



Windows

The newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church in Germantown
March 2021



From the Pastor

In a recent discussion with fellow clergy, a colleague of mine said that we know how to deal with the cross and we know how to deal with resurrection, but we struggle with the time in between. This feels true to me. That we know how to grieve and we know how to celebrate, but it is much more difficult to live when things are unresolved. That means we've been in a difficult time for a long while now!

We're coming up on a year of enforced isolation with the COVID19 pandemic. We seem to be closer to resolution with some people having been vaccinated and others scheduled for vaccination, but we still have a long way to go before things will be "normal" again – if indeed they ever will be. If you ask me when we will be worshiping in the sanctuary again, I would guess the fall of 2021. The president said things will be better in December 2021. There are some in our presbytery who are discussing moving to in-person worship in June. Once again, it's a time where there is no resolution – or at least not yet.

The presbytery is continuing its anti-racism work with Coming to the Table and other initiatives, the current administration is also taking steps including reinstating diversity training at the federal level and instituting a study on reparations, but we have a long way to go before our nation will be healed from its national trauma. Truthfully, there will be no final resolution on this issue for years to come, although we can take steps as individuals, a church, and a country to work toward a more just and equal future for all.

The country is in the midst of a massive cold spell, with freezing temperatures, snow, and ice in 44 of the contiguous United States, causing power outages, water shortages and more. It is sleeting here in Philadelphia as I write, although our situation is much better than in many other places at the moment. This is a direct result of climate change; the need to move more quickly for a positive resolution is ever more obvious.

In short, we are living in the middle, the time without resolution, and have been for a long time. Tempers are frayed, mental health issues are on the rise, and we long for something good to happen.

On Ash Wednesday, the day was bright, cold, and clear. With some help from staff and friends, Rev. Kevin Porter and I set up a table in the east parking lot for a Drive- and Walk-Through Imposition of Ashes opportunity. In the hour that we conducted the ritual, we made the sign of the cross on 22 foreheads, using the words, "In life and in death, you belong to God." Bundled up and using a single crutch to maneuver, I was practically giddy. I told Kevin it was glorious to be

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Items for the April issue of *Windows* are due on March 19th. Send to

Communications
@fpcgermantown.org



**JOIN US FOR WORSHIP
ONLINE**

Sundays at 10 a.m.

Everyone is invited to worship, study and enjoy friendships at The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown. There are service, outreach and fellowship opportunities in abundance. In addition to weekly and monthly scheduled services and activities, visit www.fpcgermantown.org and click on Special Events web pages for more information.

To learn more, please email fpcg.germantown@gmail.com or call the church office at 215-843-8811.

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among three-dimensional people, even though briefly, masked and socially distanced.

“I know this is a day when we remember our mortality, our death, but to me, it feels like resurrection,” I said.

“If this feels like resurrection,” he replied, “Imagine what Resurrection will feel like!”

This is how we live in the in-between times: in the knowledge that God is always with us, that joy comes in the morning, that resurrection is in Christ Jesus, and that in life and in death – and in the in-between – we belong to God.

- Rev. Rebecca Segers

**MARCH
BIRTHDAY'S**

Irene Overton

MARCH 2ND

Duane Horne

MARCH 3RD

Francina Carroll

MARCH 4TH

C. Wesley Reisse

MARCH 7TH

Rosemary Walkenhorst

MARCH 7TH

Sally McCord-Amasis

MARCH 10TH

Ida Wiggins-White

MARCH 11TH

Ted Walkenhorst

MARCH 14TH

Randolph Clever

MARCH 17TH

Emmanuel Heyer-Rivera

MARCH 19TH

Leslie Burton

MARCH 20TH

Alexandra Deas

MARCH 20TH

Mark McCord-Amasis

MARCH 21ST

Zara Gibbs

MARCH 21ST

Tyrone Burton

MARCH 26TH

Soren Hood

MARCH 27TH

Justin Garner

MARCH 29TH

Youth News



We are getting out safely in Spring!

Spring is around the corner and the CE committee is looking to taking advantage of safe activities that we can do together outside as the weather improves. We are planning fruit picking trips, camping opportunities, biking expeditions, movie nights, and backyard BBQing. If you have a good idea for an inexpensive outdoor activity that can bring people together in a safe way, propose it to a CE committee member to bring it for consideration. The CE committee is presently made up of Andrea Overton (chair), Bob Seed, Sheila Heyer-Rivera, Don Carlin, Contina Lundy, Rev. Rebecca Segers and Christian Heyer-Rivera. Thanks and we look forward to seeing you in person soon!



Looking for Caring Adult Mentors

The CE committee is making plans to facilitate mentoring relationships between adult members and our young people. If you have a desire to share your life experiences and faith, as well as a heart to see young people encouraged and supported in their life and faith, this may be an opportunity for you to fulfill those hopes. We will be providing descriptions of what the mentor/mentee relationship would look like in our congregation, background checks for those that offer themselves, and training and ongoing support to every eligible mentor. Please see Andrea Overton or Christian Heyer-Rivera to be identified as someone who wants to explore this unique way to build up our church and its young people.



Youth exploring hot topics with Rev. Rebecca

On the first and third Fridays of the month of March, Rev. Rebecca will be hosting zoom meetings for middle and highschool youth from 6:30-7:45p to discuss hot topics around issues related to race, sexuality, gender, mental health, and/or drugs and alcohol use. Youth will help determine the topics as they are explored from a biblically grounded pastoral perspective. The format will be question and answer base with questions being submitted anonymously. If you are part of the group text list for middle and high school youth group, you will receive a reminder during the week of the 1st and 3rd Fridays (March 5th and 19th) with a link to the zoom meeting. If your student isn't a part of the youth group text list and you'd like them to participate, please contact Christian Heyer-Rivera by text or email at 2679725662 or cheyer-rivera@fpcgermantown.org.

"The Social Dilemma" Parent Watch Party and Discussion

If you or your child utilize social media in a variety of forms (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, Youtube, TicTok, etc) and you are interested in exploring and understanding why social media can seem to leave people staring at and sharing from their phones and mobile devices for hours, and what type of effect this may be having on you or your child, you are invited to join a watch party and discussion on the movie "The Social Dilemma" on Netflix. We are working to set up a time best that people interested can set aside for the viewing and discussion. Please contact Christian or Sheila Heyer-Rivera to learn the possible times and dates in order to join.

Birthday Car Caravan Celebrations

The past year we have made an effort to gather outside of our kids' home in car caravans to celebrate their birthdays. Beginning in March and continuing throughout the year, if you would like us to set up a car caravan celebration for your child, please reach out to Christian Heyer-Rivera with a date and time that you would like us to come and celebrate your child curbside. Car caravan celebrations will be limited to Saturdays after 1p and Sundays after 3p to try to best ensure participation. We need at least a week and a half in advance to gather people around the Saturday or Sunday date and time of your choosing. Thank you for your help with our ongoing effort to acknowledge and celebrate your child's birthday in these challenging times!

A Lenten Blessing

Rev. Rebecca Segers and Rev. Kevin Porter offered the opportunity for Drive- or Walk-Through Imposition of Ashes on Ash Wednesday, February 17, 2021 from 1:00-2:00 p.m. in the First Presbyterian Church in Germantown east parking lot. They were supported by John Walhausen who played selections from Bach throughout the hour, and Marc DiNardo who set up (and took down) speakers so that the Germantown Giant could be heard on the Avenue. Cherese Akers alternately livestreamed and posted photographs through various social media platforms. Sexton Tony Nixon and volunteers John McBride and Ron Simelaro helped to burn palms, carry tables, and direct traffic. In short, it took a village, but ultimately 22 people were blessed with ashes and a reminder that “in life and in death, we belong to God.”



Music News

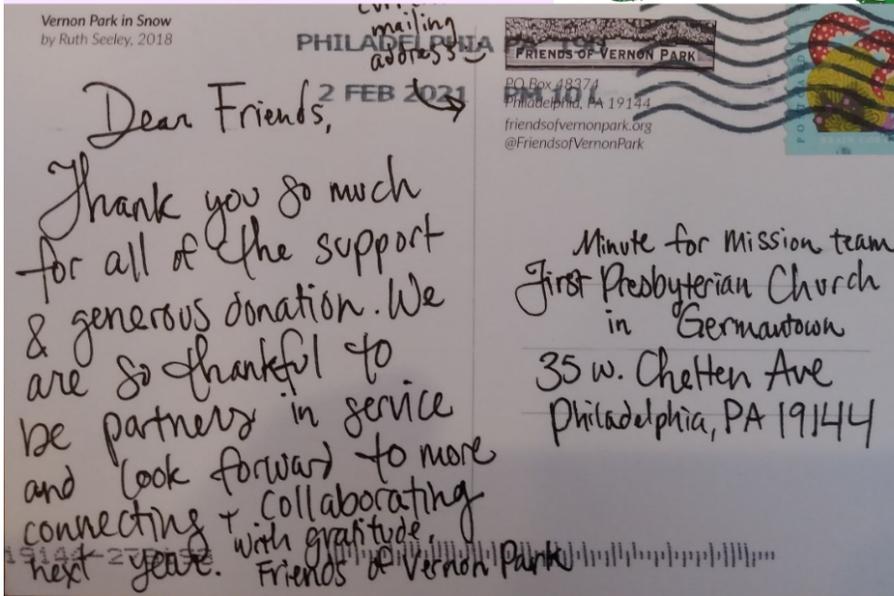
Celebrating Black History month this February has been a real joy and a great journey exploring music of African American Composers. This month we have featured compositions of 20th and 21st century composers André Thomas, Rollo Dilworth, and Jester Hairston, as well as diverse hymnody of the African American and African Diaspora traditions. It has been particularly touching to hear positive feedback on new anthems that I have introduced to services. I can hardly wait to share these with our full choirs when it is once again safe for us to gather in person. Also very exciting this month was putting together a virtual choir project with the classic Gospel anthem “Total Praise”. It was very gratifying seeing so many singers’ enthusiasm for this project, which I look forward to sharing for the last Sunday of February.

As we go into March, we will be shifting gears to celebrate Women’s History Month. This month, I look forward to building my own knowledge of female composers and expanding our music library to incorporate more choral music written by women from the Renaissance through the present. Additionally, we will be lifting up a number of hymns written by women in our services.

The work on the McLean Memorial Pipe Organ will continue through the month of March. Pipework that was removed from the gallery instrument for cleaning and regulation in January is expected to return to Germantown in the next couple weeks. I am certainly looking forward to having the roar of our famous 32’ Pedal Tromba stop back just in time for Easter!

In Other News

- A thank you note from our Friends of Vernon Park



2021 Challenge Offerings

- January**—Friends of Vernon Park
- February**—FPCG Deacons
- March**—Puerto Rico
- April**—One Great Hour of Sharing
- May**—Village to Village
- June**—Lingelbach School
- July**—OPEN
- August**—PAR-Recycle Works
- September**—Athletes in Action
- October**—Presbyterian Peace and Justice
- November**—Rise Against Hunger
- December**—Presbyterian Joy Offering

Missions & Outreach

The Mission and Outreach Committee is expanding, and you have a part to play! We recently accepted the "Evangelism" role from the Praise and Evangelism Committee as it brings its season of service to an end. That has us thinking in new ways about how to reflect God's love in Germantown through Mission, Outreach, and Evangelism. Please join us at 10a.m. on Saturday, March 20th for a conversation about how FPCG can learn, serve, and connect with our community as we respond to God's call to love and serve others.

- Drew Hood

Black History Month Recap

"Praying the learnings from the past bless us into a better future." - Rev. Kev.

Last month FPCG hosted a virtual Black History Month campaign on our social media platforms for the first time ever, and it was a success. We highlighted influential black men and women that played a significant role in American History. It was both educational and humbling simultaneously. We learned about **many** unsung heroes. As we move into a new month let us remember that black history is American history!

- Cherese Akers

Foreign Missions Project

Do you have a passion for an overseas missions' project? Do you want to support the church or a school or a medical mission activity overseas? If so, you are part of a group of people at First Church who have the same passion. And the history goes way back.

In the 1920's two sisters, Mary Mansfield and Sarah Mansfield, left bequests to the Women's Foreign Missionary Society of the First Presbyterian Church in Germantown. The administration of their estates spanned 15 years from 1928 to 1943 and had some issues. There are Wills, Orphans Court documents and 30 pages of letters detailing all of this in the church files. The lawyers for the estates recommended sending the funds to the "national organization". In fact, the FPCG did send the funds to the Presbyterian Foundation for administration at some point. We have no documentation on when or why this happened, but we do have documentation that the Presbyterian Foundation sent the funds back in 1995.

The funds have been part of the Endowment's "designated" funds since then. The designated funds are to be used for a specific purpose. The Administration and Finance Committee is responsible for seeing to it that the designated funds in the Endowment Fund are used according to the donors' intentions. Since we no longer have a Foreign Mission Society, no funds have been disbursed for Foreign Missions. The Church wants to honor the donor's intentions and disburse the funds for foreign mission projects. We are hoping to do this promptly. If you have an overseas mission outreach project to suggest, we would like to hear from you. Please send your ideas to the church's email address at fpcg.germantown@gmail.com for Attention: FOREIGN MISSION PROJECT. The Session will put together a committee to review applications and make recommendations to the Administration & Finance Committee for final approval. It is the hope to take care of this in a timely fashion. **DON'T MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY.**

- Lois Bethea

March Challenge Offering & Information

Ongoing Puerto Rico Support

While once again we find ourselves unable to travel to Puerto Rico due to the pandemic, our challenge offering this month will contribute to the rebuilding efforts that are still ongoing on the island of Puerto Rico through our partners in ministry. We have established two ministry partners on the island who have been and will be critical for us to send our teams of adults and students to serve alongside and learn from during our future trips. Our challenge offering will be divided equally between La Primera Iglesia Presbiteriana en Añasco, and Campamento El Guacio.



La Primera Iglesia Presbiteriana en Añasco

La Primera Iglesia Presbiteriana en Añasco (PCUSA) and their ministry of hospitality through La Posada de Angeles was the place our first group stayed as we worked to rebuild the church itself. On our second trip we again utilized the church for housing while working with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. La Posada de Angeles is a ministry of La Primera Iglesia Presbiteriana en Añasco. They provide housing for volunteers, food for the community, assistance in times of crisis or need, and helps people prepare for natural disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes, etc.



Campamento El Guacio

Campamento El Guacio will serve as our future site for ministry and learning on the island, as they are able to host both adults and our middle and high school members. Campamento El Guacio is part of the mission of the Boriquén Presbyterian Synod in Puerto Rico, a member of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America (PCUSA). Located in the municipality of San Sebastián, the camp offers services as a center for conferences and retreats of several days as well as for meetings or single-day activities. Currently Guacio Camp is also an official accommodation for volunteers through the Presbyterian Disaster Agency (PDA). We receive groups of volunteers from different parts of the United States through this agency of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America to do work in the camp and in the community.



Please give generously to these important ministries through this month's challenge offering as we look forward to continuing our partnership with them in their efforts to rebuild the island and as they continue to care for the physical and spiritual needs of their communities.

Easter Memorial Lilies

The lilies in the sanctuary on Easter Sunday are in memory and honor of our loved ones. As is our custom, these flowers will be delivered to the sick and shut-in of our congregation. If you would like your family members' or friends' names included in a scroll at the end of the worship video, please send the names and your check (made payable to FPCG) to the church office. The cost is \$15 per line. Listings will be accepted until Wednesday, March 31st, no later than 12pm.



Thank you from FPCG Staff

Dear FPCG friends and family,

Your generous Christmas gift to the staff provides us the opportunity to express our gratitude for the privilege of serving in ministry alongside you. Especially over the course of this last year when so many circumstances would understandably draw your focus of time and attention inward, so many of you have been so faithful in reaching out beyond yourselves in so many ways for the ministry we have together.

As we shift our attention from the manger to making our way to the cross and empty tomb, we pray we can offer the gifts God has granted us in renewed ways that magnify God's loving presence in and through the FPCG community. May God continue to bless you, even as you continue to bless us!

With gratitude,

Cherese, Christian, Cindy, CJ, David, Eileen, Heidi, John, Rev. Kevin, Terry, Tony

Dambman Update & Thank You

Greetings from the US Pacific Northwest---

Noreen and I want to thank you for your prayers and the financial support we received from the church in 2020. It has been a year since we have traveled by airplane—something Carl did every month before the pandemic. 2020 for the whole world was a test and a trial. Hopefully we are still learning how to trust God in all circumstances.

Noreen and I are grateful for technology that allows us to connect with family, friends, supporters and other believers locally and globally. Yesterday I was on our every other week Eurasia (Russian language) Bible Study for wrestlers. Guys from Russia, Ukraine, Moldova and Azerbaijan are regulars and take turns leading the studies. This morning AIA Global Leaders connected on a monthly Zoom call with leaders from over 30 countries. I still meet with the AIA Russia staff team (on Skype). In 1979 when we moved to Austria, communication was primarily by Aerogram (Airmail), in 1990 AIA gave us a FAX Machine, that was a great help as we set up tours of visiting sports teams. Before the turn of the century we learned how to use email and in 2000 the cell phone was a great help at the Sydney Olympics and beyond. WhatsApp and now Telegram keep Carl connected with ISLS grads from 2008-2019. We still

struggle on occasion with Google Docs and One Drive.

We are both healthy and so are our three children, their spouses and our 4 grandchildren. Glad we have 7 of our 11 nearby. Our local granddaughter Brooke turned 5 last month. We enjoy time with her and her 3 year old brother Blake. We miss David's family in San Diego. David and our youngest son Stephen are both working in Bio Tech so they are incredibly busy. David and Kelli's sons Caleb (8 years) and Andrew (4 years) have to do their schooling on the computer from home—not easy for them or Mom and Dad. Kelli is a professor at Point Loma Nazarene University and all her classes are virtual this semester. Our daughter Elisabeth is juggling 2 part time jobs that are sometime in person with masks and sometimes virtual, (she is a receptionist for a nutrition office and a children's dance studio). Carl got down to 220 (my weight class in 1975 when I joined AIA), the lightest I have been since then.

Each week with the AIA Global Events Team we discuss, plan, evaluate and strategize options for ministry at the Tokyo Olympics and other Global and Continental Sports Events. I am on the list for potential chaplains for July 2021, but we don't know if chaplaincy will all be virtual, if the athletes will be in a "bubble", if there will be spectators (other than TV), so many questions. Your prayers are appreciated. If you are familiar with the Bible App You Version, AIA has posted a reading plan Struggle and Triumph that you might enjoy.

The beginning of December, after decades of friends telling me to do so, I started telling the story of how God used a team of wrestlers to pioneer sport ministry in the Soviet Bloc (we moved to Europe in 1979). God led me to a good writer and publisher and I need your prayers that the book will be honoring to the Lord and encouraging to those who read it. I want to share how God works in teams (community) and uses broken people who are available to trust Him and take steps of faith. Many exciting stories – still in process.

Once again, thanks for your prayers and the church's financial support. Please email us any updates and prayer requests.

In HIS grip, Carl and Noreen Dambman

Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, Surely I will uphold you

Holy Week Schedule

There will be several opportunities to worship during Holy Week in a variety of ways that will hopefully allow each and every person who worships with the First Presbyterian Church in Germantown to be even more connected to God and to one another.

March
28 **Palm Sunday**
10:00 AM ~ Worship Online via YouTube, Facebook, & website

April
01 **Maundy Thursday**
6:00 PM ~ Worship via Zoom with Shared Meal & Communion

April
02 **Good Friday**
7:00 PM ~ Worship Online via YouTube, Facebook, & website

April
04 **Easter Sunday**
6:30 AM ~ In-Person Sunrise Service / East Church Parking Lot

April
04 **Easter Sunday**
10:00 AM ~ Worship Online via YouTube, Facebook, & website



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