



Windows

The newsletter of The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown

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Church Hours:

Office:

Tuesday through Friday
9AM-1PM

Building Hours:

Monday through Friday,
8AM-4PM

Saturday: 8AM-3PM

Sunday: 8AM-5PM



www.fpcgermantown.org

FPCG Members and Friends:

As summer is nearing an end with August upon us, we have much to celebrate this month and much to look forward to. Our search committee continues the important work of discerning who God is calling to lead us into our next stage of our journey together as a family of faith. Continue to pray for their work among us as we look forward to updates that they will bring us in the coming weeks.

We will be celebrating our 2026-2027 graduates this month in our worship service on August 23rd, even as we usher our students back to school for another year of learning. Please lift up our students throughout this month as they enjoy the last remaining weeks of summer and prepare themselves for the work of growing in knowledge through academic study.

We will also be hearing testimonies from 2026 FPCG Service-Learning Trip team members in our worship service on August 23rd. The team representing FPCG will be hard at work, laboring and learning from August 8th through August 16th in Puerto Rico. Join us in praying for safety, good weather, and hearts, heads, and hands full of love and humility as we support one another in the work God has ordained us near and far. Make plans to be present as they share their reflections on this time within our service of worship together.

As always, let us encourage one another to take account of those among us who are enduring difficulties in body, mind and circumstances. While our deacons continue to reach out and provide support for our members, God calls each one of us to rejoice with each other and to share each other's burdens. Give a call, a card, or a visit to members you haven't seen in a while, to members you know are "going through it", to our homebound members, and reach out in love to our newer friends and members as we deepen our relationships with one another and find ways to incorporate all the gifts that God has given us into our common calling to love God, love our neighbors, and love ourselves.

Rev. Christian A. Heyer-Rivera



@thefirstpresbyterianchurch8143



@FPCGermantown

Happening this Month

Schedule

- Session Meeting, 08/05, 7PM
- Admin and Finance Committee Meeting, 08/11, 7PM
- Deacons' Meeting, 08/16, 11:30AM
- All Ages Youth Group, 08/21, 6:30PM
- CDFC Meeting, 08/23, 12PM
- Property Committee Meeting, 08/27, 7PM
- All Ages Youth Group, 08/28, 6:30PM
- Worship, Music, and the Arts Committee Meeting, 08/30, 11:30AM

Weekly Events

- Sunday Worship, 10AM
- GACM Food Pantry, 10AM
Thursdays

Pastor Christian's Office Hours

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



Matthew 14:13-21

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost, 08/02
Rev. Christian, preaching

Matthew 14:22-33

Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost, 08/09
Cari States-Codding, preaching



Matthew 15: 21-28

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost, 08/16
Cari States-Codding, preaching

Matthew 16:13-20

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost, 08/23
Rev. Christian, preaching
Puerto Rico team testimonies



Matthew 16:21-28

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost, 08/30
Arlene Grace, preaching

August Birthdays

Leah Hood August 04

Lois VanEerden August 08

Delores Solomon August 11

Siena Williams August 12

Matthew Lagunsad
Anthony Ohemeng August 15

Lois Nafziger-Bethea August 19

Johari Smith August 20

Aleisha Gibbs
Eileen Jones August 27

William Lewis
Ann Stauffer August 29

Shawde Rolle August 31

August Challenge Offering

August's Challenge Offering recipient is Lingelbach Elementary School.



Summer Plans

What are your plans for this summer? Vacation, time with family, staying home? We want to know! Please email us what you're up to this summer, with a couple of photos, so we can share your adventures with everyone. We would like to publish your stories in the September newsletter.



New Copier

We have a new copier! It has the same functions (and a couple of new ones) that the old copier had. It is being housed in the main office, not the upstairs office.

PERSEVERING *toward* WHOLENESS

The 227th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, addressed constitutional governance, racial justice, gender justice, denominational finances and the direction of the church, laying groundwork for work continuing through the next assembly.

Co-moderators elected, GA228 to be held in Puerto Rico

Commissioners elected the Rev. Marta Pumroy-Cordero, border ministry coordinator for the Tres Rios Border Foundation in Tres Rios Presbytery, and the Rev. Dr. Kristopher D. Schondelmeyer, pastor and head of staff at First Presbyterian Church in Davenport, Iowa, as co-moderators. They will preside at GA228, June 11-22, 2028, in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Commissioners also **approved full, in-person assemblies**, including an exhibit hall, beginning in 2030.

Budget and per capita

Commissioners approved a **balanced \$188.4 million unified budget** for Presbyterian Life & Witness (PL &W) and the A Corporation for the 2027–2028 biennium, about \$5.8 million more than the previous budget: \$90.45 million for 2027 and \$97.92 million for 2028. Per capita rates were set at \$13.04 in 2027 and \$12.72 in 2028.

General Assembly Relationships

The GAR Committee approved the new Organization for Mission, the structure for the General Assembly as the denomination's highest council, and **established PL&W and its governing board.**

Israel/Palestine

Commissioners approved RIW-04, declaring that the **Israeli government has violated international law** prohibiting genocide in its war in Gaza. As amended, RIW-04 directs the denomination's Office of Public

Witness to advocate against U.S. military sales to Israel and purchases from Israel. It also encourages members to avoid products from Israeli companies linked to violations of international law.

Constitutional interpretation, missiology, and mission co-worker dismissals

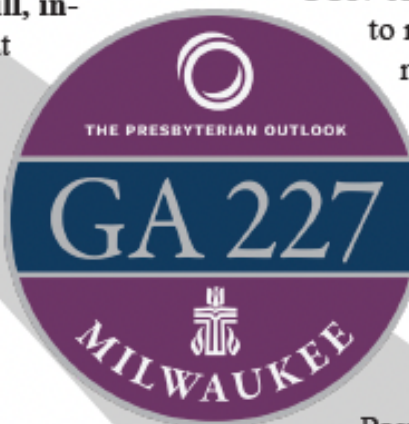
Following testimony on staff dismissals during **World Mission's closure**, the assembly approved CON-02, directing PL&W and the A Corporation to revise employment policies to prohibit nondisclosure covenants for employees, with a report due to the 2028 assembly. RIW-01 calls for review of the processes that terminated mission co-worker positions and World Mission. RIW-02 directs the development of a new missiological statement for global engagement.

Pastors will now be required to complete **boundary and abuse-prevention training** at least every three years. An overture to remove the Board of Pensions' medical coverage requirements was rejected.

Commissioners referred CON-10, which seeks an authoritative interpretation of monogamy, for discussion within the theological framework proposed in GEN-09, "Beyond Changing Families."

Gender and Sexuality Justice

The Constitutional Interpretation Committee **rejected a call for a special study of the Olympia Overture amendments**, citing related proposals GEN-06 and GEN-09. GEN-06 directs the development



of a mechanism that would allow congregations to indicate their openness and readiness to call an LGBTQIA+ candidate on their Ministry Discernment Profiles. Candidates would be allowed to view congregational responses. GEN-09, “Beyond Changing Families: Flourishing Relationships and Belonging,” seeks a theological framework and a study guide on human sexuality and gender that reflect the PC(USA)’s commitment to full inclusion.

The assembly reaffirmed support for access to **medically necessary gender-affirming healthcare** and approved development of a survey collecting non-identifying information about sexual misconduct in church settings.

Climate and Environmental Justice

The Climate Justice Committee approved CLJ-02, “Changing Course for a Green Future,” directing **divestment from more than 50 companies** by 2030 and barring new investments in them. All CLJ items were placed on the consent agenda, including a call for education on regenerative farming and prioritizing responses to the climate crisis.

White Christian nationalism

Commissioners voted overwhelmingly to declare White Christian nationalism and similar ideologies “**a theological error**” incompatible with the teachings of Jesus Christ; language changes in the *Book of Order* require presbytery ratification. Commissioners rejected an amendment that would have removed references to White Christian nationalism from the Special Committee on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and Race report.

Racial justice

The Racial Justice Committee advanced several recommendations **strengthening the denomination’s**

anti-racism work, including RAC-04, “The Report from the Special Committee on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) on Race,” directing “PL&W to create a tracking system that displays the progress/ completion of all GA business... related to race, racism, and White supremacy ...”

RAC-01 calls for PC(USA) entities to report to the 228th GA on implementation of RGJ-13, the 2022 Report from the Disparities Experienced by Black Women and Girls Task Force. RAC-03, the “Resolution on Liberia Project 180,” explores establishing theological learning and repair, and developing **acknowledgment and apology for Presbyterian involvement** in and support of the American Colonization Society and its lasting effects on Indigenous Liberians.

Ordered ministry

The Theological Education and Ordination Committee approved changes **modernizing preparation for ministry** while preserving Presbyterian ordination standards. ORD-02 clarifies that ministry preparation in G-2.06 and G-2.07 of the *Book of Order* applies to those training for the ministry of Word and Sacrament; it requires a two-thirds presbytery vote. ORD-03, addressing collaborative ministry teams, was approved; ORD-04, seeking removal of the time-of-service requirement for ruling elders in mid council roles, was not.

A new confession

A newly appointed special committee will continue **considering a new confession**. The draft seeks to articulate Christian faith in response to contemporary challenges including racism, economic inequality, environmental degradation, violence and political polarization.

For full stories about General Assembly or other news from the PC(USA):

Visit our website: pres-outlook.org

Follow us on social:

Facebook: Presbyterian Outlook

Bluesky: [@presoutlook.bsky.social](https://presoutlook.bsky.social)



Dear Congregation,

The Property Committee provides the leadership and guidance to maintain the church's building and equipment. This includes the building structure, systems, fixtures (organ, stained glass windows, etc.), and utilizing the Building Use Policy, provides direction and support for use of the building by outside organizations.

Besides the event space users, we have longer term leases with several organizations. These include:

Historic Germantown:

<https://historicgermantownpa.org/>

Commencement Date 4/15/2026 – Located in lower level formerly occupied by GACM.

Safe Place Church:

<https://nppc.church/>

This is their second lease renewal effective 4/1/2026 for weekly use in The Jennings Room and related areas.

Tax Journey LLC

<https://www.ptindirectory.com/tax-firms/pennsylvania/philadelphia-pa/319208/tax-journey-llc/angelina-williams>

Commencement Date 3/15/2026 – Located in Longstreth Balcony Office

School House Lane Philly:

<https://schoolhouselanephilly.com/>

Commencement Date 8/1/2026 – Located on east section of 2nd floor CE corridor.

We further wish to inform you the following repairs/projects are underway:

Replace Finney Room Air Conditioner which has been broken since 2024.

Replace West Parking Lot Gate.

Jennings Room Floor Refinishing: The initial plan was to replace the carpeting. With input from WMA (Worship Music and the Arts committee) we were convinced that removing the carpeting and refinishing the existing hardwood floors with supplemental area rugs would improve the aesthetics and acoustics of the room. Thank you, Cathy Coho and John Walhausen, for working closely with us on this project.

Railings for Sanctuary: We previously reported we are investigating the possibility of installing railings on the chancel to assist worshipers with mobility issues to transit from the nave more easily to the pulpit. At the outset this seemed to be a simple task. Nothing is as simple as it appears to be; there is more complexity to facilitate this than meets the eye. Considering the multi-functionality of this area not only for worship but also as a performance venue, and given the flooring is imported marble with building structural and mechanical elements beneath it, great care must be taken to plan and execute the best way to do this. Surveys and preliminary engineering along with rough order of magnitude pricing in the range of 20K has been completed. PC is exploring options and will be able to provide our findings by the end of the next Property Committee Meeting

Hock Grant: To assist us in maintenance and improvement of our facilities, we have received a commitment of \$100,000 from the Liz and Roy Hock Foundation. Thank you, Marc DiNardo and Jim Thompson for spearheading this.

Utilities: We continue to work with our engineering firm, Optics Consulting, LLC to monitor the national energy markets and to provide recommendations for the most favorable rates for natural gas and electricity. We have made two modifications to our contracts over the last six months.

For more than 250 years FPCG has been an integral part of the fabric of the greater Germantown community. You the members have faithfully dedicated your lives to serving the Lord and making our church one of Germantown's strongest institutions. As a 40-year church member I am pleased to say that the loving support you give to our church not only helps FPCG, but also the greater Germantown community. Thank you for faithful energy and continued support.

Peter Smith, Property Committee Chair

Submitted by Carolyn Ballard-Freeman



Prayer Box

As part of caring for the congregation, our deacons would like to collect the congregation's prayer requests. They will ensure the requests are put on the public prayer list, if requested.

Choir Update

FPCG Chancel Choir will resume rehearsals starting Thursday September 10, and our first Sunday back will be Sunday, September 13. Whether you have been singing with us for years or are curious to grow as a musician in a fun and supportive environment, all are welcome to give it a try!

This summer First Church is pleased to welcome to Longstreth Auditorium a new piano given by a friend of the oratorio choir. This Kawai grand piano will serve us well for many years to come, and will be used in particular for youth programming, the Christmas Festival, and by guest theater groups.

-John Walthausen

Puerto Rico Service Team Commissioning



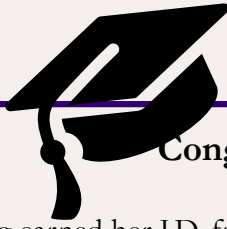
from left to right: Emery Hood, Joshua Overton, Emanuel Heyer-Rivera, Matt Grewe, Lisa Grewe, Rev.. Christian Heyer-Rivera, Elisa Heyer-Rivera, Sheila Heyer-Rivera, and Nathan Davis
photo credit: Contina Lee Lundy

Not in photo: Adelle Bowman-Johnston, Randy Clever, Elijah Grewe, Lily Grewe, Addy Hoekema, Leah Hood, Siena Williams

2026-2027 Scholarship Recipients

Congratulations to our scholarship recipients!

Kai Burton (Temple University Beasley School of Law)
Zaria Cuffee (Community College of Philadelphia)
Naomi Davis (Temple University)
Jasmine Greene (East Stroudsburg University)
Emanuel Heyer-Rivera (Dickinson College)
Henry Hunsicker (The Pennsylvania State University-Main Campus)
Chloe Lagunsad (Delaware County Community College)
Mimi Ohemeng (Brown University)
Joshua Overton (Indiana University of Pennsylvania)
Siena Williams (University of Pittsburgh)



Congratulations to our 2026 Graduates:

Kristina Ohemeng earned her J.D. from Columbia Law School, where she served as the Vice President of Black Law Students and as an editor of the Columbia Law Review

Danielle Ohemeng earned her B.A. in Psychology from Boston University, where she minored in Sociology and African American and Black Diaspora Studies.

Mimi Ohemeng graduated from William Penn Charter School where she was chosen as a commencement speaker to her class. Mimi will be attending Brown University for the 2026-2027 academic year.

Chloe Lagunsad graduated from Upper Darby Highschool and will be attending Delaware County Community College for the 2026-2027 academic year.

Please join us Sunday, August 23rd in our worship service as we honor our graduates, giving thanks to God for their achievements and praying for their futures!

Hosting/Sponsoring Coffee Hour

The CDFC is in need of volunteers to host or sponsor coffee hour. If you'd like to sponsor, please write a check for \$35 to FPCG, with "fellowship time" written in the subject line. If you'd like to host, the usual categories purchased are cookies, danishes, fruit, and something else (snack bag varieties, etc.). The CDFC provides the juice and gluten-free choices. The sign-up sheet is on the CDFC bulletin board, located by the kitchen window. Please remember to include your contact number. Thank you for considering hosting/sponsoring, and please feel free to ask any CDFC member any questions.



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. August's item is sandwiches. A signup sheet will be at the CDFC bulletin board...we thank you in advance.

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.



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

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 Walhausen

Building Manager

Terry Boyer

Church Administrator

Cari States-Codding

Bookkeeper

Cindy Osborne

Sextons

Tony Nixon, Robert Patterson, JR Pasture

Prayer Requests

Special Needs

Angel Adams
Mandy Adams
Karen Bowens and
family
Todd Cameron
Alexa Casimir
David Cassie
Robin Caroline Clark
Sylvia Clark
Randy Clever
David Corbin
Denise Cowey
Ian Cameron
The Cameron family
Lagunsad Family
Stephanie Garrrett
Debra Gary
Todd Gasper

Veda Gibbs & Family

Arlene Grace
Marney Hague
Robin Hansen
Jane Heyer
Lee Hurst
Matt Hurst
Laverne Kitchen
Frank Lundy
Evadney and Peter Miller
Tatiana Mitchell
Cindy Osborne
Frannie Smith
Edna Solomon
Bogdan Suiunbaiev
Alice Wootson

Members & Friends in Military Service

Brittany Carroll
Michael D. Davis
Chip Martin
Dawayne Robinson

Homebound

Charlene Hardy & Family

Nursing Home & Retirement Community Residents

Diane Hinman-Guggolz
Hortense Kennedy
Betty King
Margaret Ann Reisse
Lois VanEerden

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:

- 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

ALIVE,
CELEBRATING.
& SERVING
THE LIVING LORD!

July Sermons

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

07/05: *Setting Faith Free*, Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30
 Rev. Christian Heyer-Rivera

07/12: *Divine Gardening*, Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23
 Rev. Christian Heyer-Rivera

07/19: *Listening*, Romans 8:12-25; Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43
 Cari States-Codding

07/26: *Surrounded by Love; Upheld by Prayer*, Romans 8:26-39
 Don Carlin



<https://www.fpcgermantown.org/sermons/2026/07/>

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN



CHURCH IN GERMANTOWN

35 West Cheltenham Avenue
 Philadelphia, PA 19144

