harvest Festival*



# Harvest Festival

## Saturday - October 14<sup>th</sup>

### 11 am - 1 pm

- Live Music
- Food Trucks
- Pumpkin Sale
- Flower Sale
- Bake Sale
- Games
- Treats for the kids & more!

**Everyone is invited to join in the fun. Be sure to tell your family & friends!!!**

## *Blessing of the Kirken*

# The Blessing of the Kirken



October 29<sup>th</sup>

During Worship



In celebration of our Presbyterian Heritage, we will celebrate Reformation Sunday with the Blessing of the Kirken (Church). Each household in the congregation will receive a special blessing during the worship service which will include bagpipe music and our favorite Celtic hymns.

## Potluck Lunch

After worship, we will have a luncheon in Findley Hall. Please sign up to bring a dish on the sheet located outside of Findley Hall.

**Don't Forget to Wear Plaid!**