



The First Presbyterian Church of Sharon, Pa.

E m p h a s i s

MAY 2025

The Bible: What is It?

Years ago, in seminary I took a required pastoral care class. An assignment for the class was to pick a location and once a week for the semester visit the location and provide pastoral care. We were also to keep a journal of what we did and what we learned. I chose a nearby senior assisted living facility. I think it was Presbyterian affiliated.

I met with the chaplain of the facility. She gave me a list of names of residents to visit. Each week I was to check in with her.

I clearly remember one visit. The resident was a small woman in her 80s. She was in good health and pleased to greet me. As I sat down in a chair, I placed my clip board on the coffee table in front of me and I introduced myself. She immediately and very politely said, “Could you please move your clip board. You’ve covered up my Bible. I grew up never putting anything over my Bible.” I quickly moved the clip board and apologized for not seeing her Bible. A pleasant visit went on from there.

I remember that visit because it continues to remind me of the special place the Bible can hold in people’s lives. Even its physical presence can have a special holy significance. And it makes me wonder how the Bible can be significant.

The program staff of 1st Church are currently reading and discussing the book; *The Rise and Fall of the Bible* by Timothy Beal. This interesting book argues that though Bible publishing is big business and new translations flood the market, people are actually reading the Bible less. People like to have a particular translation of the Bible to fit their religious and political world view (conservative New American Standard Bible or progressive New Revised Standard Version). They are familiar with a verse here or there cited in a particular progressive or conservative discussion. But they are not reading the Bible for themselves and wrestling with all the complexity of interpretation that is part of the Bible. And they don’t want to be introduced to interpretations that may challenge or expand their world view. So as a consequence, more and more people may have multiple Bibles, but they really don’t know the Bible.

Dr. Crooks recently wrote citing an article in the April 2025 Christian Century entitled “What is the Bible for?” In the article various pastors, theologians, and authors give 7 words or less responses to the question. Some of the responses are: “Awakening us to the call of God,” “Stirring us to believe in costly love,” “Window into God, mirror to the soul.” To those I would add my own: “A curious library of experiences with God.”

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May 2025 Preaching and Worship Schedule

- 4 3rd Sunday of Easter. I Samuel 9:1-10:16. Baptism of Noah Dillinger.
- 11 4th Sunday of Easter. I Samuel 11:1-15. Bible Sunday. Mother’s Day. Minute for Mission: Front Lawners.
- 18 5th Sunday of Easter. I Samuel 13:1-15a. Dr. Crooks preaching.
- 25 6th Sunday of Easter. I Samuel 13:15b-14:52. Memorial Service.

Worship Notes

Eastertide Sermon Series. Dr. Hink and Dr. Crooks will return to preaching from I Samuel. This Old Testament book tells the story of ancient Israel moving from a theocracy of a loose confederation of tribes to a kingdom with a king. The story wrestles with the security and challenges of “religion and politics.”

Memorial Service. Worship on May 25th will include our annual memorial service as we remember those members of 1st Church who have passed away in the last 12 months.

A Look Ahead at Worship

Pentecost Sunday is June 8th. All people attending worship are encouraged to wear red. Worship will include the sharing of communion.

Summer worship will begin on June 15th. Worship will move to the a/c, digital projection and more “casual feel” of Fellowship Hall. Worship will begin at 10AM.

Graduate Sunday. On Sunday, June 29th, 1st Church would like to celebrate with parents and grandparents in family member graduations. If you have a family member graduating from high school, college, community college, trade school, or graduate school and would like to have them recognized on Graduate Sunday please contact Brenda Hall (Director of Family and Children’s Ministries) or Nancy Fritz (Office Manager) with the name and place of graduation.



An Annual Congregational Meeting was held on Palm Sunday, April 13th, to hand out and briefly discuss the Annual Report. Extra booklets are available in the church office. Please contact Nancy in church office to receive one. One booklet per household, please.



We are so proud of **Kiara Wilson**, Class of 2026, for receiving the Rachel Carson Healthy Planet Award from Chatham University. She is entitled to an annual \$2500 scholarship to the University, and she will receive priority consideration for a full-tuition scholarship. Kiara plans to study Nursing and pursue a career in Anesthesiology. Please help us in congratulating Kiara.



Congratulations to **Liam Hall** who recently earned his Eagle Award in Scouting. Liam’s Eagle Court of Honor was at 1st Church. Liam is a Boy Scout with Troop 52, Transfer, PA. Liam’s Eagle Project, the Transfer Kiwanis All Wars Memorial, is located at the Transfer Harvest Home Fair Grounds. Liam wishes to thank everyone in the congregation for their support, prayers, and help at the work site for making this achievement possible.



Remember Our Shut-Ins

Ridgewood 724-347-0998

One Elston Way,

Hermitage, PA 16148

Gail Hink, 206

Shirley Sankey, 303

Mary Ellen Foltz, 305

Gables Care Center

351 Lahm Dr, Hopedale, OH43976

Betty Hudson



John Nugent

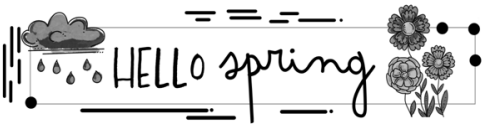
April 6, 2025

Cora Stephens



5 Kristen Patton
5 Natalie Macosko
5 Lori Woods
5 Lisa Walker
8 Paula Haehnel
9 Kathy Heasley
9 Michelle Bartholomew
10 Grant Schnolis
11 Robert Frazier
11 Mark Wilson
15 Judy Achre
15 Bill O'Donnell
15 Andrew Toskin

15 Patti Keath
16 Sally Young
17 Susan Wolf
17 Keith Lucas
18 Nathan Clark
19 John Rose
19 Ellie Nespor
21 Kimberly McCullough
22 Jessica Goodwin
23 John Woge
25 Chelsea Rose
25 Katie Jurenovich



In *Rest Your Dreams on a Little Twig*, poet Joyce Rupp finds in spring flowers the proclamation of the gospel: “we who have died / are alive today.” In another poem in the same volume, she writes: “A green shoot grows / out of an old tree stump, / announcing to the world / that power lies within death.” As you move about outdoors these springtime days in the northern hemisphere, where do you see nature testifying to resurrection? Where is evidence that what seemed dead—bare branches, dry grass, inactive seeds—was not in fact the final word? What encourages you to believe in renewal, second chances, life that blossoms from death? In what ways are you, who had died, alive today? Part of your life that felt like an old stump might be sprouting green shoots after all!

Special Dates in May

- ♦ Mother’s Day, *May 11*
- ♦ Armed Forces Day, *May 17*
- ♦ Memorial Day, *May 26*
- ♦ Ascension Day, *May 29*

(continued from page 1)

The commandment in the Bible is clear: “You shall not make for yourself an idol...” (Exodus 20:4; Deuteronomy 5:8). Human beings tend to worship the idols they make. And human beings tend to try to control their idols. The command directs us to only worship who is really God. And the commandment states the freedom of God. Despite the commandment people still make idols: rain, a statue, a powerful person, money. And I wonder if the Bible has become an idol for some.

I am comfortable with our Reformed/Presbyterian theology of the Bible which swirls around the idea of “inspiration.” “Inspiration” means God was active in the process of the Bible being written. And God is active in the process of reading and studying the Bible. And God is active in the teaching and preaching of the Bible. “Inspiration” upholds the special place and history of the Bible and the changing interpretations of the Bible in the changing contexts of life. A “literal” belief in the Bible tends to make it an idol. “Inspiration” instead points us beyond the Bible to the living God.

So, what is the Bible? How might you answer the question in 7 words or less? And in the meantime Bill and I will continue to teach and preach from the Bible according to “inspiration” in a time when people really know less and less about it.

Trusting “Inspiration,”
Glenn

P.S. If you are interested in questions about the Bible I would recommend the Timothy Beal book mentioned above, or a book by Rob Bell, *What is the Bible?* Both books are very readable for anyone.

LIVESTREAM

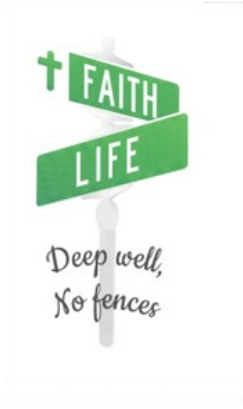
All 1st Church worship services are online. This has increased our worship attendance by 50 to 100 people. A few people watch the worship service at the same time as live worship, while most watch it at a later date and time. We are thankful to have such a gifted Tech Team that produces online worship each Sunday.

If you are interested in online worship simply go to the 1st Presbyterian Church of Sharon Facebook Page, click on the You Tube link, and click on “live.” This will take you to the 1st Church You Tube Channel. Or you can visit the 1st Church Website. Click on “FPC Videos” and click on “live.” Either way will get you to online worship.

We also encourage members and friends who enjoy online worship to pass it on to family members and friends. We would like to grow this new and emerging part of 1st Church ministry.

Church Attendance for March 2025

2024		2025		Online
3rd	78	2nd	76	53 views
10th	72	9th	68	71 views
17th	94	16th	77	63 views
24th	108	^{Palm} 23rd	88	83 views
31st	^{Easter} 175	30th	82	62 views
	527 40%		391 30%	



Find us on the Corner of Fifth and Fullerton

A few years ago 1st Church decided to adopt a Lot of Love. This program allows community members to sponsor the maintenance of a lot, so that the grass is cut and doesn't become overgrown or neglected—an eyesore to the neighborhood. The **Frontlawners**, our church members, maintain this lot as well as another in the city.

The Mission Team will be hosting a **Block Party Event** on **June 26 from 5pm-7pm** at the lot located at the corner of Fifth and Fullerton. Parking will be at 1st Church and Barnabus will be available to shuttle folks over.

There will be freshly grilled food, live music, activities for kids, fun, and fellowship. Last year's event was a huge hit with the neighborhood!

All are welcome so mark your calendar and join us as we meet “on the corner of faith and life.”

Financial Giving News
March 2025

Operations Budget		Mission Budget	
1st Sunday	5,831.40	1st Sunday	370.00
2nd Sunday	3,496.86	2nd Sunday	250.00
3rd Sunday	3,575.40	3rd Sunday	260.00
4th Sunday	8,621.99	4th Sunday	495.00
5th Sunday	1,599.40	5th Sunday	205.00
Total for March	23,125.05	Total for March	1,580.00
Budget for March	14,904.17	Budget for March	1,385.50
Balance for March	8,220.88	Balance for March	194.50
Total for Year to Date	49,141.33	Total for Year to Date	5,075.00
Budget for Year to Date	44,712.50	Budget for Year to Date	4,156.50
Balance for Year to Date	4,428.83	Balance for Year to Date	918.50



HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY

Dear Lord, thank you for the blessings of children and families. Help us rely on you for guidance, patience and even-temperedness throughout our days.

We pray that our children will love you, worship you, and serve you with their God-given gifts. Grant us the wisdom to know how to influence them to live godly lives. Prevent us from provoking our children to anger and from manipulating or nagging them.

Fill our households with abiding love and respect. And help us all be united in purpose to do your will. In the name of Christ our Lord. Amen.



MISSION TEAM PRAYER PROGRAM

Adopt-A-Cop is an international prayer protection ministry for law enforcement officers.

It was founded by Chaplain Sgt. Ken Rochell of Michigan State Police in 1998 to serve as a bridge between local churches and their local law enforcement agencies.

The purpose of **Adopt-a-Cop** is to assign law enforcement officers to a group, or individual who will pray daily for them. While 1st Church is not involved directly or officially with this Ministry, the Mission Team wanted to maintain the spirit and encourage the congregation to pray for our own local police officers. The Team will announce a new officer each month and ask for prayers for them and their family. Our youth will make cards and the Mission Team will include a \$25 gift card for each officer of the month.

May

C. Cory Bartley

Sharon Police Department



Make these sweet sandwiches for a Mother's Day tea party.

What you need:

- 4 oz. cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 3 Tablespoons powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 6-10 strawberries, washed and sliced
- 6 slices of white bread
- Cellophane
- Adult help



What you do:

1. With an electric mixer, whip the cream cheese in a bowl until fluffy.
2. Add cream, powdered sugar, and lemon juice. Continue whipping on high speed until mixture is stiff.
3. On each slice of bread, spread a layer of the mixture. Then arrange some sliced strawberries on top.
4. Place the sandwiches together, with filling on the inside.
5. Wrap tightly in cellophane. Chill for two hours so the filling sets.
6. Trim off crusts with a serrated knife. Cut sandwiches in squares or triangles. Serve and enjoy!



Bible Sunday is May 11. If you have a child completing kindergarten or 3rd grade, please reach out to Brenda Hall 724-866-2638 or bmckinney04@yahoo.com.



On March 30, 2025, First Presbyterian Church welcomed the following new members to our congregation.

Joellen Cain was brought up at 1st and has returned! She is a retired high school English teacher and enjoys reading, travel, and the Steelers! She is drawn to the music, the sermons, and our beautiful church.

Shirley Gibson enjoys puzzles, reading, computer games, and travel. She tunes in to services online.

Joyce Hawk enjoys outdoor sports and gardening. She was impressed by our friendliness and is looking forward to participating in some church activities.

Lori Seinar-Roknick's hobbies are cooking and baking, entertaining, and travel. She attended the Boar's Head Festival and appreciates the music here at 1st.

Please welcome them as they begin life in the church!

Mission Team 2025

Save the Dates!

Help.....Pray.....Attend

Lots of Love Cookout
June 26, 5-7 PM

Mission Sunday
September 14 10 am-12 pm

Trunk or Treat
October 19, 3-5 pm

May Merriment



"I'd like to thank the Women's Auxiliary for the plants and flowers, and I'd like to thank the Men's Fellowship for the machete."



"And you thought you were having a bad hair day."

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Sundays in May 9:30 Choir Practice-303 10:00 Adult Sunday School Class-FH 11:00 Worship in Sanctuary 12:00 Fellowship@First FH = Fellowship Hall CR = Conference Room				1	2	3
4	5 6:00 Shenango Valley Chorale-FH	6	7 1:00 Staff Meeting-106	8	9	10
11 HAPPY Mother's DAY 10:00 D&M-Library 12:00 Deacons-106 12:00 Worship Team-Parlor 12:00 Mission Team-FH 12:30 Carillon Choir-206	12 5:00 Presby Operations Team-CR 6:00 Scouts 7:00 Shenango Valley Chorale-FH	13 11:30 Memorial Committee-106	14 7:00 Men's Fellowship-Panera 12:00 Mary/Martha Circle-FH 1:00 Program Staff-CR Staff Lunch 5:00 Admin.-CR 6:00 Property Team	15 6:00 Presbytery Minute Bk. Review-FH	16	17 10:00 SVC Board-Rm. 206
18 6:00 Session-206	19	20 1:30 PWCT-106	21 1:00 Staff Meeting-106	22	23	24
25—Memorial Service	26 Church Closed Memorial Day	27 6:00 Amateur Radio-FH	28 7:00 Men's Fellowship-Panera	29	30	31 5:00 Scouts-FH