



# Providence Post

SEPTEMBER 2023

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*There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born  
and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal,  
a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn  
and a time to dance, a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace  
and a time to refrain from embracing, a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep  
and a time to throw away, a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent,  
and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.*

— Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 (NIV)

During my 11½ years as your pastor, we have experienced many of the events mentioned in the above passage of Scripture. I remember weddings, funerals, Vacation Bible Schools, ball games, Block Parties, yard sales, Youth Sundays, Rally Days, Lenten studies, Christmas plays, and times of fellowship and friendship plus many other events.

Now is a time of transition as you search for a new pastor. Jeremiah 29:11 states, “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” (NIV) While the way forward may seem unclear at the moment, trust that God will guide and bless you each step of the way, just I trust God to guide me in the future. I am certain of this because of all that Christ Jesus has done for us. As it says in 2 Corinthians 1:20, “For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ. And so through him the “Amen” is spoken by us to the glory of God.” (NIV)

Please know that while I am no longer your pastor, you all hold a special place in my heart and will be in my thoughts and my prayers as we move in new directions.

*Pastor Dennis*

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**By Barb Hazlett**

*(Note: The following highlights are taken from the minutes of the Monday, July 17, 2023, regular Session meeting.)*

**Clerk's Report:** Sixty-nine communicants received communion on Sunday, July 2.

**Treasurer's Report:** The treasurer's report was distributed and discussed.

**Huntingdon Presbytery Report:** Presbytery ratified the agreement between Providence Presbyterian Church and Pastor Dennis Braun to dissolve their pastoral relationship effective August 31, 2023, so that Pastor Braun can retire. There are now 38 congregations in Huntingdon Presbytery with only 12 of those having full-time installed pastors.

**Nominating Committee Report (Barry Gaut and Ellie Herbster):** The committee is working with a list of 16 names suggested to be on our Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC). The group will now begin making contacts to see who is willing to serve on the PNC.

**Moderator's Report:** Dennis McGeary, Wesley Thompson, and Devany Laratonda will become active members of Providence Presbyterian Church. Kai Thompson and Oakley Thompson will be baptized at Providence in the near future.

Pastor Braun reviewed the "Code of Conduct for Former Pastors" with the Session to explain why he is not permitted to associate with our church for a designated period of time. Session accepted the provisions of this document and our clerk signed the agreement on behalf of the Session.

### Session Team Reports (Chair)

**Finance & Stewardship (Barry Gaut):** Per capita for 2023 has been established at \$39.24 per member,

and based on 139 members, our per capita bill from Huntingdon Presbytery will be \$5,454.36, which we pay in four installments of \$1,363.59. For the period ending on June 30, 2023, a total of \$3,116.50 has been paid to our per capita fund. This represents a 57% response.

The 2023 vs. 2022 Monthly Financial Summary is summarized below:

	Through 06/30/23	Through 06/30/22
Congregational Giving	\$ 86,958	\$ 101,143
Building Rental Income	365	2,956
Special Offerings	7,057	4,983
=====		
Total Income	\$ 94,380	\$ 109,082
Total Expenses	\$ 124,003	\$ 114,091
=====		
Surplus (Shortfall)	\$ 29,623	\$ 5,009

**Note:** Last year's (2022) Congregational Giving includes additional donations made for repairs to the church building.

**Congregational Care (Gail Irwin):** Coupons for military families will be sent at the end of July.

Homebound communion is scheduled for the months of August and November.

**Congregational Fellowship (Glenn Nelson):** The committee has received 43 reservations for the church picnic. The church group attending the Altoona Curve baseball game will do so on Thursday, July 20.

**Mission (Judy Hartzell) :** We distributed 51 lunches at our Soup on Saturday event in July; leftovers were delivered to the Altoona Teen Shelter.

A suggestion was made that we place a flyer in the box in the Community Garden and the Food Pantry regarding a way to contact the Facebook page of the Blair County Narcan Squad. Judy will invite the person in charge of that organization to come and speak to us on either Sunday, August 13 or 20.

**Outreach (Jane Yerty):** We are very blessed to be sending five neighborhood children to Krislund. The response from those who have attended is overwhelmingly positive. We are working to keep these young people and their families engaged in church activities.

Our thanks to Jen Braun for helping us to resolve

issues with email contacts from the Yard Sale. We plan to spread the news of upcoming activities at Providence Church using those contacts.

The Community Library is up and running. We are asking for donations of books suitable for adults (we have an adequate supply for teens and children).

Community Garden Update—Everything is growing, including the weeds and grass. We are scheduling work days as needed. Nancy Woomer and Bruce Hazlett continue to take a much appreciated leadership role. Thank you to those who are faithfully filling the water tanks.

The team is planning a card making event for September or October. These cards will be geared toward giving to veterans. More details will be shared as the planning develops.

**Property (Geoff Geesey):** Geoff has spoken with a representative from Cumberland Glass. He will be at the church this week to inspect the stained glass vent windows in the sanctuary. *[At a special Session meeting on Sunday, July 30, Session approved the repair of all the bottom vent windows in the sanctuary by Cumberland Glass. Money for the repairs will be taken from our Stained Glass Window Fund.—Ed.]*

**Spiritual Enhancement (Jeanie Mollica):** The team is ready for this year's Vacation Bible School, which will be held from Sunday, August 6, through Thursday, August 10.

We are discussing Sunday school curriculum for the fall of this year.

**Worship (Ellie Herbster):** Acolytes, liturgists, and ushers are mostly set for July.

The pipe organ is repaired for now, but we're not sure how long the repairs will hold. The organ has been made from parts which are no longer available. A digital replacement organ would probably be the way to go, but the committee has not yet made a decision.

On Sunday, July 23, we will have a casual morning worship service. An announcement will be made to wear your picnic clothes to the service.

For Reader's Theatre, Rick Herbster will make some

copies of the script for reading at the next meeting.

Summer Calendar:

Thursday, July 20 - Altoona Curve Baseball

Sunday, July 23 - Casual worship and the Church Picnic at DelGrosso's Park

Sunday, August 6 - Morning Worship Service & Communion

Sunday, August 6, through Thursday, August 10 - Stellar Vacation Bible School

Sunday, August 27 - Morning Worship Service & Pastor Braun's last Sunday in the pulpit

Sunday, September 3 - Morning Worship Service & Communion

Sunday, September 10 - Morning Worship Service at 10:15 am & Rally Day

The Worship Team has filled the pulpit through the end of this year.

**Old Business:** Kimberly has the gift cards that were formerly distributed by the pastor as a part of his discretionary fund. We will inform Kimberly to call someone from Session for approval to give them out as needed.

Session remained after our regular meeting to work on the remainder of the 2023 Mission Study.



*(Note: The following highlights are taken from the minutes of the Monday, August 21, 2023, regular Session meeting.)*

**Clerk's Report:** Cora Nelson passed away on Sunday, August 20, 2023.

Fifty-five communicants received communion on Sunday, August 6.

Devany Laratonda and Wesley Thompson were received into membership at Providence on Sunday, August 13. They were also baptized on that day with Kai and Oakley Thompson.

**Treasurer's Report:** The treasurer's report was distributed and discussed.

**Nominating Committee:** The committee has assembled the five member Pastor Nominating Committee along with one alternate. They are

continuing to search for a church treasurer and a Session position for the Finance and Stewardship Committee. Our current treasurer, Jane Carothers, is retiring as of the end of this year.

**Moderator’s Report:** Pastor Braun is giving Kimberly ten gift cards for the benevolence fund and will surrender the checkbook to her also. A question was raised as to who will oversee these gift cards following Pastor Braun’s retirement. It was suggested that Kimberly keep track of them and provide a report for our Session meetings. We asked Kimberly to have the person requesting a card sign for it and also to check with Session before giving out anything other than a gift card. Bob Hollingsworth said that he would meet with Kimberly on a regular basis to make sure that everything is going smoothly.

Huntingdon Presbytery’s Committee on Ministry announced that our Moderator will be the Rev. Janie McElwee Smith. Rev. Mary Morrow is the probable liaison between the Committee on Ministry and our newly formed Pastor Nominating Committee.

**Session Team Reports (Chair)**

**Finance & Stewardship (Barry Gaut):** Per capita for 2023 has been established at \$39.24 per member, and based on 139 members, our per capita bill from Huntingdon Presbytery will be \$5,454.36, which we pay in four installments of \$1,363.59. For the period ending on July 30, 2023, a total of \$3,116.50. This amount is unchanged from what was reported as of June 30, 2023.

Jane Carothers and Barry Gaut recently met with Irwin Financial to discuss the church’s manse account. This account was set up many years ago with the sale of the former Broad Avenue church’s manse. Today, this account functions primarily as a small source of income for our church. As such, Irwin Financial suggested that a couple of funds be changed to realize more income. These funds are conservative in nature and within the current family of funds and would not involve any fees in their implementation. Session approved a motion to make these recommended changes.

The Finance and Stewardship Committee has recently received the materials from KLV Enterprises for the 2024 stewardship program. The theme for this program is “Working

Together—Celebrating God’s Good Gifts.” Stewardship Sunday will be observed on November 5, 2023. A stewardship letter and estimate of giving card will be mailed to the congregation in October.

The 2023 vs. 2022 Monthly Financial Summary is summarized below:

	Through 07/30/23	Through 07/30/22
Congregational Giving	\$ 104,727	\$ 115,606
Building Rental Income	365	3,031
Special Offerings	8,302	5,461
=====		
Total Income	\$ 113,394	\$ 124,098
Total Expenses	\$ 143,608	\$ 140,433
=====		
Surplus (Shortfall)	\$ 30,214	\$ 16,335

**Note:** Last year’s (2022) Congregational Giving includes additional donations made for repairs to the church building.

**Congregational Care (Gail Irwin):** Communion was delivered to the sick and shut-ins.

**Congregational Fellowship (Glenn Nelson):** Plans were made for a coffee fellowship on Sunday, August 27. There will not be a coffee fellowship in September.

**Mission (Judy Hartzell) :** We distributed 88 lunches at our Soup on Saturday event in August.

Pam Townsend, from Hope Drop-In, will be working on additional ways that our church could help the Families United for Change to expand the information about distribution of Narcan.

For July, our committee made the following donations: Partnership Presbyterian Fund - \$300; Pakh 5 Nan Special Projects - \$300; Pakh 5 Nan Partnership - \$300; Lexington Clubhouse - \$400; and Operation Our Town - \$150. August donations included: Altoona Food Bank - \$600; Friends of Kenya - \$700; and The Door - \$300.

For September, the Altoona Food Bank is asking for donations of cereal, especially children’s cereal, although any non-perishable food is appreciated.

For our outdoor Food Pantry, we are asking for donations of non-perishable food items and personal care items.

**Outreach (Jane Yerty):** We are going to have a card-making class on Wednesday, October 11.

**Property (Geoff Geesey):** Monitronics inspected our church's fire security system and reported that it is no longer operable. They proposed a new system for \$3,066.71, and would need a down payment of \$1,533.36 to start the work. Session approved the installation of this new system.

The pipe organ committee has spoken to an organ consultant, Mr. Zamberlan, and he is willing to travel to our church and inspect our organ. He will then send a detailed report on its condition, along with a recommendation to repair or replace. His fee for this work is \$750 plus expenses. He is scheduled to be here on Thursday, August 24.

Our outdoor electronic sign is not working. Kimberly will make arrangements for the repair.

**Spiritual Enhancement (Jeanie Mollica):** There will be a Bingo Party for the youth on Friday, September 8, from 6:00 pm until 9:00 pm.

Rally Day is on Sunday, September 10, and Sunday School resumes on September 17. All curriculum materials have been ordered.

**Worship (Ellie Herbster):** Acolytes, liturgists, and ushers are mostly set for August.

Rick Herbster clarified that if there is a question from any of the people on Pulpit Supply, those questions should be directed to the Worship Team.

The July 23 casual worship service was well received.

Late Summer/Fall Calendar:

Wednesday, August 23 - Choir practice will resume

Sunday, August 27 - Pastor Dennis' last Sunday - we will sing some of his favorite hymns

Sunday, September 3 - Final 9:30 am Worship Service; First Sunday of pulpit supply; no communion on this Sunday

Sunday, September 10 - Rally Day at 9:00 am and Morning Worship Service at 10:15 am

Sunday, September 17 - Sunday School classes begin at 9:00 am

Sunday, October 1 - World Communion Sunday

Sunday, October 29 - Reformation Sunday  
*(Schedule continues on next column)*

Sunday, November 5 - Communion (Daylight saving time ends)

Sunday, November 26 - Christ the King Sunday

The Organ Committee met with the Allen Organ Company and discussed several possibilities. The committee will take a field trip to check out some other churches and the music store that carries Allen products. All options are being considered at this point in the process.

**Old Business:** Session discussed the Mission Study, which is not yet completed. A small group within Session volunteered to meet soon to finish the report, which will be needed to start the process of finding a new pastor.

## Special Congregational Meeting

A special congregational meeting was held on Sunday, August 20, 2023, at 10:16 am. The purpose of this meeting was to announce the nominees for the Pastor Nominating Committee. The nominees are:

Jim Burchfield  
Paul Conway  
Barb Hazlett  
Bob Hollingsworth  
Heather Wisor  
Allen Gibboney (Alternate)

A motion was approved to elect the above to the 2023 Pastor Nominating Committee.

There being no other business, the special meeting was adjourned with prayer at 10:18 am.

## With Sympathy

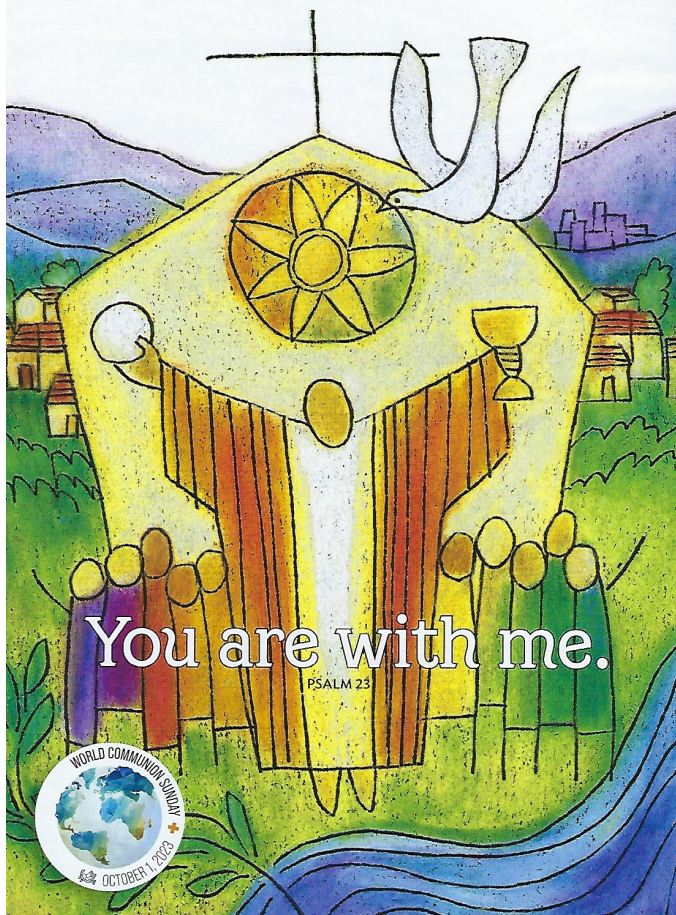
The congregation extends its heartfelt sympathy to the family and friends of **William R. Hinton**, who passed away on Wednesday, June 28, 2023, at his home. Bill was a former member at the Broad Avenue Presbyterian Church.

The congregation also extends its sympathies to the family and friends of **Cora E. Nelson**, who passed away on Sunday, August 20, 2023, at UPMC Altoona. Cora was the mother of Glenn and Galen Nelson.





PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS  
SPECIAL OFFERINGS  
PEACEMAKING AND RECONCILIATION



## Peace & Global Witness Special Offering

On World Communion Sunday, October 1, we celebrate that Christ's peace extends throughout all creation. We celebrate that we are all together at the communion table, in God's house. We celebrate that we are offered what we need to continue the work of building the household of God, with active peacemakers here at home and around the world. Extending the peace of Christ is a part of an active, engaged faith—a witness to what it means for us to be the Church, together.

Through participation in the Peace & Global Witness Offering, our church is extending Christ's peace throughout our community and our world. We begin at the communion table, with our siblings in every time and place, and we celebrate the peace we find there and commit to building a more just and peaceful world. God is with us...and God in Christ is with us through the Sacrament of

Communion, celebrated on World Communion Sunday. We are not alone. Peace begins with each of us.

Here are some **Quick Facts**:

- ◆ Since 1940, World Communion Sunday is an ecumenical celebration of our oneness in the Spirit and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, bringing churches together in Christian unity.
- ◆ This year marks the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Peacemaking: The Believers Calling* approved by the 192<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly (1980).
- ◆ World Communion Sunday is the most common Sunday for receiving the offering, but many congregations promote the Offering throughout *A Season of Peace* (September 3 - October 1).
- ◆ 25% of this Offering stays with our local congregation to support peacemaking and reconciliation in our community.
- ◆ 25% of the Offering goes to our mid council to join with other congregations to support peacemaking work in our region.
- ◆ 50% of this Offering supports the work for peace and reconciliation being done by Presbyterians across the globe.

Thank you for your participation in the Peace & Global Witness Offering!



On Sunday, August 27, we received as a new member by affirmation of faith, **Alecea Wisor**. We have also received into our membership **Brian** and **Kathy Rutter** by letter of transfer.

**Family Services:** For September, in lieu of the usual monthly list of items, Providence Presbyterian Church is accepting gift cards from any local grocery store or supermarket for **Family Services**. The gift cards should be brought to the church on Sunday, September 10. Thank you!



## Presbyterians in the Press

[**Note:** Unless otherwise specified, all articles and photographs have appeared in the *Altoona Mirror*.]

On the first weekend in June, the last ninth-grade class from Logan Junior High School was reunited after 42 years. Attendees of the reunion were featured in a group photograph and an article in the August 5-6, 2023, *Community* section. In the photo, **Peggy Horner**, teacher, is pictured.

A photograph in the August 14 edition shows **Lee Fagley** picking cherry tomatoes from one of his three garden plots at the Providence Presbyterian Church Community Garden.

## SEPTEMBER Birthdays & Anniversaries

Sharon Hayford	10
Gail Irwin	11
Richard (RJ) Jukes	11
David Brownell	14
John Mallow	14
Jonathan Yerty	14
Allen Gibboney	19
Galen Nelson	26
Linda McKee	27
Tom Musselman	29

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Geoff & Patti Geesey	5
Jonathan & Janelle Yerty	17
Bret & Sharon Hayford	19
Ken & Angela Lynch	21
John & Betsy Gallace	22

**September 10, the worship service time goes back to 10:15 am**

**Sunday School for all ages begins on September 17, at 9:00 am**

## Rally Day & Blessing of the Backpacks Sunday, September 10 9:00 am in Fellowship Hall

Join us as we kick off our Sunday School Year with a Back to School Breakfast! Come meet our Sunday School teachers, see photos of our past year, get a sneak peek of all the great events we have planned for this year. Hear from our Camp Krislund campers about the fantastic time they had this summer at camp! And don't forget your backpack for a special back to school blessing!

## Calling All Students

You are invited to Back to School Bingo on Friday, September 8, from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm, at the Providence Presbyterian church. Have tons of fun with friends! Eat some yummy food—there will be a taco bar and ice cream floats. Also, there will be a photo booth. Parents, this is a drop-off event. Enjoy the night out!

## Attention Session Members!

September is the month that all Session committee chairs need to complete your team budget and turn it in to our treasurer, Jane Carothers, by October 1, 2023. Review each line item for your committee and list the correct dollar amount for each line. Thank you for your cooperation!

