



Windows

The newsletter of The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown

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FPCG Family and Friends,

As we enter April, in the life of the church we find ourselves at the end of our Lenten journey with the celebration of Palm Sunday and the proclamation of Jesus Christ as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. How fitting too, that the last week of March has also ushered in the season of spring. All creation seems to be joining us in our celebration. The work of God to reform and refine our lives through the Holy Spirit is grounded in the truth that Jesus is indeed Lord of our lives, and Lord of all life. As Lord, we know Christ desires to transform us by the renewal of our hearts and minds through love, that we might experience life abundant.

We now find ourselves entering into Holy Week, where Jesus gives shape to abundant living. This road to abundant living for a disciple of Jesus is paradoxical. In Holy Week, Jesus sets before us God's command to love one another and illuminates the depths of that love, God's love! That love in Christ calls us first and foremost to serve one another. To put aside our pride and take up the towel and basin; to wash each other's feet. Love then invites us to walk with Jesus into places where condemnation, oppression, and hopelessness abound. Love compels us to suffer alongside each other in order that we might follow and join Christ there. Love then bids that we lay down our lives for each other. As we do, we bear witness to a hope that the love that leads us to follow Christ into dark and hopeless places, is the same love which promises to resurrect us, with Christ, back to life. God's love speaks life into hopelessness. God's presence reaches into our emptiness to meet us there. God's power resurrects us to newness of life, back to the works which support life, back to the sure hope that in every circumstance, God is working for the good of all creation.

Newsletter submissions are due the 22nd of each month.

Church Hours

Office:
Tuesday through Friday
9AM-1PM

Building Hours:
Monday through Friday,
8AM-4PM

Saturday: 8AM-3PM
Sunday: 8AM-5PM

Throughout this month, may we celebrate this life God has given us in Jesus Christ. Let us celebrate by walking alongside Christ, walking the path of love, the path of humility, service, suffering and sacrifice with and for each other. As we follow Christ, we can and will experience the hope that God's grace, presence, power and love are at work, resurrecting, bringing things back to life, to life abundant.

With resurrection hope,
Rev. Christian Heyer-Rivera



www.fpcgermantown.org



[@thefirstpresbyterianchurch8143](https://www.youtube.com/@thefirstpresbyterianchurch8143)



[@FPCGermantown](https://www.instagram.com/FPCGermantown)

Happening this Month

Schedule

- Maundy Thursday, 04/02, 7PM
- Good Friday, 04/03, 7PM
- Easter Festival, 04/04, 10AM
- Easter Sunday service with communion, 10AM
- Oratorio Choir Rehearsal, 04/07 and 04/14, 7:15PM
- Oratorio Concert, 04/19, 3PM
- Congregational Development and Fellowship Committee, 04/26, 12PM
- Property Committee, 04/23, 7PM
- Homestrong, Tuesdays, 12PM
- GACM Board Meeting, 04/08, 4PM
- Session Meeting, 04/08
- Deacons' Meeting, 04/19
- All Ages' Youth Group; 04/10, 04/24

Weekly Events

- Sunday Worship, 10AM
- Choir Rehearsal, 7:15PM
Tuesdays and 8:45AM Sundays
- GACM Food Pantry, 10AM
Thursdays

Pastor Christian's Office Hours

Tuesday-Thursday, 10:30AM-1:30 PM


Preaching this Month



John 13:1-17, 31b-35
Maundy Thursday, 04/02
Cari States-Codding, preaching


The Shadows
Good Friday, 04/03
poems and scripture readings, no sermon






John 20:1-18
Easter Sunday, 04/05
Rev. Christian Heyer-Rivera, preaching

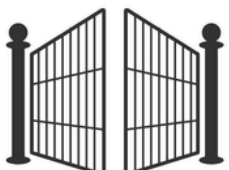
John 20:19-31
Doubting Thomas
Second Sunday of Easter, 04/12
Don Carlin, preaching





Luke 24:13-35
Road to Emmaus
Creation Care Sunday, 04/19
Rev. Christian Heyer-Rivera, preaching

John 10:1-10
Christ the Shepherd
Fourth Sunday of Easter, 04/26
Cari States-Codding, preaching



April Birthdays

April 02
Todd Gasper
Chuck Reisse

April 13
Denise Cowie
Roberta Robinson

April 03
Peter Ahn
Joy Ahn
Amelia Harris
Clyde Harris

April 15
Elisa Heyer-Rivera

April 04
Linda Farlow

April 18
Elijah Burnley
Camia James

April 05
Pernell Jackson

April 20
Lydia Overton
Fay Tomlinson

April 08
Brittany Jones

April 23
Kendi Easterling

April 09
Robert Seed

April 25
Mandy Adams-Henderson
Jason II Greene

April 10
Dolores Shanks

April 26
A. Webb

April 11
Vera Harrison

April 27
Phyl Bryan

April 30
Valient Solomon



April Challenge Offering

The Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) has partnered with Techos Pa' Mi Gente for many years. PDA helps them fulfill their purpose on the island by providing them with groups of volunteers. Techos Pa' Mi Gente works with families all over the island that need their roof fixed or rebuilt, as well as other necessary home repairs. They also provide education to the community. Our April challenge offering will go directly towards Techos Pa' Mi Gente ongoing work of rebuilding. Thank you for joining us in this work through your generosity!

Congregational Coffee Hour

The CDFC is doing a new thing on the 4th Sunday of each month. The 4th Sunday will be Congregational Coffee Hour. The CDFC is asking the church to bring one item on the 4th Sunday. The item for each month will be announced in the worship bulletin and monthly newsletter. For March the item is appetizers. A signup sheet will be at the CDFC bulletin board...we thank you in advance.

-CDFC Committee



Make GACM Your +1

"Make GACM Your +1" is our church-wide campaign to support the work of Germantown Avenue Crisis Ministry. Each month, "most needed" items are listed in the bulletin, and bags are provided to bring in contributions for the food pantry. As you shop, add an item to share! The last Sunday of every month is "collection Sunday." During the first hymn, we will come forward to donate our collected food items. Whether you're able to bring one needed item in your bag or you're able to fill the bag, every donated item is valuable and appreciated. We are excited about keeping our cupboard stocked to bless our neighbors in their season of need.



Service/Learning trip to PR

On August 8-15 a group of 16 members of FPCG and 5 members of Overbrook Presbyterian Church are going to Puerto Rico for a week of working alongside Techos Pa' Mi Gente and learning more about the island. During the next few months we will be having different fundraising events in our community, such as hoagie sales, plant sales, and more! We are currently selling delicious Puerto Rican coffee! 8oz bags for \$10 each. Please let us know if you want some. We will be selling them during coffee hour after worship service and also around the neighborhood. Help us spread the word!

-Sheila Heyer-Rivera



Holy Week

This year, Holy Week is from March 29-April 04. Join us for our Three Days (also called the *triduum*) services. These days include Maundy Thursday (April 02, 7PM, with a soup supper at 6PM) and Good Friday (April 03, 7PM). While FPCG does not have an Easter Vigil on April 04, there will be an Easter festival held at the church from 10AM-1PM. At the festival, there will be crafts and an Easter egg hunt, led by the Easter Bunny. Our Easter Sunday service, with communion, will be held at our normal service time (10AM), followed by a festive coffee hour hosted by the CDFC.

Holy Week Timeline

Palm Sunday

Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem

*Matthew 21:1-11 Mark 11:1-11
Luke 19:29-44
John 12:12-15*

Tuesday

Jesus continues to teach, answering challenges and telling parables. He also criticizes the Pharisees and delivers his sermon on the Mount of Olives.

*Matthew 23:1-36, 24:4-36
Mark 12:37-40, Mark 13:5-37
Luke 20:45-47, 21:8-38*

Maundy Thursday

The Last Supper, washing of the disciples' feet, betrayal and arrest of Jesus, and his trial before the Sanhedrin.

*Matthew 26:17-30, 47-67
Mark 14:12-26, 43-65
Luke 22:7-38, 47-53
John 13:1-17, 18:3-14, 19-23*

Holy Saturday

Jesus lay dead in the tomb.

Monday

Cleansing of the temple, where Jesus made a whip and overturned the money changers' tables

*Matthew 21:12-16
Mark 11:15-18
Luke 19:45-47
John 2:15-17*

Wednesday

Judas arranges to betray Jesus, possible anointing of Jesus by Mary

*Matthew 26:14-16, 26:6-13
Mark 14:10-11, 14:3-9
Luke 22:3-6, 7:36-50
John 12:1-8*

Good Friday

Conclusion of Jesus' trial before the Sanhedrin and his trial by Pilate. Jesus is tortured, convicted, crucified, and dies.

*Matthew 27:26-55
Mark 15:15-39
Luke 23:9-49
John 19:1-30*

Easter Sunday

He is risen!

*Matthew 28:1-10
Mark 16:1-8
Luke 24:1-12
John 20:1-18*

**From the Office of Theology and Worship,
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):**

Maundy Thursday

On Passion/Palm Sunday we celebrated the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem ... and then turned with him to face the cross, where he gave his life for us and our salvation. Tonight we keep the feast that Jesus shared with his disciples on the night of his arrest, and we remember his new commandment to love one another even as he has loved us.

Good Friday

On Maundy Thursday we kept the feast that Jesus shared with his disciples on the night of his arrest, and we remembered his new commandment: to love one another even as he has loved us. This afternoon we turn to the cross, where Jesus gave his life for us and our salvation.

Easter Sunday

On Good Friday we witnessed the tragedy of Jesus' suffering and death on the cross, where he gave his life for us and our salvation. Today, on the first day of the week, we gather at the tomb ... only to discover that the stone is rolled away, and the grave is empty. Today we celebrate the good news of the gospel: Jesus Christ is risen!

The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown

Holy Week and Easter 2026

During Holy Week, a self-guided labyrinth is available during regular church hours and before services in Finney Room.



Palm Sunday

March 29, 10AM

Sunday worship with a procession of the palms.
Rev. Diane Fitch, preaching

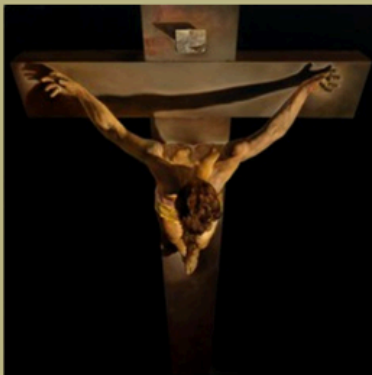
Maundy Thursday

April 2, 7PM

Worship with Holy Communion
A light soup supper will be served at 6PM.



The Mystical Supper



Christ of St. John of the Cross, Salvador Dali

Good Friday

April 3, 7PM

Meditative service with readings, poetry, and music

Easter Festival
Saturday, April 4, 10AM

Easter Sunday
April 5, 10AM
Worship with Communion



Woman at the Tomb, Canonesses of the Holy Sepulchre - England

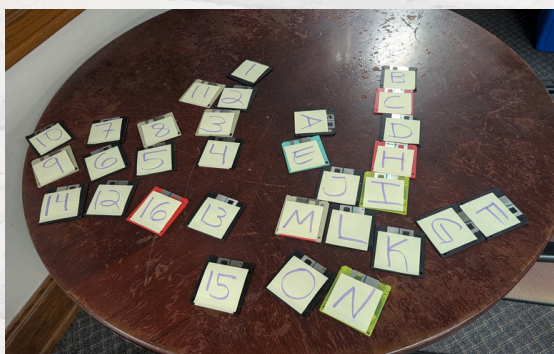
The Labyrinth

During Holy Week, a labyrinth will be available in the Finney Room. Everyone is invited to stop in and walk it. There will be (optional) guides, as well as information about labyrinths, available. If you'd like to do some reading and research about labyrinths, labyrinthssociety.org is a good place to start. The labyrinth, made by Cari and Dwayne States-Codding, is an ancient meditation and contemplation tool. It is self-guided, meaning you enter/exit at your own pace, and there will be no spoken instructions. During Holy Week, the labyrinth will be available on Wednesday, from 8AM-3:30PM; on Thursday and Friday, from 8AM-7:30PM; on Saturday from 8AM-2:30PM; and on Easter Sunday, from 8AM-4:30PM. On Good Friday, Cari will be at the labyrinth at 5PM, should you have any questions. You can also email Cari at office@fpcgermantown.org.

--Cari States-Codding

Making the Labyrinth

The labyrinth was made over the course of two weeks. Before drawing, the canvas was overlaid with a grid. Then, the labyrinth was drawn in chalk with three colors: one for the start/end points, one for anchor points, and one for connecting lines. Finally, the canvas was painted.



Making the grid markers



What is a labyrinth?

A labyrinth is a single, winding path that leads to a center point. Unlike a maze, which has dead ends, labyrinths are *unicursal*, meaning it is made of one line and only has a one way to and from the center. Mazes aim to confuse and disorient, while labyrinths aim to aid in contemplation, mindfulness, and meditation.

How do you use a labyrinth?

There is no wrong way to walk the labyrinth, but there are some practices/frameworks that can be useful. One of them is the three Rs: *releasing*, *receiving*, and *returning*. On the way to the center, you *release*, letting go of concerns, distractions, and worries. Once at the center, you pause to *receive* insights, peace, and clarity. When done, you *return*, where you integrate your experience and return with a new perspective. The walk out of the labyrinth is just as important as the walk in, so don't rush. If you run into someone along the way, step to the side and let them pass. If you do not find the walk helpful, you are welcome to cut across the labyrinth and exit without completing it.

How long does a labyrinth walk take?

There is no set time required. If this is your first time walking the labyrinth, give yourself around a half hour.

What do you do while walking?

Labyrinth walks are a type of active meditation. While meditation is commonly thought of as sitting still, closing your eyes, and thinking about not thinking, that's not the purpose of meditation. The goal of meditation is to train your attention and awareness to foster mental clarity, to observe thoughts and feelings, and to foster a sense of perspective. For this walk, there will be breath prayers available to aid in your journey and reflection (more information available in Finney).

Lent Soup and Sabbath

During Lent three small groups gathered to share a meal and discuss together different Lent meditations. The Christian Education committee wants to thank the Cassie and the Davis families for hosting. We also want to thank everyone that helped in the cooking, in bringing food and the creation of the meditations. The time spent together was meaningful and a blessing.



Triennium 2025 Reflection

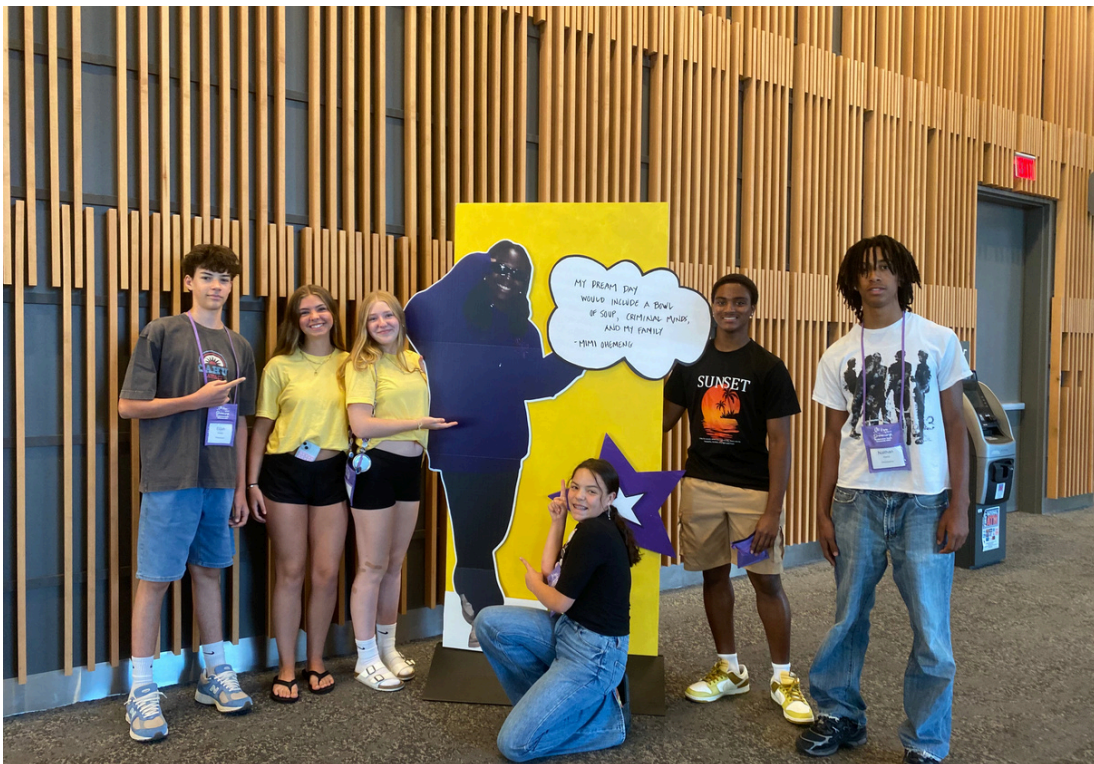
Hi, my name is Addy, and I had the incredible opportunity to attend Triennium last summer. I'm grateful and excited to share a little bit about my experience and how it impacted my faith and perspective. From the moment I arrived, I could already tell it was going to be a memorable trip.

After the very long bus ride to get to Louisville, I was excited to see the hotel and convention center. We were able to get settled in and have some downtime, and then hopped into the first worship service. The days consisted of meeting people and exchanging pins, which was a fun tradition where you collect pins from kids in different states. I got closer with my friends from First Pres, and also made many new ones from all around the country. Dreamscape was a fun place that had games, sports, crafts, and many people! I spent a lot of time there.

I will never forget how amazing the worship was—I felt God's presence in the wonderful music and sermons, and there wasn't a single service where I didn't shed some tears. Before the trip, celebrating God sometimes felt like a chore. This worship renewed my love for and excitement about being a Christian, and the preachers were very engaging and great at making their sermons relatable to us as youths.

Getting the freedom to explore the connected hotel, and the giant spaces set up for the event was one of my favorite parts of the trip. Eating meals together was also very fun, and we were all excited every day to see what was being served! Overall, I loved the experience and am so sad to only be able to do it one more time in three years as a senior. Sharing conversations, laughter, and meaningful moments with others reminded me of the strength and joy found in community. I would highly recommend this experience to anyone interested!

-Addy Hoekema



Sharing With Long-Time Members

On Sunday, February 15, a living Valentine was delivered to three FPCG members living in retirement homes. Ann and Wes Reisse and Lois VanEerden were delighted recipients of the visits by nine of their fellow congregants.

Organized by Gloria Bethea, the group scheduled their trips earlier, but the weather did not cooperate at all, so the day after Valentine's Day was chosen. Snow still covered the grounds of the two retirement residences, but it somewhat added to the excitement of the day.

Visiting in addition to Gloria were Dhyan Cassie, Debra Gary, Alison and Bob Seed, Jim Thompson, Sylvia Clark, Dr. Annie Kotto, and Sam Whyte. After a visit to the Reisses. The FPCG'ers met and escorted Lois VanEerden to lunch at Michael's Family Restaurant in Montgomeryville.

Earlier visits to members of the church included Jessie Coleman and Nancy Smith.

Members are encouraged to write to Lois and to Wes and Ann. The Reisses at Atria Lafayette Hill—Apt. 405—9303 Ridge Pike—Lafayette Hill, PA 19444-1774; Lois at Hudson Estates Retirement Community—651 Montgomery Glen Drive—Lansdale, PA.19446

Anyone interested in being included in the next (so far unscheduled) may get in touch with Gloria Bethea.

-Jim Thompson





Carpooling

Would you like to attend in-person Sunday service but need a ride? Do you have a car and the willingness to drive another congregation member to church! To sign up, see deacons Matt Grewe or Andrea Overton-Horne after Sunday service, email office@fpcgermantown.org, or call 215-842-8811. Thanks to those who are already serving and building fellowship in this way.

-Matt Grewe

Artcinia Concert

Thank you to Artcinia for the wonderful concert, titled *Romantic Reflections – Music of the Mendelssohn Siblings!*



Mural Restoration



Before



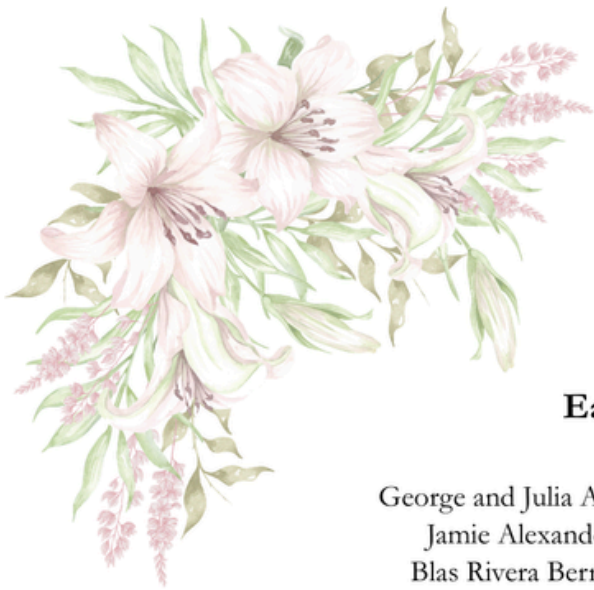
After



Art Restorer Steve Erisoty works to mural in Jennings Room

Palm Sunday

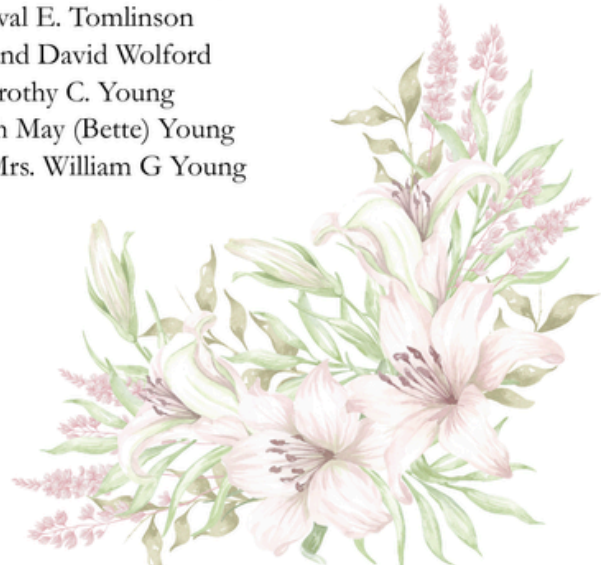


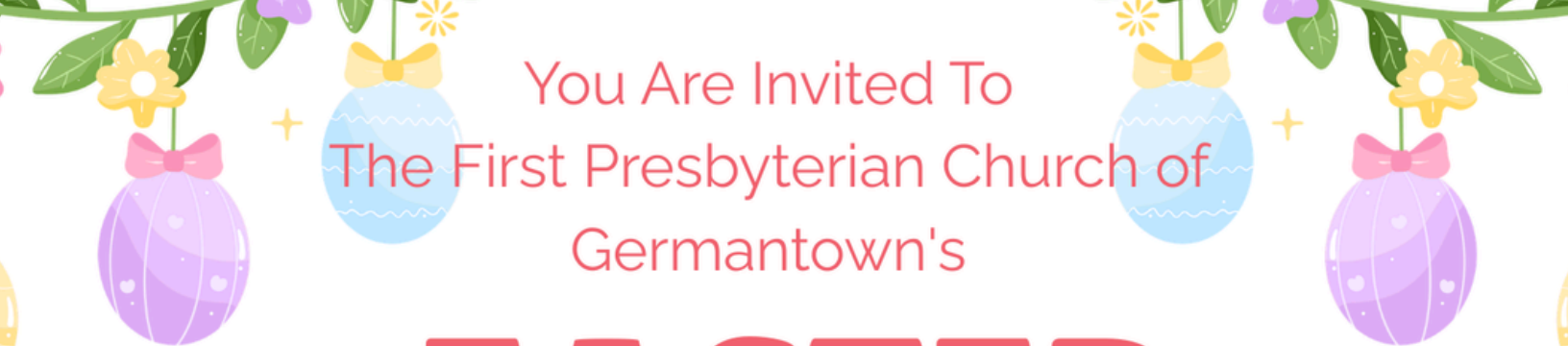


Easter Flower Memorials

George and Julia Abbott
Jamie Alexander
Blas Rivera Berrios
Laurent and Connie Bosse
Romeo Cascarino
Capt. Michael P. Cassidy, U.S.A.
Susan E. Cassidy
Pete Castillo
Vera R. Deas
Ann DiNardo
David Drum
Mattie Drum
Winnie Fahs
Lenore Finger
Eugene Gardenhire
Bill and Bea Gardner
family members of Stephanie Garrett
Kenney Gibbs II
Jason Guggolz
Lorraine Q. Hall
Betty A. Henze
Larry Heyer
Mrs. Annie Jackson
Rev. Freddie Jackson
Horace Jackson
Dr. James Jackson
Mrs. Myrtle Jackson
Reginald Jackson
William Jackson
Irene Keely

Mr. and Mrs. Paul W. Keibler
Norma Kilson
Linda and Joe Leube
William James Lewis, Sr.
Virginia Linden
Raymond and Joyce Debreast Madison
Virginia Miller
Alicia Murray
Miguel Naranjo
Rose Neuringer
William H. Oldach, Jr. and Betty Oldach
Irene Overton
Elisa Rabassa-Rodriguez
Arlene Richardson
William and Mable Richardson
Paula Nieves Rivera
Renee Rodriguez
J. Randall Rosensteel
Arsenio Santiago-Santana
George Paul Thompson
H. George Thompson
Hilma E. Thompson
Lorraine Thompson
Patricia Ann Thompson
Barbra Lewis Burton Tillery
Percival E. Tomlinson
Faith and David Wolford
Dorothy C. Young
Elizabeth May (Bette) Young
Mr. and Mrs. William G Young





You Are Invited To
The First Presbyterian Church of
Germantown's

EASTER FESTIVAL

We will have games, crafts, egg dyeing,
lunch, pictures with the Easter Bunny and an
Egg Hunt!

For ages 0 to 100

All Free!!

Date: April 4, 2026

10:00am to 1:00pm

35W. Chelten Ave.

Phila, PA 19144



THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN



CHURCH IN GERMANTOWN

GERMANTOWN ORATORIO CHOIR

I DARE LOOK UP

A CONCERT OF AMERICAN MUSIC

*WORKS BY FLORENCE PRICE, ADOLPHUS HAILSTORK,
AARON COPLAND, ROMEO CASCARINO, AND OTHERS*

APRIL 19 at 3 PM



FREE CONCERT-DONATIONS ACCEPTED AT THE DOOR

**THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN GERMANTOWN
35 W CHELTEN AVE. PHILADELPHIA, PA**

PARKING AVAILABLE AT THE GERMANTOWN LIVE EMPOWERMENT CENTER

Church Officers

Elders

2026
Sheila Heyer-Rivera
Andrew Hood
Peter Smith

2027
Arlene Grace
Randy Clever
Contina Lee Lundy, Clerk of Session

2028
Anthony Webb
Sara Greene
Klass Hoekema-Boerman

Deacons

2026
Zaria Cuffee, Moderator
Garth Herrick
Madeline Valentine

2027
Lydia Cooper
Matthew Grewe
William Lewis

2028
Faith Lewis
Andrea Overon-Horne
Rosemary Williams

Committees and Chairs

Administration and Finance

Klaas Hoekema-Boerman

Christian Education

Sheila Heyer-Rivera

**Congregational Development
and Fellowship**

A. Webb

Mission and Outreach

Drew Hood

Personnel

Ingrid Harris and Randy Clever

Property

Pete Smith

Safety and Wellness

Sara Greene

**Worship, Music, and
the Arts**

Arlene Grace

Staff

Acting Head of Staff

Rev. Christian Heyer-Rivera

Director of Music Ministry

John Walthausen

Building Manager

Terry Boyer

Church Administrator

Cari States-Codding

Bookkeeper

Cindy Osborne

Sextons

Tony Nixon, Robert Patterson, JR Pasture, Chris Shoffner

Prayer Requests

Special Needs

Angel Adams
Miles Adams
Mandy Adams
Issa Byrdsong-Patterson
Todd Cameron
Robin Caroline Clark
Sylvia Clark
Randy Clever
David Corbin
Denise Cowey
Ian Cameron
The Cameron family
Lagunsad Family
Debra Gary
Todd Gasper
Veda Gibbs and family

Arlene Grace
Marney Hague
Charlene Hardy & Family
Jane Heyer
Lee Hurst
Matt Hurst
Family of Norma Kilson
Laverne Kitchen
Evadney Miller
Cindy Osborne
Edna Solomon
Bogdan Suiunbaiev
Leslie Williams
Alice & David Wootson

Members & Friends in Military Service

Brittany Carroll
Michael D. Davis
Chip Martin
Dawayne Robinson
Joey
James

Homebound

Lois VanEerden
Wes and Ann Reisse
Betty King

**Nursing Home &
Retirement Community Residents**

Diane Hinman-Guggolz



- 03/01: Rev. Christian Heyer-Rivera, *Challenging Communications in the Dark*, John 3:1-17
- 03/08: Dr. Heather Rice, *Is the Lord Among Us or Not?*, John 4:5-42
- 03/15: Rev. Carey Davis, *The Sacred Practice of Release*, 1 Samuel 16:1-13
- 03/22: Cari States-Coddling, *Yolo?*, Ezekiel 37:1-14; John 11:1-45
- 03/29: Rev. Diane Fitch, *Shouting Stones*, Luke 19:28-40

Please check our website if you'd like to catch up on (or re-watch) any of March's sermons.

March Sermons

17

- We will reflect the loving presence of Christ – Matthew 28:19-20
- We will serve others faithfully – Mark 10:43-45
- We will worship God joyfully – Colossians 3:16
- We will share life together – Acts 2:42-47
- We will be a diverse community – 1 Corinthians 12:15-19
- We will be a generous community – 1 Timothy 6:18-19

The mission of The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown is to reflect the loving presence of Christ as we serve others faithfully, worship God joyfully, and share life together in a diverse and generous community. While much could be added to this statement, we believe that this captures the most essential elements of our mission today as revealed through the words, thoughts and actions of the congregation. This mission statement is not only rooted in the life of the congregation; we believe that each promise this statement makes is rooted in Scripture as well:

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN



CHURCH IN GERMANTOWN

35 West Chelten Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19144

