



Windows

The newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church in Germantown
April 2021



In this Issue

Minister's Message.....	1
April Birthdays.....	2
Faith @ 5:00.....	2
Music News.....	3
Apr Challenge Offering	3
GACM News.....	4
Youth News.....	5
In-Person Worship.....	5
Holy Week Schedule.....	6



Items for the May issue of *Windows* are due on

April 15th. Send to

Communications
@fpcgermantown.org

From the Pastor

Resurrection is coming! We celebrate Jesus rising from the dead on April 4th this year, two weeks from when I am writing this article, and just a few days after you are scheduled to receive and be able to read it. Of course, Jesus' actual resurrection was almost 2000 years ago, and theologically we celebrate it each and every Sunday, but the holy day of Easter is our annual reminder of the physical event itself. A day that we live into the celebration of God's love and forgiveness for us all. Still, we recognize that while God loves and forgives us all, we human beings have a long way to go in sharing that love and forgiveness with everyone we encounter, both in our immediate lives and the world at large.



Resurrection is coming! After a very challenging winter, we are seeing the signs of spring. Green tufts of grass are sprouting in the neighborhood. There is the occasional jonquil or crocus sighting. The pear tree I got through the Tree Philly program of the Philadelphia Parks and Recreation Department a couple of years ago is beginning to bud. Still, sometimes the days can be cold; we're not quite there yet.

Resurrection is coming! At the time of this writing, almost 25% of the population of Pennsylvania has had at least one dose of the vaccine. I am scheduled for my first dose next Wednesday and will be the last of our FPCG program staff to be vaccinated. We have two teams working on getting us back together again: the Re-Opening Task Force and the Livestream Task Force, with the objective of safely being able to worship in the sanctuary as quickly as possible, while maintaining the ability for those who would like to worship remotely to do so. Still, we are not projected to have 90% of the US population vaccinated until August, and whatever life looks like in the future, it will definitely be a new "normal" rather than going back to how things were before the pandemic.

Resurrection is coming! I fell and fractured my acetabulum – that is, the pelvic bone encircling the hip socket – a week before Christmas. I have endured three months of true quarantine, but am now cleared to drive and no longer need to use a walker or a crutch. Still, the doctor has recommended a cane and another six weeks before I can return to my yoga practice. I am easily tired, and definitely have a way to go before I am fully healed.

Resurrection is coming! I am realizing, however, that resurrection may be a process rather than a once and done event. The signs abound: the lilies in the sanctuary, the robin in the yard, the increased travel to see children and grandchildren that was delayed for a year, my ability to stand with both feet on the ground and my weight evenly distributed.

Resurrection is coming! Perhaps the promise of resurrection is fulfilled in those small moments, the ability to pay attention to those glorious mini-resurrections all around us rather than an expectation of something awe-inspiring and massive and permanent, other than Jesus' resurrection and the expectation of our own upon death. Maybe it is enough to heal bit by bit, in anticipation of the day when we all will "run and not be weary; walk and not faint."

- Rev. Rebecca Segers



**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.

Windows is a publication of The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown. For questions regarding the information published here or to submit content, please call the church office at 215-843-8811 or email: **communications@fpcgermantown.org**

Contributors:

- Cherese Akers
- Christian Heyer-Rivera
- Eileen Jones
- Rev. Kevin Porter
- Rev. Rebecca Segers
- Jim Thompson
- John Walthausen

APRIL BIRTHDAY'S

Todd Gasper

APRIL 2ND

Pernell Jackson

APRIL 5TH

Robert Seed

APRIL 9TH

Vera Harrison

APRIL 11TH

Roberta Robinson

APRIL 13TH

Lydia Overton

APRIL 20TH

Delores Adams-Henderson

APRIL 25TH

Phyl Bryan

APRIL 27TH

Linda Farlow

APRIL 4TH

Brittany Jones

APRIL 8TH

Dolores Shanks

APRIL 10TH

Denise Cowie

APRIL 13TH

Elisa Heyer-Rivera

APRIL 15TH

Fay Tomlinson

APRIL 20TH

Jason Greene II

APRIL 25TH

Valient Solomon

APRIL 30TH

Faith @ 5:00 Update

The Faith@5:00 worship service returns on Sunday, April 25, 2021 and Sunday, June 27, 2021. The first will be via Zoom with the theme of "Awake! to New Beginnings." Our foundation will Genesis 28:10-17, the passage in which Jacob dreams of the ladder going up to heaven with the angels ascending and descending upon it. There will be music and prayer, a brief homily and the opportunity to build a Jacob's Ladder craft. If you would like to participate in that aspect of the service, the materials you will need are: 12 pieces of the same sized cardboard or light balsa wood, 3 pieces of ribbon each 40" long, and glue. We will send out directions and a tutorial earlier in the day as well as demonstrate during that portion of the service. The Zoom link will be: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5907061661>. Don't forget to bring your alarm clock!

The second Faith@5:00 service has not yet been planned beyond choosing the date, but the Planning Team is considering holding it in person. We'll keep you posted!

Music News

For most church musicians, the season leading up to Holy Week is by far our busiest few weeks of the year. Among many of my colleagues, "after Holy Week" becomes the common refrain of procrastination as planning for and rehearsing liturgies, concerts, and events leaves little time for anything else. Holy Week is also such a crucial moment for togetherness, as Music Directors, choirs, and even guest musicians all live together some of the most intense moments of the church year, from the uneasy celebration of Palm Sunday, to the grief of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, to the climactic joy of Easter. This year, I have especially missed this feeling of living Holy Week together now that we are unable to gather for these crucial moments of living our faith.

However, I have been so heartened to be in touch with so many folks from the First Church community, and to build relationships over Zoom as we look towards the future. Working with the Livestream Committee, it has been particularly enjoyable learning more about how we can update our technology to better share worship services over the internet with the faithful near and far. I have also been so encouraged to see the enthusiasm of members participating in virtual choir projects. I was so happy with the results of our virtual choir for "Total Praise," and I am very excited for "Jesus Christ is Risen Today" coming out on Easter Sunday. As the vaccine rollout continues, I look forward to celebrating more of these signs of hope and rebuilding.

April Challenge Offering: One Great Hour of Sharing



**YOU SHALL BE
CALLED REPAIRERS
OF THE BREACH**

— ISAIAH 58

Providing relief from natural disasters, food for the hungry, and support for the poor and oppressed.

Typically received during the season of Lent, each gift to One Great Hour of Sharing supports efforts to relieve hunger through the Presbyterian Hunger Program, promote development through the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People, and assist in areas of disaster through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

These three programs all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope.

Life during COVID has been challenging. That feels like an understatement, right? At times, we have all felt disconnected, confined. Missing family, missing friends. Lonely. Worried about the groceries holding out. Unsure of what the future may hold. Imagine feeling all of those things but living in a place or in a situation that was already challenging each and every day without the added pressure of the pandemic. A place where access to food is day to day. Access to vital health care is questionable. Finding clean water is a daily struggle. A place where you are denied racial justice or plagued with outright violence and oppression. But one thing remains steadfast and true: We are the Church, together, no struggling for justice, righteousness, and peace for life.

Since 1949, Presbyterians have given generously to the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering, making an impact both at home and abroad. Jesus said, "Do you love me? Feed my sheep." Share your blessings with a generous gift to the April Challenge Offering that is designated for One Great Hour of Sharing. Use your tan April Challenge Offering envelope or indicate on your payment April Challenge Offering.

Germantown Avenue Crisis Ministry News

Throughout the pandemic Germantown Avenue Crisis Ministry (GACM) has continued to operate the Food Cupboard. In addition to the quality foods, monthly we distribute 50 Healthy Alternative Vouchers valued at \$10 for the purchase of fresh fruits, vegetables, milk, and eggs. Redeemable at A&N Produce, these vouchers supplement the foods we give and are especially useful to those who have medical or other conditions. As we slowly transition from pandemic lock down to a return to more normal activity, healthy eating and losing pandemic pounds may be on your to do list.

Can We Help You?

For information or appointments, call the GACM office, 215-843-2340. No walk-ins! Mon - Wed 9am to 2pm.

Food Cupboard parking lot distribution: Every Thursday 10am – 12pm.

Limited delivery may be available to those disabled or shut-in.

We Are Here For You!

Thank you to everyone who provides prayers and financial support to GACM. The need is great and our ability to assist is because of you! In February, GACM conducted 117 counseling sessions and distributed \$19,200 in cash assistance. Amazing, considering the bulk of counseling is happening virtually. Most grants addressed rent, mortgage and utility assistance. New and extended unemployment and delays in receiving unemployment benefits has caused many to seek our assistance. As stated in our mission, we connect at risk Northwest Philadelphia residents to resources within themselves and the community, that resolve their crises, stabilize their lives and equip them to take the next steps toward self-sufficiency.



Race Against Hunger

Formerly known as the Walk Against Hunger, GACM will participate in this event sponsored by the Greater

Philadelphia Hunger Coalition. Primarily, we are looking to our school partners to help reach our \$6,000 fundraising goal. Students become informed about food insecurity in the community and engage their family and friends in fundraising. This is a 10-Day Virtual 5K Run/Walk, Friday, April 16 -Monday, April 26. You can run, walk virtually from anywhere and also easily donate.

To learn more or to donate, visit GACM's website: www.crisisministry.org.

GACM & F.U.N.

GACM is in partnership with Einstein Medical Center's F.U.N. (Families Understanding Nutrition) Program. F.U.N. works with schools and community programs to help spread the word about the benefit of healthy foods. During Freedom School operation, F.U.N. provides scholars weekly nutrition and hands-on tasting activities. See below for a F.U.N Healthy Tip for April from Einstein.

Bumping Up the Berries!

Berries are delicious, nutritious and loaded with fiber. They are great for your heart and your digestive system. One cup of raspberries provides 6.5 grams of fiber, and one cup of blueberries provides 2.4 grams. Foods high in fiber may help to lower your cholesterol and keep your arteries clear. They also provide other nutrients including Vitamin C, Manganese and Folate. Try these ideas to add more berries to your day!

- Add them to your cereal – hot or cold. Berries add a nice sweetness to your day.
- Yogurt Berry Parfait –a simple recipe with just 2 ingredients: yogurt and berries! Try adding granola, nuts, and/or seeds for an added crunch.
- Use berries instead of syrup on pancakes, waffles, and French toast. Slice up some berries and throw them into the batter or sprinkle them on top. You save on added sugar and add vitamins and fiber to your meal.
- Bump up the water flavor by adding berries or freeze them and use them as ice cubes.
- Mingle fruits, veggies and add some berries to your salad.

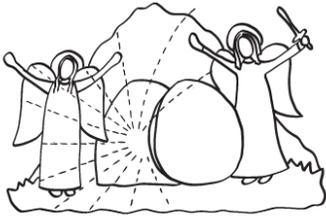


For a Very Berry Kale Salad Recipe, visit www.crisisministry.org

Youth News

Easter Festival

All FPCG children up to sixth grade are welcome to join us on Saturday, April 3rd from 1-3p in the small West Parking Lot for crafts, snacks and an Easter Egg Hunt to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord together. RSVPs with the number of young people coming are highly recommended and greatly appreciated so we can set up our parking lot to accommodate everyone safely. Masks are required for every person attending whether you've received your vaccination or not.



All middle and high school aged youth of the church are welcome and encouraged to volunteer at the event with the Christian Education Committee. Please rsvp for volunteering. Call, text or email Christian Heyer Rivera or Andrea Overton to reserve a spot as a participant or sign up to volunteer. Thank you and Happy Easter! Christ has risen!

April's Elementary and Middle/High School Youth Group Schedules

Starting in April FPCG will be hosting outdoor youth groups at the Heyer-Rivera home for both Elementary (1st and 3rd Fridays 6:30-8:30p) and Middle/High school (2nd and 4th Fridays 7:00-9:30p) on any Friday that is above 50 degrees. We will start outdoor youth groups in a similar fashion as we did in the late summer and throughout the fall with movie nights and a shared meal. As we take more and more steps towards stopping the present pandemic, we will move to a more regular format of games, talks and small group discussions. As always in this time, each participant and leader will be required to wear a mask at all in person youth group gatherings. Should the temperature stay in the 40s for the day of any youth group, or should we experience inclement weather, we will resume YG virtually that Friday. Look for mid-week texts and then a text on the day of a youth group meeting indicating if we will meet in person or virtually. struggle on occasion with Google Docs and One Drive.

When Will In-Person Worship Resume?

This is the burning question on so many of our hearts and minds. Be assured that a multitude of people, committees, and teams are working on it!

The Property Committee, with a huge assist from Duane Horne, has worked very hard on the ventilation in the church, linking the AC and heating systems so both the ducts above and below the sanctuary are linked and include air flow from outside. Additionally, our air filters are in the process of being upgraded from MERV8 to MERV13.

The Re-Opening Task Force is looking at city and state requirements, as well as taking into account your input through the survey. Forty of you have responded – thank you! – and it is clear that while there is a longing to be together again, it comes with provisions for masking, social distancing, and other concerns. They will be bringing their recommendations to the session at their next called meeting on April 7, 2021.

The Livestream Task Force is also working to assure that once we are back in service again, those who are unwilling or unable to join us in person may continue to be with us virtually. One of the beautiful benefits of having the service online is that we have friends and former members (and some people who are brand new to us!) worshipping from Ohio, New Hampshire, Arkansas, Delaware, Pittsburgh, Chennai India, and more. We want to continue to offer that opportunity even as those who are able come together in person again. The LTF is meeting with four companies who do this work, with an eye to a three-camera approach with pan/tilt/zoom capabilities and an upgraded or new sound system. Thus, we will not only be able to stream worship at a high-quality, but also other events such as concerts in the future.

Finally, the session is responsible for taking all the information brought to them and discerning what our next steps will be. They don't have a definite answer for you yet, but signs are that we will be together again soon. We will be informing you as we know more and look forward to being a gathered community in the (relatively) near future.



HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

35 W. CHELTEN AVE PHILA, PA 19144

- **APRIL 1ST MAUNDY THURSDAY**
6:30 PM -- Worship via Zoom with Shared Meal & Communion
Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85453065818>
- **APRIL 2ND GOOD FRIDAY**
12:00 PM -- Joint NW Philadelphia Presbyterian Seven Last Words Service
Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/39wyNzL>
Streaming at your convenience: <https://bit.ly/2PPfg6g>
7:00 PM -- Worship Online via YouTube, Facebook, & Website
- **APRIL 4TH EASTER SUNDAY**
6:30 AM -- Easter Sunday Sunrise Service: In-Person in Vernon Park (Behind Church)
10:00 AM -- Easter Sunday Worship: Online via YouTube, Facebook, & Website



THE FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
IN GERMANTOWN

35 West Cheltenham Ave.
Philadelphia, PA 19144
215-843-8811
www.fpcgermantown.org