



February 2024

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Sunset Hills United Presbyterian Church

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A Message from Pastor Laura

If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill', and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

- James 2:15-17



More than one in five children in the United States are at risk of hunger (one in three among Black and Latino children). What many of these children experience is referred to as hidden hunger. That is, they receive enough food but it is food lacking in necessary vitamins and minerals. This leads to stunted growth, poor cognitive function, weakened immune systems, and chronic diseases.

Hunger amongst children in our country isn't caused by a lack of food. Childhood hunger is caused by poverty. Bread for the World addresses that poverty through advocacy. Bread is an ecumenical, Christian organization that advocates for the end of hunger by addressing the underlying issues that lead to hunger. As co-chair of the SW PA Bread for the World team, I lead our group in writing to local representatives, meeting with the same representatives, and informing our community about legislation that impacts those who are hungry locally.

I invite you this Lent to learn about the root causes of hunger in our nation, and in our area. We will gather every Sunday in Lent at 9:00 a.m. in Findley Hall to watch a documentary on the various causes of poverty-related hunger. We will study the problems of food waste, how climate change leads to hunger, and the reasons for childhood hunger in a nation as developed as ours. The weekly study will begin on February 18 and our last study will be on March 24. The study will culminate on Palm Sunday with an opportunity to write letters to our local government in advocacy for hunger-alleviating legislation.

In the words of Bread for the World, 'with your support, we can end hunger.'

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Laura

Music Notes

By Shelby Gracey

Some of you might remember that I've written some articles over the years concerning Billy Graham. When I was a child, I can remember my dad faithfully watching the Billy Graham Crusades on our black and white TV. The most distinguishing moment of the program for me was when Rev. Graham would call people forward to the musical strains of "Just As I Am." If I'm honest, it was my favorite part because I knew the program was almost over and I could have the TV back to watch the shows I wanted to watch. But that song left an indelible imprint on me as I watched the thousands of people come forward to give their lives to Jesus.

"The composer of that song, Charlotte Elliott of Brighton, England, was an embittered woman. Her health was broken, and her disability had hardened her. 'If God loved me,' she muttered, 'He would not have treated me this way.'

"Hoping to help her, a Swiss minister, Dr. Cesar Malan, visited the Elliotts on May 9, 1822. Over dinner, Charlotte lost her temper and railed against God and family in a violent outburst. Her embarrassed family left the room, and Dr. Malan was left alone with her.

"You are tired of yourself, aren't you?" he asked. 'You are holding on to your hate and anger because you have nothing else in the world to cling to. Consequently, you have become sour, bitter, and resentful.'

"What is your cure?" asked Charlotte.

"The faith you are trying to despise.'

"As they talked, Charlotte softened, 'If I wanted to become a Christian and to share the peace and joy you possess,' she finally asked, 'what would I do?'

"You would give yourself to God just as you are now, with your fightings and fears, hates and loves, pride and shame.'

"I would come to God just as I am? Is that right?'

"Charlotte did come just as she was, and her heart was changed that day. As time passed, she found and claimed John 6:37 as a special verse for her: '. . . he who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.'

"Years later, her brother, Rev. Henry Elliott, was raising funds for a school for the children of poor clergymen. Charlotte wrote a poem, and it was printed and sold across England. The

leaflet said: *Sold for the benefit of St. Margaret's Hall, Brighton: Him That Cometh to Me I will in No Wise Cast Out.* Underneath was Charlotte's poem – which has since become the most famous invitational hymn in history.

"Charlotte lived to be 82 and wrote about 150 hymns, though she never enjoyed good health. As her loved ones sifted through her papers after her death, they found over a thousand letters she had kept in which people expressed their gratitude for the way this hymn had touched their lives." (*"Then Sings My Soul,"* Robert J. Morgan, Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2003, p. 113.)



*Just as I am, without one plea, but that thy blood was shed for me,
and that thou bidd'st me come to thee, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

*Just as I am, though tossed about with many a conflict, many a doubt,
fightings and fears within, without, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

*Just as I am, thou wilt receive, wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
because Thy promise I believe, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

*Just as I am, Thy love unknown Has broken every barrier down;,
Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

Notes from Christian Education

By Taylor Strang

February is all about Strength and Courage!

We'll be exploring scripture verses like Joshua 1:9, which says, "Be strong and courageous. The Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

Our key idea is Psalm 28:7a, which says, "The Lord is my strength and my shield." We'll be exploring what true strength looks like and how we can place our trust in Him.

We'll also be revisiting Joshua 1:9, which emphasizes the call to be strong and courageous.

Our Children's Church will be a safe and fun place for kids to grow, learn, and be inspired throughout this month-long journey. We want our little ones to experience strength and courage for themselves, not just hear about it. We'll do this through engaging stories and plenty of play.

Days for Girls Pittsburgh South PA

Team

When?

Starting January 10th!

Wednesdays

10-2 pm

Last Sunday of the Month

11:30-2:30 pm

Donation List

- Polyester Thread
- 5/8" Grosgrain Ribbon
- Sewing Scissors
- Seam Rippers
- Sewing Lights
- Rotary Cutters
- Straight Pins
- 24 x 18 Cutting Mat

Where?

Sunset Hills United Presbyterian Church

Wilson Hall

Enter through side door of large parking lot

900 Country Club Drive, Pittsburgh, PA, 15226

Merry of Soul: A Celtic Christian Retreat for Women

Saturday, March 16th

9 am – 4 pm

Sunset Hills U.P. Church

Explore early Christianity in the land of the Celts with sisters in the faith, led by Rev. Dr. Laura Strauss. Enjoy good food, fascinating conversation, and learn about the world of faith in Scotland, Ireland, and beyond!

Cost: \$50.00

Breakfast and Lunch Included

Thank You

Dear Church Family of SHUP!

You offered a young, inexperienced, 23-year old an opportunity to be of service in '82-'83 before heading off to seminary. Then, you donated to his cross-country bike hike across the USA, along with a place to stay in '21. This year, you made extravagant donations to our living, serving, and learning in Malawi.

What generosity and large-heartedness. Thank you all so very much from the bottom of our hearts.

May God continue blessing and guiding your church life, ministry and mission, faith, hope, and love.

In Christ,

Chuck & Deb Monts

Keeping You Posted

Year-End Statements

2023 Year-End Giving Statements were mailed at the end of January 2024. If you received one and there is a discrepancy, or if you did not receive one and feel that you should have, please contact Karin in the office at:

(412)561-6261

or

sunsethillschurch@gmail.com.

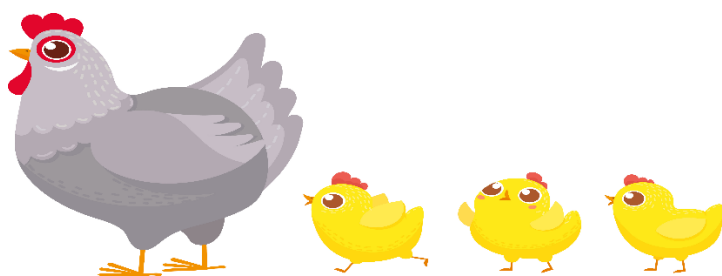
Donate Your Cookie Tins!

Please donate any clean Christmas cookie tins (or plastic/cardboard) that are in good condition.

They will be used at our next Cookie Sale.

A collection box will be placed in the pantry/supply room off Findley Hall during the month of February. Thank you!

If you have any questions, contact Lee Cepits at:
412-770-6785.



Rev. Dr. Strauss's Dissertation

Pastor Laura Dissertation entitled "As a Hen Gathers Her Chicks," will be made available in early 2024 to the congregation. She will be using her dissertation for a sermon series of the same name through the season of Lent, February 18 – March 17, 2024.

February Events



Ash Wednesday

February 14th



Pancake Supper

6:00 pm – Findley Hall

Worship Service

7:00 pm – Sanctuary

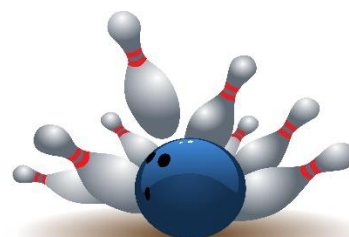
Planning Your End-of-Life Service

Sunday, February 4th

After Worship – Findley Hall



Pastor Laura will help guide you to a better understanding of how you can help your family prepare your memorial service years from now.



Bowling

Saturday, February 17th

Princess Lanes

Calling all 30-Something members of SHUP to get together for a fun night of bowling and fellowship.

Contact Jeff Allison at:

jeffallison407@gmail.com

with any questions.

Field Trip

St. Anthony's Chapel

Sunday, February 18th – After Worship

On behalf of the Adult Sunday School Class, Pastor Laura invites everyone to join us for a field trip to Saint Anthony's Chapel in Troy Hill following worship on Sunday, February 18. Bring a brown bag lunch and then we will carpool to the chapel. Saint Anthony's is noted for having the largest collection of relics in the world outside the Vatican.

February Information

Adult Sunday School

9:00 am - Library

The class will continue to meet in the Library on Sunday mornings.

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

We will continue to hold fellowship after the worship service on the first Sunday of every month. If you would like to host one Sunday, please sign up on the sheet outside of Findley Hall.

Days for Girls

Last Sunday of the Month – 11:30 am

Days for Girls will meet on the last Sunday of every month after the worship service in Wilson Hall. For more information about DfG, please contact Taylor at sunsethillsCE@gmail.com

Findley Hall Bible Study

Monday's – 1:00 pm

The Findley Hall Bible study meet for the month of February.

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 class will be studying the Epistles, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians. They will continue to meet in February. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Carole McCullough at (412)343-5758.

Yoga - Evening

Tuesday's – 5:30 pm - Crystal Hall

Instructors from BreaheIn2It Yoga will finish their winter session on February 27th.

To sign up or learn more, please visit: [Online Stress Management & Anxiety Relief Programs \(breathein2it.com\)](#).

Campanile Bells Rehearsal

Tuesday's - 6:30 pm

Bells will have practice in the sanctuary.

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.

Days for Girls

Every Wednesday – 10:00 am

Days for Girls will meet in Wilson Hall. For more information about DfG, please contact Taylor at sunsethillsCE@gmail.com

No Dfg on February 14th.

Tai Chi

Wednesday's – 6:30 pm

Gurney Bolster, certified Tai Chi instructor, will finish the winter session on February 28th.

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

Instructors from BreaheIn2It Yoga will finish their winter session on February 29th.

To sign up or learn more, please visit: [Online Stress Management & Anxiety Relief Programs \(breathein2it.com\)](#).

February Birthdays

- 1 Nancy Newman
- 6 Marge Petty
- 5 Ginny Bowman
- 6 Bill Ney
- 7 Connor Brumfield
- 9 Maralee Williams
- 11 Jessalynn Ellis
- 13 Sean Daniels
- 15 Harriet Ross
- 16 Jeffrey Stimmel
- 18 Michelle Brumfield
- 19 Brienne Sembrat
- 24 Bill Geary
- 24 Thomas Stacey
- 27 Luke Obarsky
- 28 Jessica Weidensall



Prayer List

Dee Borman



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>
Feb 4 th	Carol McCallum Chip McCoy
Feb 11 th	Jack & Carole McCullough James & Linda McKean
Feb 18 th	James McKeen Carl Moeller
Feb 25 th	Phyllis Moore Nancy Newman

Nursery School Closed
Monday, February 19th

The Sunset Hills Nursery School will be closed on Monday, February 19th in honor of President's Day.

SHIM Food Donations
February 2024

This month, we will be collecting **Pasta & Sauce.**

Sunset Hills Book Club
January Book of
the Month

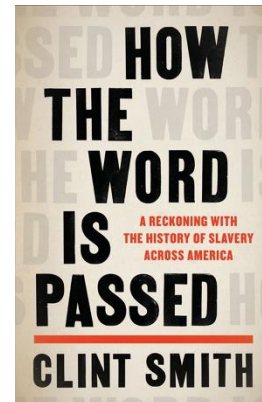
How the Word is Passed
By Clint Smith

Feb. 28th – 7:30 pm

Beginning in his hometown of New Orleans, Clint Smith leads the reader on an unforgettable tour of monuments and landmarks—those that are honest about the past and those that are not—that offer an intergenerational story of how slavery has been central in shaping our nation's collective history, and ourselves.

A deeply researched and transporting exploration of the legacy of slavery and its imprint on centuries of American history, How the Word Is Passed illustrates how some of our country's most essential stories are hidden in plain view—whether in places we might drive by on our way to work, holidays such as Juneteenth, or entire neighborhoods like downtown Manhattan, where the brutal history of the trade in enslaved men, women, and children has been deeply imprinted.

Informed by scholarship and brought to life by the story of people living today, Smith's debut work of nonfiction is a landmark of reflection and insight that offers a new understanding of the hopeful role that memory and history can play in making sense of our country and how it has come to be. (Amazon Book Description)



March 2024

The Magnolia Palace
by Fiona Davis

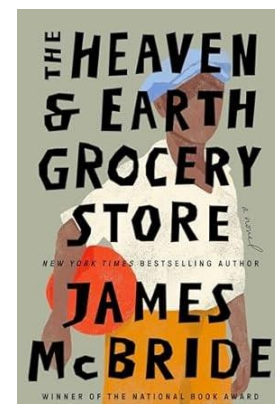
Meeting on **March 27th**
Via Zoom



May 2024

The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store

by James McBride
Meeting on **May 29th**
In Person



Session & Deacon Information 2024

Session 2024

Clerk of Session: Carla Robinson

2024	2025	2026
Mary Abbott (b)	Jody Colby (b)	Luke Obarsky (b)
Bev Knasko (b)	Ryan Gracey (b)	Carla Robinson (b)
Chip McCoy (a)	Tim Fako (b)	Beth Romig (a)
	Kara Yates (b)	

Chairs of Session Commissions

Administration & Personnel:	Bev Knasko
Christian Education:	Beth Romig
Communications:	Ryan Gracey
Congregational Care:	Mary Abbott
Facilities:	Chip McCoy
Mission:	Jody Colby
Neighborhood Outreach:	Kara Yates & Luke Obarsky
Nominating Committee:	Luke Obarsky & Beth Romig
Nursery School Board:	Beth Romig
Stewardship/Finance:	Tim Fako
Treasurer:	Michael Berger
Worship & Music:	Bev Knasko

Deacons 2024

Moderator: Debbie Edwards

2024	2025	2026
Mike Duffner (a)	Debbie Edwards (a)	Jonathan Fako (a)
Carol Noonan (a)	Pat Ellis (a)	Karen Heim (a)
Amy Riley (a)	Leslie Ney (a)	Harriet Rickard (a)
	Pat Patterson (a)	

Session & Deacon Information 2024

After the worship service on January 28th, there was a Chili Cook-Off in Findley Hall. We had a large turn-out, but with 6 different entries to choose from, there was plenty of chili to go around. Thank you to Tim & Jill Fako, Carla Greenfield, Mike Robinson, Beth Romig, Rev. Dr. Laura Strauss, and Christa Tang for sharing your favorite recipe with your church family. The first-place prize went to Carla Greenfield with her vegetarian Chili. Second place was awarded to Mike Robinson and third place went to Tim & Jill Fako. Better luck next year, Beth, Laura & Christa!

A big “thank you” to GPM for providing us with some “spicy” music to go along with the chili!



The Big Winners

Tim & Jill Fako (3rd), Mike Robinson (2nd), & Carla Greenfield (1st)!



GPM

(Dave Petty, Frank Cepits, Mike Robinson, & Keith Yanda)

Entertaining the crowd!



What a turn out!!!

Where did all of the chili go?



A great time was had by all!

Here, Pastor Laura and Christa Tang discuss strategies on how to step up their game for the next cook-off!