



Windows

The newsletter of The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown
October 2024



Beloved,

It is good to finally be recovering from my recent illness and returning to worshipping Almighty God with you. I'm grateful for all the healing prayers that you said on my behalf. God is good, all the time, and all the time, God is good!

This past week, I was at Zephyr Point, a Presbyterian camp on Lake Tahoe, Nevada. As you know, I serve the national church (PCUSA) as the vice-moderator of The Committee on the Office of the General Assembly (COGA). The work of our committee in its current form will end on December 31st. However, the task of planning for and convening the PC(USA) General Assembly will continue with the reunified church agencies.

The ride back from Philadelphia airport was a quiet one at 5 am in the morning. Running errands later on in the day had me marveling at the changes in the leaves on the maple trees, as they showed off their beautiful fall colours of rich reds and oranges. God's creation never ceases to amaze me and fill me with awe and wonder in each of the seasons that we experience in our home city.

October is filled with opportunities to reminisce about the memories that we created this summer, and to celebrate World Communion Sunday. Christians around the world will partake in the peaceable feast that Christ prepares for us, remembering his sacrifice to triumph over death and making it a "comma" and not a "period" or full stop in our life's journey. Different types of bread will be displayed on the communion table in a representation of the many cultures in which the Lord's Supper is celebrated in unison on October 6th. (The bread that is served for communion is gluten-free).



People around our global village have many traditions that memorialize their loved ones. Mexican culture offers remembering loved ones who have died by celebrating *Día de Los Muertos*, or Day of the Dead. It falls on Halloween, and folk set up altars on which they set pictures of their loved ones and some of the food and drinks that their family members enjoyed. Orange marigolds and the petals adorn the *ofrenda*, or remembrance table.

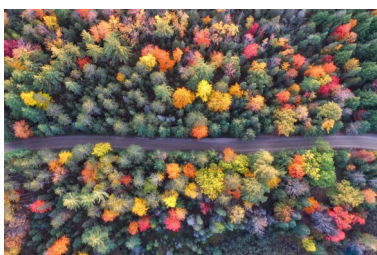
We Christians remember our deceased family and members of the church in services that are held on All Saints' Day, November 1st. Cari will be assisting me in decorating the *ofrenda*. Ms. Eileen and Contina will contribute in preparing fellowship time as well. It is my prayer that you would join me in remembering your beloved family members who have gone to live with God on Sunday, October 27th. Please bring a picture of the person(s) you would like to share a remembrance of to be placed on a table in Longstreth Auditorium. You may take the pictures back with you at the end of fellowship time. I hope that as we chat with one another, we will share stories that honor our loved ones who have gone to be with God.

Holding you all close in prayer with blessings and love,

Pastor Cheni

In this Issue

- Minister's Message.....1
- Church Closure.....2
- October Birthdays.....2
- Fall Faith Study.....3
- WMA Project.....3
- Messiah Concert.....4
- Visitors.....5
- October Challenge
- Offering.....6
- GACM Winter Warmth Drive.....7, 8



Items for the November issue of *Windows* are due on October 25, 2024. Send to office@fpcgermantown.org



JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

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.

To learn more, please email office@fpcgermantown.org 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: office@fpcgermantown.org

Contributors:

Rev. Dr. Cheni Khonje
John Walthausen
Christian Heyer-Rivera
Sandy Smith

Church Closed

FPCG will be closed on Monday, October 14th, in observance of Indigenous Peoples' Day.

October Birthdays

Morgan Ebo
October 02

Jamal Smith
October 02

Bill Young
October 03, 1938

Sara Greene
October 05

Dani Howard
October 08

Kai Jeanine Burton
October 09

Duane Horne
October 09

Faith Lewis
October 09

Charlene Hardy
October 10

Brenda Meline
October 11

Carmen Bethea
October 12

Tim Robinson
October 14

Ernie Freeman
October 17

Dhyan Cassie
October 21

Marc DiNardo
October 21

Kyarra Gibbs
October 25, 2005

Montreall Hayward
October 25

Fall Congregational Faith Study: Science for the Church

Are you interested in science? Have you ever thought about ways that your faith and science connect? The Christian Ed Committee is excited to share with you this curriculum entitled '*Science Is Telling The Glory of God.*' Come join us after church as Rebekah Davis leads this exploration into the awe of God's amazing creation. Many different scientists from within our congregation will share from their personal experience of the bond between faith and science. While considering astronomy, cosmology, biology, genetics, and neuroscience we will seek to broaden our understanding of what the heavens are telling us about our world, ourselves, and our Creator.

October 6 - November 3rd @ 11:30am, Jennings Room

The Worship, Music, and Arts Committee needs your help!

We are proudly commissioning two banners for our church sanctuary from FPCG textile artist Cathy Coho, and we are looking for donations of fabric for Cathy to use as part of her design. Both banners will feature a patchwork design: one will look like a stained glass window in the form of a cross, and the other like leaves on a vine. The photo to the right is a rough mock-up of one of the designs.

From September 8-October 6, you are invited to bring to the church any small piece of fabric (just a few inches is enough!) that is meaningful to you and your family, including scraps of old clothes, curtains, or any piece of textile that speaks to you or your life at First Church. If you don't have any fabric to bring, Cathy will bring some samples to church that you can choose from to represent you. Please give any fabrics you would like to submit to be used in these works of art to Cathy Coho, Contina Lundy, or John Walhausen.



Oratorio Choir

In just a couple of weeks, music lovers from FPCG and the larger neighborhood will start preparing for one of our most beloved annual traditions, singing Handel's *Messiah* in a free concert for the community. Rehearsals will be on Tuesday nights starting **October 29** at 7:15 PM and our concert will be on the afternoon of **Sunday, December 1**. Oratorio Choir is open to singers of all ages and levels of experience. Whether you have never sung this piece before, or have sung it many times, we want to include your voice!

The FPCG choir has sung Handel's *Messiah* almost every year since 1968, and it is an important part of Christmas celebrations across the country, and across the world. The first presentation of *Messiah* was given in 1742 in Dublin, Ireland as a fundraising concert for the debt relief of imprisoned people. In Dublin, it was a great success, and it continued to be performed throughout the UK, first in theaters like London's Covent Garden, and then later in the great Cathedrals of Britain. As its reputation spread, it was performed across Europe and soon came to the New World, when it was first presented in New York in 1770. During the 19th century, its fame spread worldwide, and it continues to enjoy popularity in many parts of the world including the Americas, Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean.

For several members FPCG, singing *Messiah* with Oratorio Choir or coming to hear it in concert was their first introduction to this community. This year, I hope we can continue to use *Messiah*, and our whole music ministry, as a bridge to the wider city. Consider inviting a friend to come sing with us this year, or bring a friend to the concert on December 1. This music has spoken the message of God's coming into the world for centuries- together let's allow this light to continue to shine for a world that needs it.



photo credit: Joseph E. B. Elliott

On Monday, Sept. 23, a group of about 10 history buffs on a tour arranged by Germantowner Sharieff Ali stopped by First Presbyterian Church on their journey through Germantown history and faith.

After visiting the Germantown Mennonite Meetinghouse, where the first protest against slavery in America was written in 1688, the group came to FPCG to see the works of art in service to God within its walls.

They began by visiting the Jennings Room to learn about the Violet Oakley murals depicting the women of the Bible. Director of Christian Education Christian Heyer-Rivera explained that the murals were a gift to FPCG from the women of the church, who struck a blow for feminism thereby. They could not have chosen a more appropriate person than Oakley, a trailblazing woman artist, to paint murals showing that the role of women in the Bible is more positive than that of the common understanding of the time. (The Jennings Room murals, completed in 1949, were Oakley's last major commissioned work.)

From there, the group proceeded to the sanctuary, where they toured and learned about the stained-glass windows there. Given in memory of various FPCG members by friends and family and installed between 1885 and the late 1970s, the windows' radiance and luminosity continue to uplift our congregants and guests to this day. Director of Urban Ministry Eileen Jones invited the group to come back to the church after dark, when the one window hidden from the inside — the Tiffany rose window given in 1902 by Charles W. Henry — is lit so it can be seen from the outside.

I would like to point out that there's still room to expand FPCG's collection of stained-glass art. It's one of the most beautiful ways to honor God, His Son, and your loved ones.

—Sandy Smith

October Challenge Offering: Peace and Global Witness

The Peace & Global Witness Offering is the third of four dedicated PC(USA) offerings. It encourages the church to cast off anxiety and fear, discord and division, and embrace God's mission of reconciliation to those around the corner and around the world. There are multiple ways this occurs. For example, each year the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program welcome an international cadre of leaders from partner organizations and denominations. They visit churches in the US to provide a global perspective about issues impacting the world. 25% of the Peace & Global Witness Offering stay with our own congregation, for our own ministries of peacemaking and reconciliation. 25% will go to the Presbytery of Philadelphia to be joined with other congregations in our presbytery to support peacemaking work in our region. 50% goes to the Presbyterian Mission Agency to support programs and ministries working actively for peace and justice around our nation and the world.





Winter WARMTH DRIVE

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING?



Volunteers are needed:

- ❄️ **Sorting Day: Oct 29th (9am - 11am)**
- ❄️ **Event Day: Nov 2nd (8am - 2pm)**

***If you're interested fill out
the volunteer form on our website
or call our office (215)-843-2340***



www.crisisministry.org

FB: @GermantownAvenueCrisisMinistry | Insta: @GACMPhilly

Germantown Avenue Crisis Ministry 35 W Cheltenham Ave Phila. PA, 19144 | 215-843-2340



Winter

WARMTH

DRIVE

Coats, Hats, Socks, Scarves, Gloves, Blankets

JOIN GACM FOR OUR ANNUAL WINTER WARMTH DRIVE.

COME AND RECEIVE ESSENTIAL WINTER ITEMS TO HELP KEEP YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES WARM DURING THE WINTER MONTHS.

📅 November 2nd, 2024 ⌚ 10am - 1pm

For More info contact GACM

www.crisisministry.org

FB: @GermantownAvenueCrisisMinistry | Insta: @GACMPhilly

Germantown Avenue Crisis Ministry 35 W Chelton Ave Phila. PA, 19144 | 215-843-2340



THE FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
IN GERMANTOWN

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