



Providence Post

MARCH 2026



Lent 2026 – Discipleship Deep Dive (More Details & Resources)

Last month, I introduced our Lenten theme for this year – a deep dive on the topic of discipleship. Discipleship is basically the process of following Jesus and becoming more like him. What better theme for the Lenten season than learning to become better followers of Jesus!

I will be preaching a **sermon series** on the topic as well as leading a study based upon **the video series, “From the Inside Out”** at our **Thursday morning Bible study at 11:30 AM in the Fellowship Hall.**

In this class/sermon series, we'll explore the following questions:

- What is Discipleship?
- What is Spiritual Formation?
- What is My Picture of God?
- What is My Picture of Myself?
- What is My Picture of the Gospel?
- How Do People Change?
- How Do I Follow Jesus?

If you can't make our weekly Bible study sessions, you can **access the videos online for free at the following link:**

https://renovare.org/courses/io/home?email=heli_ving@gmail.com&mc_cid=8516ada571&mc_eid=ce8a7fde74

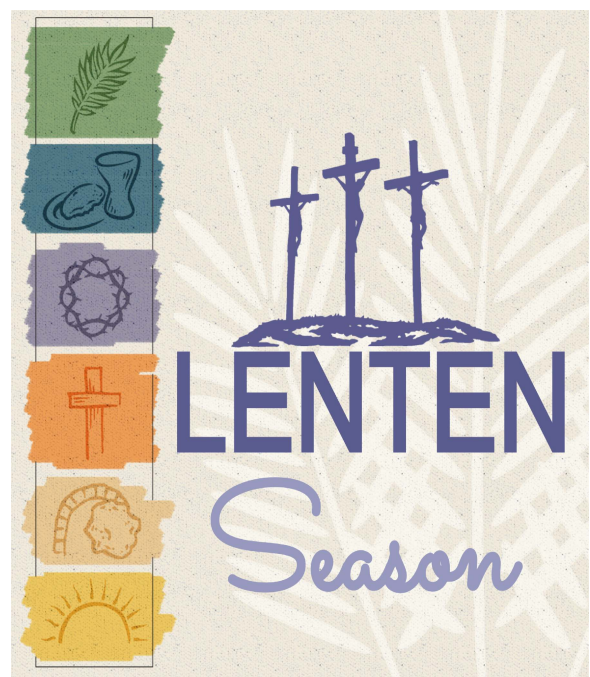
From this link, you can also access **participants**

handouts for each video lesson, as well as a **devotional journal** with five daily reflections & journaling prompts to engage more deeply with the theme.

If you would like printed copies of any of these materials, please ask me. **Suggested donation for printed materials is \$5.00.** However, if cost is an issue, we will happily provide these to you for free. If you have trouble accessing any of the materials, please contact me for assistance.

I'm really excited about this Lenten series, and I hope you will find it inspirational, challenging, and though-provoking. Let us dive deep into what it means to follow Jesus as his disciples this Lenten season!

Blessings,
Pastor Hilary





Session Highlights

By Barb Hazlett

(Note: The following highlights are taken from the minutes of the Monday, February 16, 2026, regular Session meeting.)

Clerk's Report: Sixty communicants received communion on Sunday, February 1.

Martha Ebersole-Ramsey passed away on Friday, February 6, 2026.

The clerk reported that she has completed the 2025 annual statistical report for Huntingdon Presbytery and distributed copies to the Session.

Treasurer's Report: The treasurer's report was distributed and reviewed by Session.

Huntingdon Presbytery Report: Presbytery met in February and voted on a number of General Assembly amendments. Ryan Croft is the new camp director for Krislund. Their next meeting will be held on Saturday, April 25, and can be attended in person or on Zoom.

Moderator's Report: Pastor Hilary listed all her activities for the previous month.

Session Team Reports (Chair)

Finance & Stewardship (Sue Whitsel): Our per capita total will be based on 137 members for 2026 and the rate will remain the same at \$41.00 per individual member of the church. That breaks down to \$27.76 for the Presbytery, \$2.40 for the Synod of the Trinity and \$10.84 for the General Assembly.

For the year 2026, 46 families/single members pledged a total of \$147,068.

The 2026 vs. 2025 Monthly Financial Summary is summarized in the next column:

	Through 01/30/26	Through 01/30/25
Congregational Giving	\$ 12,638	\$ 12,771
Building Rental Income	0	900
Special Offerings(*)	775	650
Total Income	\$ 13,413	\$ 14,321
Total Expenses	\$ 25,452	\$ 25,544
Surplus (Shortfall)	\$ 12,039	\$ 11,223

(*) Includes Centsability, Food Bank, etc.

Congregational Care (Kathy Rutter): The schedules were updated for Cards/Flowers/Transportation the months of February and March.

Charyl Gardner will organize the birthday cake project for 2026. Our first delivery of cakes will take place in April. Any member of the congregation who would like to bake a cake for Friday, April 24, should contact Charyl—three cakes will be needed.

The next round of communion/visitation for our homebound members is scheduled for February. A member of the committee will accompany Pastor Hilary on those visits.

Linda McKee has ordered palm crowns and will lead the Palm Cross Workshop on Friday, March 27, at 10:00 am, in the Fellowship Hall.

Session has approved Sunday, May 3, as the date to honor the ten congregants who have reached the distinguished milestone of a 50-year membership at our church. Gail Irwin will chair the event. Gail and Kathy will meet with the Congregational Fellowship team, which has agreed to help with various responsibilities for this event.

Kimberly has contacted *The Upper Room* publishers and changed our order to reflect current usage of the devotional. Adjustments should be realized in the May/June shipment.

Session is updating the 2019 Providence Leadership Handbook. A revision of the Congregational Care section was distributed to committee members for their input and review. The final version is due to Session in March.

Congregational Fellowship (Amanda Yeager): Our next coffee fellowship will be held on Sunday, March 1, and will feature Nancy Donlan and Sue

Whitsel's famous sticky buns.

Mission (Judy Hartzell): For the January Soup on Saturday event, we served 36 guests a New Year's meal of sauerkraut, mashed potatoes, hot dogs, buns, fruit, dessert and beverages. The Soup on Saturday event in February will consist of meatball sandwiches, soup choices, fruit, dessert and beverages. For the SOS event on March 14, a ham barbeque sandwich is planned for the main dish. Betsy Gallace will continue to place an invitation to Soup on Saturday in the St. Vincent Pantry food boxes on the Thursday prior to our event.

The team reviewed changes to the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. special offerings. Instead of four offerings, only three will be presented as opportunities to donate, but these three will cover the same areas of giving as were previously covered with four. The same giving envelope will be used by all three offerings. Session discussed how to announce them and it was decided that every other Sunday might be good. Also considered was announcing them right before the offering time, or doing an announcement on the first and last Sunday of the month. It was also suggested that we again use the fish coin boxes.

Total mission donations for 2025 were \$19,804, which is only \$5.00 less than the 2024 figure.

We gave to the following agencies in February: Altoona Warming Center; Mission Central HUB; Unified Mission.

For the Altoona Food Bank in March, we are asking for donations of cans of tuna, mushroom soups and bags of noodles. In addition, any donation of nonperishable food is appreciated.

For the Outdoor Pantry, we are asking for donations of any nonperishable food items and especially, personal care items like toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, lotions, socks, mittens, etc. For the winter months, Jane Falco has purchased new emergency warming blankets and is placing them one at a time in the outdoor pantry.

Outreach (Jane Yerty): Geoff Geesey will investigate the needs for the April Showers giving opportunity again this year, which addresses needs at Family Services.

The team has chosen not to do a yard sale this

year. They discussed several fundraising ideas for Krislund Camp scholarships. We floated ideas of a church application process for scholarship funds and commitment to attending. No decisions were made and we are obtaining more information.

We are continuing to refine and improve visitor bags and the name tag process. Part of this will be to encourage church families to enter the sanctuary via Fellowship Hall and pick up their name tag or visitor tag. This will also allow for a social time prior to the worship service.

Mike and Deb McClain shared a letter from a gardener with suggestions for the coming year. They are still waiting for feedback from a Penn State professor.

There are future plans under consideration: Social occasion with food to learn what expectations our neighbors have and what they would like from our church; Craft making activity at the church or in a community location; Education for our church family on being welcoming and hospitable; Gardening education relating to the Community Garden; or perhaps a Bible study.

Personnel (Dan Slep): Kimberly did a good job while the internet was out. The switch to reset everything is hard to reach and property was asked to look into moving it.

Property (Bruce Hazlett): Joe Sirianni, who is our insurance agent for Guide One, is going to compile a "Reader's Digest" edition of our insurance policy. The policy has not been examined in the past ten years and we feel it needs to be addressed. He will send us a copy soon so that we can discuss it.

Upcoming repairs needed:

- ❶ Repair the 24th exterior steps
- ❷ Repair the rain spouting above the ramp
- ❸ Replace the door between the Fellowship Hall and the sanctuary. We are open to suggestions and will ask some contractors for their ideas.

Spiritual Enhancement (Heather Wisor): Movie Night was held on Friday, February 13, 2026, from 6:00 to 9:00 pm. The youth also assembled Birthday Boxes during this time. Two age-appropriate movies were shown.

They are in the process of taking pictures for Tyler's book.

There will be an Easter Egg Hunt on Palm Sunday, March 29, 2026.

Worship (Rick Herbster): Wendy Manfred will be using the Fellowship Hall on Saturday, March 28, for a birthday party for her twin grandsons. She will take care of the cleanup,

Acolytes, liturgists and ushers are in place for February.

The winter worship cancellation process worked well when we had to cancel for the snow in January. We sent out an email saying church will be open but use your judgement before venturing out in the new snow and frigid temperatures.

Easter flowers for this year will need to be ordered by Sunday, March 15. Kim will place the order form in the bulletins starting on February 15. There will be tulips, mums and daffodils. They will cost \$9.00 for a 6½-inch pot, which is slightly larger than last year.

We discussed the ongoing issues with our A/V system. It was suggested that Rick recommend to Session that we: ① Bring in a professional to do an assessment of our system, and ② Discuss with them the possibility of hiring someone to be in charge of our systems. The Session suggested that the Worship team look for two or three people who would be willing to come and assess our systems. Heather Wisor will also check on someone to assess the internet and computer systems.

Pastor Hilary spoke with Rev. Choi regarding a combined Good Friday service, and he thought that it was a possibility. She will get back to him.

The team worked on Lenten/Easter planning.

Church Lenten/Spring Calendar:

March 1 - Communion

March 15 - Wopsonnock Winds will play

March 29 - Palm Sunday, choir and children processing with palms

April 2 - Maundy Thursday, communion, ending with the stripping of the

communion table (service begins at 7:00 pm)

April 3 - Good Friday, a combined service is possible, Pastor Livingston will check

April 5 - Easter Sunday, preceeded by the Adult Sunday school class hosting a continental breakfast. The choir will again process, and the communion table will be reset

April 12 - Café Church/Holy Humor Sunday

May 3 - Communion

May 7 - National Day of Prayer (Thursday)

May 24 - Pentecost, Memorial Day (May 25) weekend

May 31 - Trinity Sunday

June 7 - Communion

July 5 - Communion

We reviewed the activities coming up for the next few weeks, all of which are listed above.

There will be a list of giving and serving opportunities in a bulletin insert on the first Sunday of the month.

Old Business: None.

New Business: At the annual congregational meeting it was suggested that the printed annual report be distributed the week before the meeting to give people time to read the information beforehand. Session discussed how we could solve this problem. It was suggested that the team reports be passed out the week before the annual meeting, and that the financial information be distributed at the meeting.

With Sympathy

The congregation extends its heartfelt sympathy to the family and friends of **Martha L. Ebersole-Ramsey**, who passed away on Friday, February 6. Martha is survived by her husband Russell.

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 8, 2026. Thank You!

Category: Cleaning Products

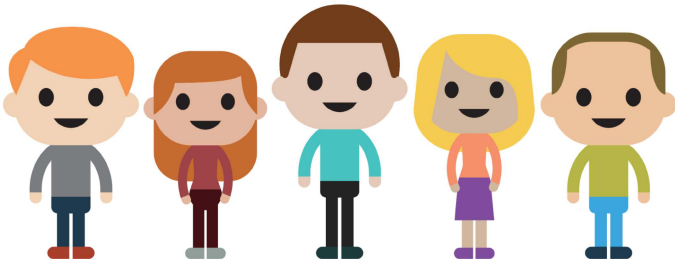
All-purpose cleaners & degreasers
 Lysol® & Lysol® wipes
 Large garbage bags
 Rubber gloves & cleaning cloths
 Mr. Clean® Magic Eraser
 Mops, brooms & dust pans
 High-efficiency laundry detergent
 Toilet bowl cleaner
 Window cleaner
 Dish liquid soap

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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ALL IN THE FAMILY



What a beautiful baby! BJ Crownover and her helpers are looking for baby pictures of the Providence family to display in Fellowship Hall. Pull out your favorite baby/toddler picture and put in in an envelope for protection. Write your name on the envelope (not the picture) and give it to BJ at any church activity. Yes, some pictures will be in black and white, some in color. Some pictures will be large and some small—it doesn't matter. The pictures will be copied and numbered, then placed in the Providence Portrait Gallery (also known as a bulletin board), to be displayed April 12 through May 3. The original photo goes back to its owner in the envelope. There will be an activity sheet available for you to fill in as you stroll the gallery, identifying as many of the babies as you can. The person who correctly identifies the most will win a \$50 Sheetz Gift Card, to be announced on Mother's Day... of course!

Palm Cross Workshop

Palm Sunday marks Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. Palm branches were scattered in his path. The palm fronds that were waved as He passed by the crowd are today considered symbols of victory, triumph, and peace. Join us as Linda McKee demonstrates how to make crosses out of palm leaves. The Palm Cross Workshop will be held on Friday, March 27, at 10:00 am, in Fellowship Hall. Each participant is asked to bring a pair of sharp scissors.

A History of the One Great Hour of Sharing

Immediately following World War II, U.S. Protestant churches made appeals for relief and reconstruction in areas devastated by the war, primarily Europe and Asia. In 1949, the leaders of several denominations formed a committee to organize an appeal for support of the separate campaigns of their churches. Their joint statement in support of this effort remains remarkably contemporary:

A program called One Great Hour was broadcast

(Continued on the next page)

on the evening of Saturday, March 26, 1949, over major networks and many independent stations. The script was written under the direction of playwright Robert Sherwood. The cast included some of the foremost dramatic and musical talents of the time, such as Gregory Peck and Ida Lupino; President Harry Truman brought greetings. The broadcast closed with a request that listeners attend their local church the following morning and make a sacrificial contribution. No exact measure of receipts was possible, but it was estimated that more than 75,000 churches participated.

The next year, the offering was repeated, using the name "One Great Hour of Sharing" for the first time. At times, One Great Hour of Sharing was coordinated with the Roman Catholic Bishops' Fund Appeal for Overseas Aid and the Jewish Passover Appeal. Free time and space were donated to this joint appeal through the Advertising Council.

From the beginning, this has been an ecumenical effort. While each denomination allocates its gifts differently, all use their funds for ministries of disaster relief, refugee assistance, and development aid. Today, projects supported by the One Great Hour of Sharing are under way in more than one hundred countries, including the United States and Canada.

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!

CMA - Christian Motorcyclists Association:



My name is Amanda Yeager, and I am not only a member of Providence Presbyterian Church in Altoona, PA, but also a member of an amazing association called CMA. Christian Motorcyclists

Association ministers all around the world, has 1,432 active Chapters chartered in the United States and currently has a presence in 34 Countries.

Christian Motorcyclists Association was founded in 1975 with a vision of taking the Gospel to people everywhere, and God has been faithfully fulfilling that vision. By partnering with ministries with world-reaching potential, we have been able to place the message of hope and salvation in front of millions of people.

We do a 100-Mile Motorcycle Ride on the first Saturday in May every year called "Run for the Son." With a vision for *changing the world, one heart at a time*, we are reaching out to the communities around the world with the love and the life-changing power of Jesus Christ. Run for the Son fuels our evangelistic outreach around the world.

If you find in you heart that we are an Association you would like to support, I ask you to sponsor me on this 100-mile ride with a one-time donation for this year's 2026 Run for the Son. Help our ministry reach even more people around the world.

To donate/sponsor me, please see me at church or reach out directly to me (text or call) at 814-414-2859, to get a sponsorship form. This form is due back to me by Friday, March 20th.

All donations are tax deductible.

With All My Heart,
Thank You and God Bless,

Amanda Yeager

***Daylight saving time begins on Sunday, March 8!
Don't forget to set all your clocks and watches
forward one hour.***

Providence Post is a newsletter of the Providence Presbyterian Church, 2401 Broad Avenue, Altoona, Pennsylvania, 814/944-7258. The *Post* is published monthly except for the July/August summer edition. Pastor: Rev. Dr. Hilary Livingston;

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