



Providence Post

MARCH 2025



Luke for Lent

The new year is moving quickly, and we will soon be entering the season of Lent. Lent is the 40-day season on the liturgical calendar leading up to the celebration of Easter. Lent is a time of penitence and somber self-reflection. It begins with Ash Wednesday, where we receive the imposition of ashes, reminding us of our mortality with the words from scripture, “You are dust, and to dust you shall return.” We are reminded of Adam and Eve’s fall in the Garden of Eden – their sin and disobedience that plunged all humanity into sin and death. Lent reminds us of our need for salvation and redemption.

Though Lent is a somber, self-reflective season, it is also a season of grace as we remember God’s gracious gift to us in sending us his only Son, Jesus the Christ, to redeem and restore us. Lent culminates in Holy Week, where we recall the final days of Jesus’ life on earth – his glorious entry into Jerusalem to cheering crowds shouting, “Hosanna!”, his final meal with his disciples, his agonizing prayer in the garden, his betrayal, sham trial, crucifixion, and burial in the tomb. Holy Week prepares us for the joy of Easter Sunday, when Jesus rose triumphant from the grave – because Jesus lives, we too have the promise of everlasting life!

Lent is a challenging season to observe. We’re naturally uncomfortable reflecting upon our sin and mortality. We shy away from self-reflection and self-denial. However, if we are willing to enter the season of Lent with courage and a sense of

God’s gracious presence with us, we will find it a fruitful season of reflection and renewal, where we draw closer to God and to one another. Some Christian traditions encourage participants to observe Lent by giving something up, like chocolate or social media, as a practice of self-denial to focus upon God’s provision in our lives. Some observe Lent by taking up a devotional practice, like reading a chapter of scripture each day or engaging in a time of prayer. You are encouraged to choose a spiritual practice that is meaningful to you as you observe this Lenten season.

If you would like some structure to your Lenten practice, join us for our “Luke for Lent” focus. I’m going to be preaching a sermon series and leading a small group study on Thursday mornings at 11:30 am, using a video study by Adam Hamilton entitled, “Luke: Jesus and the Outsiders, Outcasts, and Outlaws”. All are welcome to join us! I also encourage everyone to read the gospel of Luke during the season of Lent. If you begin on Ash Wednesday reading one chapter of Luke per day, you can read through Luke’s gospel twice by the Monday after Easter!

So, join us this Lenten season for our “Luke for Lent” study and sermon series! May we grow deeper in our faith and Christian practice together this Lenten season!

Blessings,

Pastor Hilary



Session Highlights

By Barb Hazlett

(Note: The following highlights are taken from the minutes of the Monday, February 24, 2025, regular Session meeting.)

Clerk’s Report: Sixty-five communicants received communion on Sunday, February 2.

A last minute request was made by a member who wants to use the Fellowship Hall on Saturday, February 22. The clerk contacted Session members on that morning and received a unanimous YES response to allow use of the Fellowship Hall.

Treasurer’s Report: The treasurer’s report was distributed and discussed by the Session.

Huntingdon Presbytery Report: The next meeting of Huntingdon Presbytery will be held on Saturday, March 22, 2025, at Huntingdon Presbyterian Church. There is no Session representative at the present time.

Nominating Committee: This year’s Session co-chairs for the committee will be Sue Whitsel and Heather Wisor.

Moderator’s Report: Pastor Hilary sent out a list of her activities for the month and discussed these with Session. She would like to have a meeting/ lunch after church for people wishing to become new members. The Session agreed that Sunday, March 30, would be a good day.

We discussed the Presbyterian Mission Project and decided to put that work on hold until next year. We would also like to talk to other churches that have participated in the program.

Last month, Pastor Livingston asked the Session to review the Safe Sanctuaries Policy and our policy on Sexual Misconduct and/or Abuse. We discussed these policies at our meeting. The most important

fact is that we need to make certain everyone who works with children in the church has the relevant clearances and keeps them up-to-date. It was decided that we need to see that these policies are written simply and clearly. A small group will look at this and bring it back to Session at a future date.

Session Team Reports (Chair)

Finance & Stewardship (Sue Whitsel): Per Capita for 2025 has been established at \$41.00 per member. For the period ending on January 30, 2025, a total of \$1,920 was received toward the church’s per capita obligation compared to the \$1,605.34 collected for the same period in 2024.

The *2024 Annual Report* was presented to the congregation at our congregational meeting on Sunday, February 16, 2025.

The 2024 vs. 2023 Monthly Financial Summary is summarized below:

	Through 01/30/25	Through 01/30/24
Congregational Giving	\$ 12,771	\$ 14,890
Building Rental Income(*)	900	1,940
Special Offerings(#)	650	470
=====		
Total Income	\$ 14,321	\$ 17,300
Total Expenses	\$ 25,544	\$ 17,538
=====		
Surplus (Shortfall)	\$ 11,223	\$ 238

(*) Includes contributions
 (#) Includes Centsability, Food Bank, etc.

A member of our church has made a donation, which was temporarily placed in our manse account. Since this account is restricted and only the interest can be used, we will move this money into a money market account, which will give the church more flexibility when using these funds.

Congregational Care (Gail Irwin): Judy Hartzell would like to get another mailing ready for the Yokosuka Naval Base in early March. Coupons should be separated into two categories: food and non-food. Remember that coupons used by military families are good for six months beyond their expiration date.

The Cards/Flowers/Transportation schedules were updated for the months of February and March.

The next cycle of communion/visitation is scheduled for the third week in February. A

member of the committee will accompany Pastor Hilary on those visits. This designated committee member is also asked to call the communicants in advance to verify the appointment. There are approximately ten people who have requested home communion.

Birthday cards, get-well cards and missing-you cards were prepared by team members for January and February. Names for the congregational card shower were designated.

Charyl Gardner will check with Penny Rupeka, the Presbyterian Home activities director, to see if she has selected dates for the residents' birthday celebrations. We will supply the birthday cakes, as we have done in the past.

The committee reviewed the four activities we organize during the month of December. It was agreed that other than the weather, which complicated deliveries, all went well.

Our church's newest directory was reviewed, with attention given to matching new names and faces. Pastor Livingston shared that Session has created a committee to look into the use of name tags to help identify members, friends and visitors.

The committee was contacted by our Clerk regarding a request from Huntingdon Presbytery to respond to a campaign to assist a fire victim who attends the Clearfield Presbyterian Church. It was agreed to forward a card and a gift to that church's moderator.

Congregational Fellowship (Amanda Yeager): Our next coffee fellowship will be held on Sunday, March 2, and will feature Nancy Donlan and Sue Whitsel's famous sticky buns.

Jane Falco reported that the men's singing group, the Hanging Curve, will be performing at the Altoona Curve game on Thursday, June 12, at 6:30 pm, with fireworks to follow. Jane will get 30 tickets to sell at that game.

Mission (Judy Hartzell): We received acknowledgment of our donations from Family Services Teen Shelter and from the Lexington Clubhouse.

We continue to research our community project and are also researching Blair County agencies and

explore monthly county services meetings.

Our application for "Hunger Fund Money" for 2025 from Huntingdon Presbytery still awaits a response. These funds will support our Outdoor Pantry.

Pastor Livingston, Judy Hartzell and Bev Moss-Oswalt will arrange a visit soon to the Lexington Clubhouse.

Soup on Saturday Summary for 2024: The average attendance for 2024 was 35.58 people. We had a total of 427, with a high of 50 and a low of 24. We started to offer seconds in October.

We sent 20 quarts of soup and four very nice desserts to the Families United for Change Soup & Dessert sale.

The Soup on Saturday event was held on February 15. Meatball sandwiches, soup choices, fruit, dessert and beverages were served. For the SOS event on March 15, a ham barbeque sandwich is planned for the menu.

We gave the following: Unified Mission - \$1,000; World Mission - \$500.

For the Altoona Food Bank in March, we are asking for donations of tuna, cream soups and noodles, as well as any appropriate sides. In addition, any donation of nonperishable food is appreciated.

For the Outdoor Pantry, we are asking for donations of any nonperishable food items and personal care items. No glass containers, please.

Outreach (Jane Yerty): Here is our calendar of future events for the year-to-date:

Yard Sale, Saturday, May 3, with set-up on April 28 through May 2. Proceeds to benefit Krislund scholarships. *[See article on pages 5 and 6.]*

Clothing Giveaway, Saturday, September 27.

North Pole Toy Giveaway, Saturday, December 13.

The team is planning to sponsor a shower of needed items for Family Services during the month of April. An informational flyer will be in the church bulletin and in the newsletter.

The committee has requested information on Krislund camping dates and costs so that we may share this with our youth and for planning purposes.

We discussed plans for the Community Garden. A workday will be planned and we will begin taking reservations for the 2025 growing season.

Our team evaluated the Visitor Bags and attendance tracking with input from Pastor Hilary and from Session. We believe this is a work in process needing fine tuning and regular evaluation of effectiveness. Pastor Hilary will highlight visitor bags from the pulpit. We also encourage all church families to support each other. Make a call, send a card or text when you notice someone has been missing from worship. Also, greet and introduce yourselves to new attenders and visitors. They are suggesting assistance from the Worship Team to educate ushers of the location of visitor bags and to give them out at the beginning of the service. We are also requesting that Congregational Care be notified of absent church members when attendance sheets are tabulated. Congregational Care has procedures in place to let our church family know that they are missed.

Property (Bruce Hazlett): There has been lots of snow and ice so far this winter—Bruce managed to purchase six bags of salt, so that we have a reserve supply to get us through the season.

There was a leak in the area of the door leading to the church basement. The team is still trying to determine where the water is coming from. A shop vac will be purchased to clean up the water.

There is an odor in the basement choir practice room and the source of that odor is also being investigated.

Spiritual Enhancement (Heather Wisor): Bob Hollingsworth and Heather are going to try to determine why a flat screen monitor in the basement isn't working.

Worship (Rick Herbster): Acolytes, liturgists and ushers are in place for February.

We discussed those members who do not have an email address for inclement weather cancellations. Rick will check on the few that we finally agreed will need notification.

The team also discussed some ideas for making the worship service and the church more appealing to younger people. Surveys and town hall meetings were suggested along with adding more contemporary music to the service. Rick discussed the town hall concept with Session.

Carole Parsons has pricing for Easter flowers. It will cost \$8.00 for a 6-inch pot of tulips or daffodils. This information will be given to Kimberly so that she can make the appropriate order forms.

Church Lenten/Spring Calendar:

March 2 - Communion

March 5 - Ash Wednesday, 6:00 pm,
Imposition of Ashes

March 9 - Daylight saving time begins

April 6 - Communion

April 13 - Palm Sunday

April 17 - Maundy Thursday

April 18 - Good Friday, a service is possible,
Pastor Livingston will check further

April 20 - Easter Sunday

April 27 - "Holy Humor" Sunday

May 1 - National Day of Prayer (Thursday)

May 4 - Communion

June 1 - Communion

June 8 - Pentecost

June 15 - Trinity Sunday

Carol McCracken asked to have Joe Zamberlan come to the church to tune (and repair where needed) the church organ. This service will cost between \$300 and \$400—money has been budgeted for this expense.

Old Business: Session discussed the name tag prices that were proposed by the committee that explored various options. A decision was made to

purchase magnetic tags, with a 48-inch by 36-inch board to store and display them. The cost will be about \$205, with money from the Outreach, Property and Worship committee budgets.

New Business: We discussed the possibility of doing another pictorial church directory. Barb Hazlett and Sue Whitsel will explore options.

March Donation Needs

Providence Presbyterian Church is collecting the following items for **Family Services** on the second Sunday of the month. Items may be left on the designated shelves located in the 24th Street hallway adjacent to the Fellowship Hall no later than Sunday, March 9, 2025. Thank You!

Category: Cleaning Products

All-purpose cleaners & degreasers
 Lysol® & Lysol® wipes
 Large garbage bags
 Rubber gloves & cleaning cloths
 Mr. Clean® Magic Eraser
 Mops, brooms & dust pans
 High-efficiency laundry detergent
 Toilet bowl cleaner
 Window cleaner
 Dish liquid soap

Watch for a new donation category in April!

Odds & Ends

✘ If you would like to remember loved ones or a special event, please sign the 2025 Flower Calendar located in the 24th Street hallway, adjacent to the Fellowship Hall. The cost is fifty dollars (\$50) for two vases.

✘ This month, the youth will be attending “Winter Jam” at the Bryce Jordan Center on Saturday, March 8. This will be a fun-filled concert with various Christian artists sharing their talents.

✘ Just a reminder that the Per Capita amount for 2024 is \$41.00 *per member*. Please try to meet your per capita obligation early using the special [blue envelope](#) in your box of offering envelopes.

MARCH

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Bobbie Gibboney	1
Elaine Kilgore	2
Dan Slep	2
Louise Albright	6
Jane Carothers	6
Denny Nevling	6
Janelle Yerty	13
Joan Conway	13
Vaida Stanek	18
Debra Wedge	18
Bruce Hazlett	22
Donna Yeisley	22
Jim Carothers	24

Harlan & Dee Schnarrs	19
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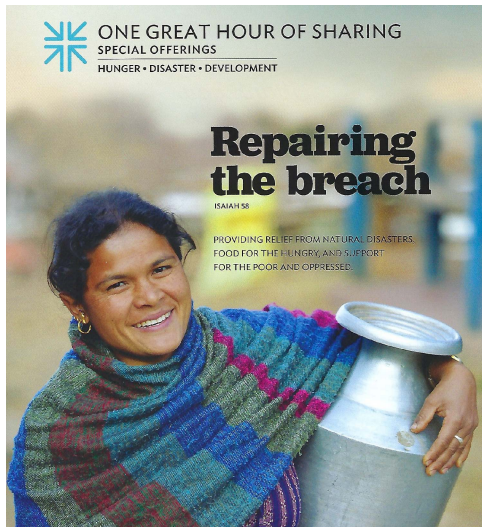


The Outreach team has scheduled their annual Yard Sale for Saturday, May 3, from 8:00 am until noon. As with previous years, profits from the yard sale benefit scholarships to Camp Krislund for neighborhood kids. Last

year, we were delighted to help five campers attend at a cost of \$2,760. This year, we estimate needing \$3,000 to \$5,000, depending on the response. Additionally, last year we created a Scholarship Fund for Krislund that allows for seed money for succeeding years. This fund has donations given by the church family throughout the year and any leftover funds from year to year. Our Mission team also assists regularly attending youth from our church with scholarship assistance. What a ministry Krislund is as they connect a relationship with God, friends and nature. The feedback from last year’s attendees was overwhelmingly positive.

Help is needed in several areas. Please save us yard sale items when you are cleaning out drawers, closets and attics. No clothing or stuffed animals, please. We will accept donations on Monday, April 28, through Friday, May 2, from 9:00 am until

noon. If these times don't work out for you, please contact a member of our team; we will be glad to make accommodations. Sorting and pricing help is always needed on donation turn-in days and willing hands on the day of the sale. We are so very thankful for the monetary donations to aid Krislund as well.



One Great Hour of Sharing

Around the world, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS)—Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People—all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope.

Received during the season of Lent (March 5 to April 20), each gift to OGHS helps to improve the lives of people in these challenging situations. The Offering provides us a way to share God's love with our neighbors in need. **In fact, OGHS is the single, largest way that Presbyterians come together every year to work for a better world.**

One Great Hour of Sharing helps Presbyterians join together to share God's love with our neighbors-in-need around the world. Each gift helps to improve the lives of people in challenging situations through these three impactful programs:

① **Rebuilding Hope — Presbyterian Disaster Assistance** (Receives 32% of funds raised) This is the emergency and refugee program of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It enables our congregations and mission partners to witness to the healing love of Christ through caring for communities adversely affected by crisis and catastrophic event.

② **Growing Food Security — Presbyterian Hunger Program** (Receives 36% of funds raised) This program takes action to alleviate hunger and the systemic causes of poverty so all may be fed.

③ **Partnering in Progress — Self-Development of People** (Receives 32% of funds raised) The Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People works with low-income communities to overcome oppression and injustice. Projects focus on advocacy; youth-led initiatives; skills development; farming; refugee issues and capacity building.

Thank you for opening your doors to share in ministries of justice, compassion, and joy through your support of One Great Hour of Sharing.

If we all do a little, it adds up to a lot!



Our youth will be hosting a "We are Lucky to Have You" pancake breakfast! We invite all to join us on Sunday, March 16, between 8:30 and 10:00 am, for a delicious, and free, breakfast. We will show our thanks for all your support of our youth. Donations to help fund upcoming events will be accepted.

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