



Providence Post



OCTOBER 2026



Time and Talents

Empowered by God— Responding by Grace

We are entering into our annual stewardship emphasis entitled, “Empowered by God—Responding by Grace.” During this time, we will consider how God has empowered us and how our response, by grace through faith, can be used by God, especially in the ministry here at Providence Presbyterian Church.

Just what does it mean to be empowered by God? The Lord Jesus said that His disciples would receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon them (Acts 1:8). That not only happened as he said it would, but we, too, receive God’s power by His grace through our faith in Christ as the Holy Spirit takes up residence in us.

As we experience God’s power through faith in Christ, our hearts respond. Our response begins with the realization that God owns everything. God is our source. God is the Creator and Sustainer of life. God is the provider of all that we have, whether it be life itself, the air we breathe, water which sustains us or financial resources

through which we obtain the necessities of life. On a daily basis, God demonstrates again and again His abundant power.

And what should be our response to God’s provision for us? According to 2 Corinthians 8:7, we respond by “faith,” implicitly trusting God to provide all that we need. We respond by “speech,” sharing the good news of the Gospel with others. We respond by “knowledge,” through the study of God’s word. And we respond by excelling in the “grace of giving.”

As an example of what it means to give by grace, the Apostle Paul points to the Christians at Macedonia. These people were poor—dirt poor, poor as the proverbial church mice, who were commended by Paul for giving beyond their ability to give. How could they do that? The answer is found in 2 Corinthians 8:5— “they gave themselves first to the Lord.” Giving does not begin with the movement of the hand to the wallet, purse or pocketbook. Giving begins in the heart.

In fact, this principle goes back to God’s instruction to Moses in Exodus 25:2. “You are to receive the offering for me from each man whose heart prompts him to give.” This principle is still in operation today. As we give our time, talents and treasure to the Lord, we do so by God’s grace because we have already given our hearts to him.

“Empowered by God—Responding by Grace.” That was true of the Macedonian Christians. May it also be true of us here at Providence Presbyterian Church.



by Barb Hazlett

(Note: The following highlights are taken from the minutes of the Monday, September 21, 2026, regular Session meeting.)

Clerk's Report: Sixty-three communicants were served communion on Sunday, September 6.

Amanda Stanek has been contacted regarding her membership status; she requested that she be moved from an active member to our "Friends and Family" list. We also received a letter from Paul A. Conway asking that he be removed from membership at Providence Church.

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

Huntingdon Presbytery Report: The next meeting of presbytery will be on Saturday, October 24, 2026, 10:00 am, at Petersburg Bethel Church. It will be an in-person meeting only.

Nominating Committee Report: The committee met and came up with a slate of names to be contacted for open positions.

Moderator's Report: Pastor Hilary listed all her activities for the past month and reminded Session that she will be away for vacation on October 10 and October 11, and on study leave from October 12 through October 15, for the "Wee Kirk" conference.

Pastor Livingston's "Ordinary" will be held on Sunday, October 4, 2026.

Session Team Reports (Chair)

Finance & Stewardship (Sue Whitsel): The 2026 vs. 2025 Monthly Financial Summary is summarized in the next column:

	Through 08/30/26	Through 08/30/25
Congregational Giving	\$125,663	\$117,954
Building Rental Income	442	51,042
Special Offerings	6,695	6,984
Total Income	\$132,800	\$175,980
Total Expenses	\$216,687	\$214,520
Surplus (Shortfall)	\$ 83,887	\$ 38,540

Per capita for 2026 has been established at \$41.00 per individual member of the church. For the period ending on August 30, 2026, there was \$3,849.00 given to our per capita fund.

The Finance and Stewardship Committee met on Thursday, September 10, 2026. We are currently working on and reviewing materials for the 2027 stewardship campaign. The stewardship letter, brochure and estimate of giving cards will be given to Kimberly in preparation for a mailing by mid-October. Stewardship Sunday will be observed at our church on November 8, 2026.

"Session Worksheets" for the new budget were distributed at this month's Session meeting. The deadline for turning in the completed worksheet will be on Sunday, October 11, 2025.

\$35,000 was transferred from our Presbyterian Foundation accounts to the church checking account. Prior approval was given to the Finance and Stewardship committee to make transfers up to this amount as needed.

Congregational Care (Kathy Rutter): The schedules for cards/flowers/transportation were updated for the months of September and October.

Our next scheduled delivery date of birthday cakes to the Presbyterian Village will be on Friday, October 30. The congregation will be asked to participate. Three cakes are needed—contact Charyl Gardner for details.

Communion and visits for our homebound members in November will be scheduled at next month's meeting.

Buddy Bags containing treats and personal care items for our homebound population will be assembled at the October meeting.

A request was made for short-term assistance with

meals. Our committee was able to meet this request.

Expenses for 2026 were reviewed and a new budget was prepared for 2027.

Congregational Fellowship (Amanda Yeager): The team is working on Pastor Hilary's Ordinary reception.

Mission (Judy Hartzell): Jane Falco has applied to the Synod of the Trinity for extra money that they are making available for projects like our outdoor food pantry. We all ask for prayer that her application gets good results! Jane is also thinking she will stagger the times that she fills the pantry so that people who stop later in the day will have more food available to them.

World Communion Sunday will be observed on October 4, 2026. Announcements and envelopes for the offering will be presented on Sunday, September 20, and September 27. Offerings will be received up to and including October 4.

At the Soup on Saturday event on August 15, we served 50 guests a meal of meatball sandwiches, soups, bananas, desserts and beverages. Seconds were served at 12:30 pm. Thanks to all who helped in any way!

The next SOS event was held on September 19, 2026. Fifty guests were served sloppy joe sandwiches, a choice of soups, bananas, desserts and beverages.

For the October Soup on Saturday, we are planning on hot dogs and sauerkraut, choice of soups, apples, desserts and beverages.

The September giving report includes the Altoona Mountain Lion Backpack Program, The Door and the Lexington Clubhouse.

Community donations for August include the Altoona Food Bank, where we gave pasta and sauce.

In October, for the outdoor food pantry, we are asking for donations of nonperishable food items, and especially, personal care items like toothbrushes, soap, lotions, socks, etc.

Outreach (Jane Yerty): A very successful Clothing

Giveaway was held on Saturday, September 12. We are very thankful for the generous help from our church family. Our congregation was willing to sort their donations by size and this was a tremendous help mentally and physically—THANK YOU! Over 100 people attended and we gave away three-quarters of the clothing and coats that were donated. The event started with 77 pairs of new shoes. By 9:00 am, all of them found homes with people who could wear them. We are so appreciative of the community support from Shoe Fly, who donated new shoes and Super Shoes, who provided discount coupons for the congregation to purchase shoes. It was a true team effort that helped our neighbors prepare for the upcoming cold weather.

The Community Garden and Library will close at the end of October. Pennsylvania native shrubs should be arriving at the end of September for planting on our church property.

Postcards highlighting our church are available for use by ministry teams and our church family to invite others. These cards are available on each of the two heaters located in the back of the sanctuary.

Property (Bruce Hazlett): The wall that replaces the moveable partition between the Fellowship Hall and the sanctuary is now complete and the bill has been paid.

Work to our internet system that was done by Link Computer is now finished.

The wiring and a new microphone for the choir are being tested and progress is being made.

The 27-year old hot water tank in the basement kitchen has been replaced.

One of the ceiling fans in the sanctuary is not working. Jim Burchfield and Jon Yerty will check to see if the fan can be lowered for repair.

Several people have been asking about replacing the carpeting in the sanctuary. We obtained a bid from Blair Mill Outlet for this work. Material would cost \$16,531, labor would be \$8,718, for a total expense of \$25,249. Bruce will add this to the Property committee budget for 2027 and suggests that we ask for additional donations from the congregation for this project.

Spiritual Enhancement (Heather Wisor): Richard Cox from Overflow church reached out to Megan Burchfield and asked if we would like to participate in "Trunk or Treat" again this year. Our church will participate and the event will be held on Sunday, October 25. Richard asked for a \$50 donation to help with the advertising.

The youth are planning a trip to JB Tree Farm in October on a date to be determined.

Angela Treese will hold another "Souper Cook-Off" in honor of Lundy on Saturday, October 24, from 11:00 am until 2:00 pm, in Fellowship Hall.

Worship (Rick Herbster): The acolytes, liturgist and ushers are in place for September.

We are still doing sound checks and now we need to consider speakers for the Fellowship Hall.

Piano tuners are coming on Thursday, October 1, to tune the basement and sanctuary pianos.

Passing of the Peace will continue in the service where it is and we will find some songs to sing to bring the people back together again. Communion will remain the same, as will the Lord's Prayer, and the Apostles' Creed, except that we need to slow down the cadence as we recite them.

Rally Day was held on September 6, and started at 9:00 am. The morning worship service was held at 10:15 am with a Rally Day update presented during the children's sermon, along with a blessing of the backpacks. Sunday school will return on Sunday, September 13, at 9:00 am, worship to follow at 10:15 am.

Sunday, October 4, is Pastor Hilary's ORDIVERSARY! Rev. Ann Ard will be preaching on that day.

Budget worksheets will be handed out at the September 21 Session meeting and are due back on Sunday, October 11. Rick asked the team to examine them before our next meeting.

Calendar Highlights (All dates shown are Sundays unless noted otherwise):

October 4 - World Communion Sunday/
Ordiversary/Coffee Fellowship
October 11 - Pastor Hilary away/Carol
Wyerman will fill the pulpit

October 25 - Reformation Sunday
November 1 - All Saints' Day/Communion
November 22 - Christ the King Sunday
November 28 - "Dress the Church Saturday"
9:00 am to 11:00 am
November 29 - First Sunday of Advent
December 6 - Communion
December 24 - Christmas Eve (Thursday)
January 3, 2027 - Epiphany Sunday/
Communion
January 10 - Baptism of the Lord Sunday

Calendar Review:

Pastor Hilary's Ordiversary/World
Communion Sunday - October 4
Pastor Hilary will be away from Saturday,
October 10, through Thursday,
October 15
Soup on Saturday - October 17
Souper Cookoff - Saturday, October 24
Trunk or Treat - Sunday, October 25

Giving and Serving Opportunities: The list will be on an insert in the Sunday, October 4, worship bulletin.

Old Business: The basement cleanup for the first two rooms went well.

We sent letters to a few folks regarding our review of the church rolls and are waiting to hear responses.



Per Capita: Just a reminder that the Per Capita amount for 2026 is \$41.00 *per member*. If you haven't already done so, please try to meet your per capita obligation by using the special [blue envelope](#) in your box of offering envelopes.

(More announcements are listed on the last page of this issue of the *Providence Post*.)

OCTOBER

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Megan Burchfield	2
Sammy Yerty	2
Barbara Weigley	10
Paul A. Conway	15
Angie Treese	15
Deb McClain	18
Harlan Schnarrs	19
Joyce Sechrist	21
Dale VanHorne	22
Judy Hartzell	24
Jim Burchfield	26
Allyson Hayford	27
Ashley Hayford	27

Jim & Carlene Carothers	15
Lee & Jane Hite	18
Justin & Angie Treese	27

Family Services October Donation Needs

Providence Presbyterian Church is collecting the following items for Family Services on the second Sunday in October. Items may be left on the designated shelves located in the 24th Street hallway adjacent to the Fellowship Hall by Sunday, October 11, 2026. Thank you for your support!

Cleaning Supplies & First Aid

Band-Aids®/Neosporin®
Diapers & pull-ups—all sizes
Facial tissues
Toilet bowl cleaner
Comet®/Bleach spray
Laundry detergent
Dish liquid soap
Dishwasher pods



A Heartfelt Thank You from the Outreach Team

A very successful Clothing Giveaway was held on September 12. We are very thankful for the generous help from our Church Family. Our congregation was willing to sort their donations by size, and this was a tremendous help both mentally and physically—THANK YOU! Over 100 people attended and, I believe, we gave away three-quarters of the clothing and coats that were donated. The event started with 77 pairs of new shoes. By 9:00 am, all of them found homes with people who could wear them. We are so appreciative of the community support from Shoe Fly, who donated new shoes and Super Shoes, who provided discount coupons for the congregation to purchase shoes. It was a true team effort that helped our neighbors prepare for the upcoming cold weather.

We were happy to make connections with those attending who shared some of their stories of why they needed items and how they will be used. Opportunities were also available to highlight Providence Presbyterian and issue invitations to join us. It was a blessing to have multiple members of our church family join us for set up, during the giveaway, and afterwards for cleanup. Thank you to all for the generous team effort.



World Communion Sunday will be celebrated on Sunday, October 4, 2026, at the 10:15 am worship service. This is also the day to turn in your gift for this special offering. Envelopes are available in the worship bulletins or on the sanctuary heaters.

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Church Website: www.providencepc-altoona.org

Trunk or Treat: Trunk or Treat will be held on Sunday, October 25, from 2:00 to 4:00 pm, in the Providence Church main parking lot. We are teaming up with other local churches again for this community-wide event. If you would like to donate candy, please place it in the box in the Fellowship Hall. If you prefer to give a monetary donation please see Megan Burchfield.

JB Tree Farm: JB tree Farm is tentatively set for Sunday, October 18, from 1:00 to 3:00 pm. We will have a bonfire with hot dogs and smores. Games, a hayride and the corn maze will also be available. Each guest is asked to pay \$5 to help cover the fee. The Youth are inviting all to join us this year. Please sign up in the Fellowship Hall by Sunday, October 11. Money can given to the office or to Megan Burchfield.

Soup Cook-Off: Join us on Saturday, October 24, for a soup cook-off. This event was designed in loving memory of Lundy Treese. Chefs will sign up to enter a crockpot of soup to be entered into the cook-off. Crockpots will need to be dropped off at church by 11:00 am, and picked up at 4:00 pm. Tasters will be welcome to come anytime between 12:00 pm and 4:00 pm, to share a meal and vote for their favorite soup! The winner will be announced at the end of the event and awarded a prize! There is no cost to enter or vote, but donations for the Lundy's Gift Fund will be collected. Please sign up in the Fellowship Hall.

Text Scam Alert

Several folks have received suspicious text messages impersonating Pastor Hilary and asking for cash/gift cards. These texts are a scam—do not reply to them or engage with them. Report them to your cell phone carrier as spam and delete them. Pastor Hilary will never request cash and/or gift cards via text message. If you are unsure if a text message is legitimately from Pastor Hilary, please double check the number against the one listed in the official church directory. You may always call Pastor Hilary directly to confirm if a text is from her or not.



We have all learned to live with “voice mail” as a necessary part of modern life. But have you wondered, “What if God decided to install voice mail?” Imagine praying and hearing this:

“Thank you for calling Our Father’s House. Please select one of the following options: Press 1 for Requests; Press 2 for Thanksgiving; Press 3 for Complaints; Press 4 for All Other Inquiries.”

What if God used the familiar excuse... “I’m sorry, all of our Angels are busy helping other sinners right now. However, your prayer is important to us and will be answered in the order it was received, so please stay on the line.”

Can you imagine getting these kinds of responses as you call God in prayer: “If you would like to speak to Gabriel, Press 1; For Michael, Press 2; For a directory of other Angels, Press 3; If you would like to hear King David sing a Psalm while you are holding, Press 4; To find out if a loved one has been assigned to Heaven, Press 5, then enter his or her Social Security number, then press the # key. If you get a negative response, try area code 666.”

“For reservations at Our Father’s House, please enter J-O-H-N followed by 3-1-6. For answers to nagging questions about dinosaurs, the age of the earth, and where Noah’s Ark is, please wait until you arrive here.”

“Our computers show that you have already prayed once today. Please hang up and try again tomorrow. If you need emergency assistance when calling outside of normal office hours, contact your local pastor.”

Thank God, He doesn’t have voice mail and He listens when we pray!