



Sunset Hills

M E S S E N G E R

September 2023

In this Issue

Message From Pastor Laura	1
Music Notes	2
Movies With The Minister	2
Notes From CE	3
Volunteer Opportunities.....	3
Border Ministry Updates	4
Guest Ministers	5
Sunset Hills Slide Show	6
Monts Malawi Mission	7
Rev. Robert Abrams.....	8
Thank You.....	8
September Events.....	9-10
Sunset Hills Book Club	10
Harvest Festival	11
Health & Wellness	12

.....

Sunset Hills United Presbyterian Church

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

www.shupchurch.org

Rev. Dr. Laura Strauss
revlaurastrauss@gmail.com

Karin Schein, Office Administrator
sunsethillschurch@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

Built on the foundations of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In it you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. - Ephesians 2:20-22



A lot can be learned about a Christian community by the building where they choose to worship. Our building communicates, first, that we are a Protestant church. It is evidenced by our steeple and colonial-style architecture. Our church also communicates that our church is American since one rarely sees colonial-style architecture outside of the United States. Additionally, on the inside, we learn that this church follows the theology of John Calvin. There are no

images on our walls, no stained-glass windows, but just a plain worship space where we may focus on God’s Word and the two sacraments. The centrality of the Bible and the communion table at the front of our sanctuary emphasize our Calvin-based priority on these elements of the faith.

Every church we enter tells its own story. The architecture of Saint Bernard Church tells a different story than our own, as does the architecture of St. Paul’s Episcopal Church and Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church and the list goes on. I have experienced this as I’ve worshiped in house churches in Turkey, in Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris, the tiny cell of Julian of Norwich, and an outdoor church with benches in Uganda. Each church’s architecture spoke volumes about the Christian community worshipping therein.

This is what we will study in adult Sunday School during the 2023-24 school year: the architecture of different Christian worshipping communities. We will watch videos exploring everything from the cave churches of Cappadocia to the Stave churches of Norway to the painted churches of Romania. We will learn the history of these worship spaces, and discuss how these variety of church structures may influence the faith of its parishioners. We will also discuss how these structures impact our own beliefs about the Triune God and what it means to be the church.

In Christ’s Love,
Pastor Laura

Music Notes

By Shelby Gracey

A heartfelt “Thank You!” goes out to everyone who gave of their time and talent to offer special music for worship this summer. As always, much appreciation to my dependable GPM Guys for stepping in numerous times to help throughout the summer, as well as to Ryan Gracey for “pushing the buttons” on the Clavinova while I was on vacation! And thank you to our special guests Scott Conboy & Ron Brusceci from Unity Presbyterian Church in Greentree, as well as Becky Rickard from Southminster Presbyterian Church. This congregation has many talented musicians, and we’re grateful for your willingness to serve God in this way. It’s wonderful that the choir can have a few months off, but we’re still able to provide special music throughout the summer worship season!

On behalf of the Music & Worship Commission, I’d also like to express

our appreciation for our elders Chip McCoy, Ryan Gracey, and Dave Petty who led us in worship this summer when Pastor Laura was on study leave and vacation. It takes many people to keep our worship services vibrant and meaningful, and we thank everyone for their contributions to make that happen!

Now that summer has flown by, that means that the Chancel & Bell Choir seasons will be resuming for the Fall!

Our first rehearsal for the **Chancel Choir** will be held on **Tuesday, September 5 at 7:30 pm., in the choir room**, with the plan to sing in worship on Sunday, September 10. We always have room for MORE choir members, and we’d love to have you join us! Reading music is not a necessity – just a love for music and a desire to have fun and fellowship with some great people, while we learn songs to praise God in worship! You can sit in the congregation during

worship and come forward when it’s time to sing the anthem. Let me know if you’re interested, so I’ll have enough music for our first rehearsal.

The **Campanile Bells** will also resume on **September 5 at 6:30 pm.** If anyone might be wondering what it’s like to ring in the bell choir, it’s fun and challenging, and the ability to read music is extremely helpful. We play for worship about three or four times throughout the Fall and Spring seasons and would be happy to have you join us! The number of ringers we have determines the number of octaves we’re able to ring – which determines the music I can pick for the season. Please talk to me if you’re interested in joining this great group of ringers!

Feel free to talk to me on a Sunday morning, call me at home at 412-928-0891, or send me an email at sgracey@verizon.net to let me know of your interest in joining either group!



Sunday, September 10th

My Big Fat Greek Wedding 3

We will see the 4:30 pm showing at the AMC Classic Mt. Lebanon Theatre Galleria Cinemas followed by dinner at Panera Bread to discuss the film.

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

Border Ministry Updates

Dear friends,

Miriam and I are so excited to be back in Agua Prieta, Sonora, sharing life and ministry with this amazing community.

We had the privilege of travelling to 102 different places (churches, universities, seminaries, schools, presbyteries) in 25 states and the District of Columbia from mid-August 2022 to the end of June 2023. It was an honor for us to preach, teach, facilitate workshops, lead cooking classes and book clubs, participate in forums, and share informally with people who were hungry to hear how the community here is seeking to put flesh on the Good News of God in the face of increasing division; of families fleeing extreme violence and/or poverty; of children growing up surrounded by the drug culture; of youth and adults struggling with addictions.

One of the questions we were frequently asked was, "How do y'all sustain yourselves emotionally and spiritually?"

One of the ways that we are sustained is through our weekly Wednesday morning prayer and reflection time with the Frontera de Cristo staff at Café Justo. Another way is by attending our annual retreat on the Gulf of Mexico, where we are nourished by the beauty of creation and by each other.

While on the retreat last week, I accompanied some of the group to go swimming at night...I really did not want to go, but I did because my daughter Anna asked me to. While swimming out far away from any artificial light, I floated on my back in the sea, looking up into the vast sky filled with so many more stars than we can see in Agua Prieta. I felt as if I were floating in the womb of God and looking into the mystery of the immensity of Divine love.

We are sustained because we are surrounded by God's love, by our supportive community here, and by the prayers and support of people across the US and Mexico.

Thank you for helping to sustain us. We cherish your partnership.

Peace,

Mark Adams



First Presbyterian Church

FIRE RECOVERY FUND

On May 22nd, an arsonist set fire to the sanctuaries of First Presbyterian and St. Stephen's Episcopal churches in Douglas, AZ. Fortunately, no one was injured. If you would like to help First Presbyterian Church rebuild, you can mail a check to our office or drop your offering in the collection plate. The Mission Commission will add whatever donations received to the total they are planning to send. You can also donate directly to the First Presbyterian Church. Checks may be made payable to First Presbyterian Church and mailed directly to them at:

PO Box 410
Douglas, Arizona, 85708



St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

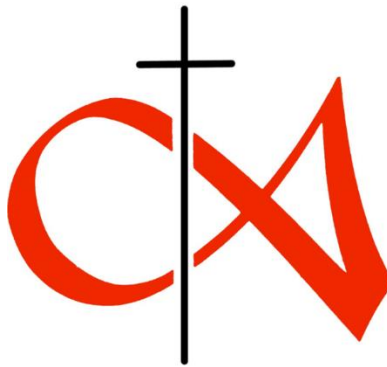
Guest Ministers

Rev. Liddy Barlow was our guest minister on Sunday, June 25, 2023. In her opening remarks, she introduced herself as the Executive Minister of Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania and asked the congregation if they knew about this organization. Since very few answered positively, she shared a little information about CASP. The role of Christian Associates is important for our community, so this is a summary of Rev. Barlow's description of CASP as well as selected information from the CASP website.

Even in the early 1800s, Christians of different traditions, such as Episcopalians and Presbyterians, were working together in Western Pennsylvania. CASP was formed in 1970, bringing together Protestants, Catholics and Orthodox Christians in the ten counties of southwest Pennsylvania. Rev. Barlow was installed as Executive Minister in 2014. In her sermon, Rev. Barlow noted that Jesus erased divisions between Jews and Gentiles; all are children of God. Similarly, CASP works for the unity of the church and the wholeness of communities through:



- * Collegiality: Convening Christian leaders to build relationships grounded in trust and common values.
- * Collaboration: Mobilizing church bodies to speak and act for the common good.
- * Connectedness: Bringing the voice of the church to civic, community, and interfaith partnerships.



Rev. Barlow shared specific examples of CASP working to reduce lines that divide us now:

- * Leading multidenominational ministries at the Allegheny County Jail.
- * Helping to clean up after Hurricane Ivan.
- * Leading workshops to help people talk through their political differences.
- * Meeting with elected officials to advocate for just and merciful policies.

Rev. Barlow encouraged us to subscribe to the CASP newsletter so that we are aware of their activities. One can subscribe and get much more information about CASP at their website: www.casp.org

Rev. Barlow's office is located at:

Hicks Memorial Chapel
Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
616 N. Highland Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15206

Mailing address, telephone, and email:

P. O. Box 5241
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
412-688-9070

lbarlow@casp.org

Submitted by: Ginny Bowman



On, **September 17th**, while Pastor Laura is away, we will be lead in worship by Rev. Ralph Lowe, Associate Minister for Justice Ministries. Ralph is the primary presbytery staff liaison for the North Branch and West Branch of the Pittsburgh Presbytery, as well as the Administrative Commission for Transformation, Amos 5:24 Ministry Team, Anti-Racism Transformation Team, Freedom Rising Pilot Project, Peacemaking Ministry Team, Hunger Fund Ministry Team, National Black Presbyterian Caucus Pittsburgh Chapter, Great Commission, and the Self-Development of People Ministry Team.

Many of you may remember Rev. Lowe from his last visit to SHUP in May of 2022. We are excited to welcome him back and look forward to hearing his message.

Slideshow Tour – Sunset Hills



Sunset Hills Slideshow Tour

6 pm, Thursday, September 7

Within Sunset Hills, Mt. Lebanon's easternmost neighborhood, you'll find Howe School, Mt. Lebanon Public Golf Course, several parks, a former Methodist camp meeting ground, and a few other surprises. In this no-walking "tour," we will share the history and architecture of Sunset Hills in a slideshow. **History Center, 794 Washington Road.**



More Info at:

<https://lebohistory.org/events/>

Tickets are \$10 for HSML members and \$15 for non-members - Purchase tickets at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/sunset-hills-slideshow-tour-tickets-618569547167>



Monts Malawi Mission



From the Sunday, July 23 Monts Update

Riding-Day #7 out of 11; 10th Day out of fourteen for the whole trip that ends this Thursday at the Southern border of Malawi and Mozambique. We're very grateful for the safety and strength, and the three Synods that have worked together to help us with overnight accommodations and publicity. People in small Trading Centers along our route have heard about the trip and the three of us (2nd year pastoral strident Hamilton had participated since our departure and 5th year Voice joined us yesterday) will continue the rest of the way.



A huge Boab Tree



At a rest stop



An outdoor fast-food shop



Riding companion, Voice

September Information

Adult Sunday School

9:00 am - Library

On August 27th, the class began 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.

Fellowship Hour

First Sunday of the Month/After Worship

We will hold fellowship hour in Findley Hall after worship on Sunday, September 3rd.

Findley Hall Bible Study

Monday's – 1:00 pm

The Findley Hall Bible Study will return on September 11 to start an 8-week 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.

Wilson Hall Bible Study

Tuesday's – 1:00 pm

The Wilson Hall Bible Study will begin meeting again on September 12th.

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

Campanile Bells Rehearsal

Tuesday's - 6:30 pm

Bells will have practice in the sanctuary beginning September 5th.

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.

Chancel Choir Practice

Tuesday's - 7:30 pm

Chancel choir will have practice in the choir room beginning September 5th.

Yoga - Morning

Wednesday's – 9:15 am - Crystal Hall

Class starting September 13th! To sign up for the classes or to learn more about the program, please visit their website at: [Online Stress Management & Anxiety Relief Programs \(breathein2it.com\)](http://OnlineStressManagement&AnxietyReliefPrograms(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.

Yoga - Evening

Thursday's – 7:00 pm - Crystal Hall

Class starting September 28th. To sign up for the classes or to learn more about the program, please visit their website at: [Online Stress Management & Anxiety Relief Programs \(breathein2it.com\)](http://OnlineStressManagement&AnxietyReliefPrograms(breathein2it.com)).

Office Closed

The office will be closed on Monday, September 4th.

Pastor Laura Away

Pastor Laura will be away from September 17th – 23rd. Rev. Ralph Lowe will be our guest worship leader on September 17th.

If you have a pastoral care emergency outside of office hours, please call Bev Knasko at (412)563-7154.

September Birthdays

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 Ryan Dawson | 15 Matt Fako |
| Lisa Ursitz | 20 Carla Greenfield |
| 5 Jeff Allison | 21 Clayton Allison |
| Andrew Gracey | 22 Lily Weidensall |
| Meg MacDougall | Amelia May Yates |
| 11 Eneless Frank | 25 David Arnold |
| Fritz Strauss | |

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:
Sept 3 rd	The Bruschi family; Paul, Marla, Paul & Kellie The Bryer family; Jeff, Jen, Kylie & Aiden
Sept 10 th	Betty Coffey Jody Colby
Sept 17 th	Michael & Karen Comstock The D'Amico family; Jason, Heather, Emily & Jacob
Sept 24 th	Anna Daniels The Daniels family, Sean, Karin & Alison

SHIM Food Donations

September 2023

For the month of September, we will be collecting **Peanut Butter and Jelly.**

Sunset Hills Nursery School

September 2023

The Sunset Hills Nursery School will be back in session beginning September 11th.

Doors Locked

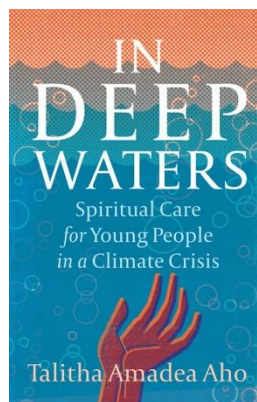
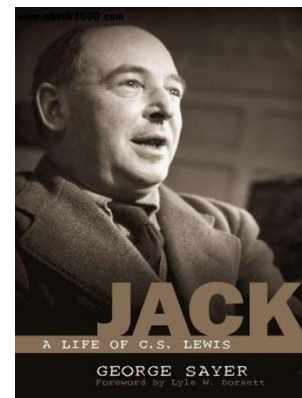
Beginning September 11th, the doors to the church will be locked between 9:15 am – 3:00 pm (M-F). If you need to enter the church during these times, please ring the doorbell by the Findley Hall entrance.

Sunset Hills Book Club September Book of the Month

Jack: A Life of C.S. Lewis
By Eleanor Shearer
Sept. 27th – 7:30 pm

George Sayer's first impression about C. S. Lewis proved true. He was interesting; but he was more than just that. He was a devout Christian, gifted literary scholar, best-selling author, and brilliant apologist. Sayer draws from a variety of sources, including his close friendship with Lewis and the million-word diary of Lewis's brother, to paint a portrait of the man whose friends knew him as Jack. Offering glimpses into Lewis's extraordinary relationships and experiences, Jack details the great scholar's life at the Kilns; days at Magdalen College; meetings with the Inklings; marriage to Joy Davidman Gresham; and the creative process that produced such world-famous works as the classic Chronicles of Narnia, Mere Christianity, and The Screwtape Letters.

This book is an intimate account of the man who helped—and through his works, continues to help—generations hear and understand the heart of Christianity. (Amazon Book Description)



October 2023 In Deep Waters

by Talitha Amadea Aho
Meeting on October 25th

November 2023

The First Ladies
by M. Benedict
&

V. Murray

Meeting on November 29th



Coming in October



Harvest Festival

Saturday - October 14th

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!!!

Health & Wellness



Morning Yoga

When/Where: Wednesdays 9:15-10:15 AM, Crystal Hall, SHUP Church, starting September 13th and continuing for 8 weeks til November 1st



Restore and Relax
to end your day.
Yoga with us this
Fall!

Evening Yoga

When/Where: Thursdays 7-8PM, Crystal Hall, SHUP Church, starting September 28th and going 8 weeks til November 16th.

How: Register at www.breathein2it.com/yoga