

The Heavenly Herald

“We will share the love of our Lord, building on our past, reaching in faith toward our future.”

A letter from the Pastor...

MARCH, 2024

*Yet even now, says the LORD,
return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
rend your hearts and not your clothing.*
Joel 2:12-23

Dear Friends,

The Lenten Journey officially began on Ash Wednesday February 14. Historically Ash Wednesday and the imposition of ashes has been used a sign of us sinners acknowledging our sinfulness. Together we read the words of David in Psalm 51, and we declare before God and one another that we are sinners and that our sin is ever before us.

This season of Lent is a time for more than just repentance, it is a time for reconciliation. A time for us to move forward with the new life that we have with God through Jesus Christ. So, the question is not how did we get here but rather where do we go from here? I believe that God is calling us as individuals and as a church family to continue day by day, hour by hour, prayer by prayer, closer to the Cross of Jesus. And as we get closer to the Cross the easier it is to see our Heavenly Father running toward us, seeking to give us the warm embrace as of a father to his only son, mercifully, graciously telling us that all is forgiven, all is forgotten.

As tempting as it might be, the Lenten Journey is not about looking backwards. Even though some of my colleagues in ministry like to laugh at this – I like to remember that there is a reason that the windshield is bigger than the rearview mirror. We need to stop tripping over the potholes of our past or stubbing our toes on the pebbles behind us. The Christian journey is all about the destination. Faith is about what happens next. Through the love of God, we are able to move to the forgiveness found at the foot of the Cross of Jesus. Holy Week is about turning back to God and knowing that God is running toward us with arms wide open. Easter is about being reconciled to God through Jesus Christ.

For the rest of the month of March, each day we cross off the calendar is one day closer to the Cross of Jesus, one day closer to Christ crucified for our sin, one day closer to reconciliation. I encourage you, I beg of you, to use this season of Lent as a time to draw closer to God so that we as a church family can continue to grow in faith, hope, and love.

God Bless,

Pastor Ben

**First United
Presbyterian Church
102 North Main Street
Houston, PA 15342
724-746-3040
houstonpresbyterian.org**

**Pastor
Ben Libert**
1379pbl@gmail.com
724-469-1244 (Cell)

Secretary
Angela M. Itzel
secretary@houstonpresbyterian.org

Clerk of Session
Sandy Wallace

Music Director
Karen Jones
jonesykj@verizon.net

Custodian
Robin Spiker

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March 1st	Kelsey Baxter	March 2nd	Doug Vintorini
March 5th	Mike Susko	March 5th	Ben Sapienza
March 8th	Carol Borda	March 9th	Jodi Shober
March 11th	Kim Arnold	March 12th	Dan Taylor
March 12th	Jeff Askew	March 12th	Rachel White
March 14th	Jim Culp	March 14th	Hallee Yoder
March 15th	Joyce Orlando	March 15th	Lewis Comer
March 16th	Jerry Skowvron	March 16th	Kaitlyn Vintorini
March 18th	Kennedy Washabaugh	March 19th	Carrie Cochran
March 21st	Lala Patsch	March 22nd	Shannon Scott
March 23rd	Melissa Shober	March 24th	Sherle Cholak
March 25th	Donna Mondik	March 29th	John Orlando
March 29th	Linda Paxton	March 29th	Shawn McFarland
March 29th	Baker Libert	March 30th	Bertha Smith
March 30th	Jill Harshman	March 30th	Jackie Zeni
March 31st	Brad Scott	March 31st	Bethany Decker



John & Paige Zanaglio - March 16th

Dean & Jodi Shober - March 20th

Dave & Tricia Fee - March 22nd

PRAYER LIST

ONGOING PRAYER REQUESTS:

John Orlando, Mindy Kelley, Brandon Craig, Darren Spiker, Cat Morgan, Rev. Don Austin, Tim Lynch, Melanie Donahoo, William Young, Patti Nagy, JoAnn Pitcock, Amanda, Matthew Scears, Brad Pitcock, Brian Baumgardner, Bill Brown, Sophia Desmond, and Bill Ensley.



FEBRUARY PRAYER REQUEST:

Grier Adamson, Darryl Beton, Rich (Pepsi) Witmer, Barb Burnett, Robert Ward, Joanne Fowler, Judy Lesso, Tom Setto, Loraine Julius, Joyce Orlando, Charity, Cathy Lynch, Patty Goldbach, Nancy Magera, Mary Lou Patsch, Bell Family, Evelyn, Bob Washabaugh, Marion Marcase, MaryAnn Clark, and Curtis Marcase.



PLEASE ALSO PRAY FOR:

Pastor Ben and our Houston Church Leaders,
Our Nation and our Nation's Leaders, and
all unspoken requests of our church family.

April Newsletter Articles
due by Friday, March 22, 2024

SERVING THE CHURCH IN MARCH, 2024

Communion will be celebrated on Sunday, March 3, 2024.

GREETERS

Deacon Greeters:

March - 3rd

(MV) Emmy Homitz
(GV) Haley Steere
(GH) Janice Bloesel

March - 10th

(MV) Dodie Hanna
(GV) Virginia Bayne
(GH) Sandy Wallace

March - 17th

(MV) Janice Bloesel
(GV) Virginia Rockwell
(GH) Vicky Lesjak

March - 24th

(MV) Virginia Rockwell
(GV) Haley Steere
(GH) Sandy Wallace

March - 31st

(MV) Volunteer
(GV) Virginia Bayne
(GH) Vicky Lesjak

Elder Greeters:

March - 3rd

(MV) Volunteer
(GV) Pastor Ben
(GH) Karen Jones

March - 10th

(MV) Bob Arnold
(GV) Linda Young
(GH) Pastor Ben

March - 17th

(MV) Pastor Ben
(GV) Ben Wallace
(GH) Bo Lesjak

March - 24th

(MV) Bob Blough
(GV) Pastor Ben
(GH) Jonnie Swarow

March - 31st

(MV) Gloria Schmalz
(GV) Bo Lesjak
(GH) Pastor Ben

Music: Karen Jones **Audiovisual:** Leon Young

Liturgist: Kayleigh Valley

Trustees: Bo Lesjak,
and Gloria Schmalz

March Acolytes:

March - 3rd - Mako Morgan
March - 10th - Eden Jeffers
March - 17th - Baker Libert
March - 24th - Julia Swarow
March - 31st - Henry Libert

NURSERY SCHEDULE:

March 3rd - Ashley Layton March 10th - Gloria Schmalz
March 17th - Kaleigh Valley March 24th - Jami Craig
March 31st - Easter - Sandy Wallace



9TH ANNUAL CHILI COOK-OFF RESULTS



Sunday, February 4, 2024 1:30pm



2024 Joke Teller: Pastor Ben Libert



**2024 Winners: Jan Taylor, Mary Lou Briggs,
and Lala Patsch**



**2024 People's Choice:
Bo Lesjak, Virginia Bayne,
and Mark Simpson**



**2024 Judges: Ken Paxton, Mike Fendja, and
Arian Yaworski**

9TH ANNUAL CHILI COOK-OFF RESULTS - CONTINUED



The Chili Cook-Off was another great success.
with over 85 in attendance. It was a
wonderful time for fellowship
and meeting up with family and friends.



There were 16 delicious chilis entered again this year by:

Bunny Patsch	Lynda Baker
Inez Patsch	Curtis Marcase
Bo Lesjak	Nancy Isiminger
Pastor Ben	Ryan Steere
Virginia Bayne	Jan Taylor
Angelo Gizzi	Leon Young
Jackie Shober	Mark Simpson
Lala Patsch	Mary Lou Briggs

Most money brought in: Mary Lou Briggs with \$99.00

THE TOTAL DONATED THIS YEAR = \$747.40

A GREAT BIG "THANK YOU" to the
Deacons, Auxiliary, Volunteers and participants
who worked so hard this year.

*Thank
You*

Jackie Shober



SAVE THE DATES:

Saturday, March 23, 2024

Egg-stravaganza - 10:00 am

Rain or shine! There will be games, crafts, snacks, a story from Pastor Ben, and, of course, an egg hunt. We are asking for donations of small wrapped candies to fill the eggs. A basket is in the sanctuary.

* * * * *

Vacation Bible School - June 24 - 28, 2024

6:00pm - 8:30pm

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Week of June 17, 2024

Mission Trip to Beckley, WV

Look for details in upcoming Bulletins.

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September 28, 2024

Rise Against Hunger

Meal packaging event at the Morris Community Center.

Look for details in upcoming Bulletins.

PASTOR BEN'S MARCH READINGS



MARCH 3, 2024
3rd Sunday in Lent
COMMUNION SUNDAY

Psalm 20:1-17
1 Corinthians 1:18-25
John 2:13-22
"Fool's Gold"

Daylight Saving Time Begins



MARCH 10, 2024
Pulpit Supply
Washington Presbytery
Executive Presbyter
Rev. Craig Kephart

MARCH 17, 2024
5th Sunday in Lent
Psalm 119:9-16
John 12:20-33
"For Goodness' Sake"

MARCH 24, 2024
Palm Sunday
Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29
Isaiah 40:4-9a
Philippians 2:5-11
"Great Minds Think..."

MARCH 28, 2024
Maundy Thursday
7pm - A Service of Shadows
Mark 14:1-15:47

Happy Easter! He is Risen!

MARCH 31, 2024
7am Sunrise Service
11AM COMMUNION
Isaiah 25:6-9
Mark 16:1-8
"Terribly Terrific"

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS - SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2024 ELDERS AND DEACONS



**Pastor Ben, Virginia Rockwell, Jan Taylor, Nancy Youmans,
Vicky Lesjak, Ben Wallace, Sandy Wallace,
Haley Steere and Bob Arnold**



**Laying of Hands on the Newly Ordained
Elders and Deacons.**

**Our Lil'
Chimers**



EASTER FLOWERS

Help decorate the chancel for Easter by ordering Lilies, Daffodils, Mums or Tulips. Submit the form below with your payment in an envelope marked Easter Flowers. Orders can be dropped into the offering plate or mailed into the office. If you purchase any flowers, you may take them home after the service on Easter. Loved ones and donors will be listed in the Easter bulletin.

Easter Flower Order Form
Due by Sunday,
March 24, 2024



Flowers	Quantity		Price		Total
Daffodils		X	\$9.00	=	\$
Mums		X	\$9.00	=	\$
Tulips		X	\$9.00	=	\$
Lilies		X	\$10.00	=	\$

Your Name: _____

Phone: _____

Paid: \$ _____ **Cash or Check #** _____

In Memory of:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

In Honor of:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

MARCH - 2024



Regular Events

Sunday School - 9:45am
 Bible Study 10:30am
 Worship - 11:00am

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1-	2-
3-	4-Ministry Mtg. 6:30pm	5-Deacons Mtg. 6:00pm	6-Pastor Ben Away	7-Pastor Ben Away	8-Pastor Ben Away	9-Pastor Ben Away
10-Rev. Craig Kephart Pastor Ben Away	11-Mission Mtg. 6:30pm Pastor Ben Away	12-No Bible Study Pastor Ben Away	13-	14-	15-	16-
17-	18-Admin. Mtg. 6:30pm	19-	20-	21-	22-	23- Easter Egg- Stravaganza 10:00am
24- 31- Easter 7am Sunrise Service 11am Worship w/Communion	25-Session Mtg. 6:30pm	26-	27-	28-Maundy Thursday 7pm Service	29-Good Friday Office Closed	30-



First United Presbyterian Church
 102 North Main Street
 Houston, PA 15342

Address Service Requested

Nonprofit organization
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Houston, PA 15342

Church Office
 724-746-3040

Pastor Ext: 313
 1379pbl@gmail.com

Secretary Ext: 310
 secretary@houstonpresbyterian.org

Meals on Wheels Ext: 314
Open Door Nursery Ext: 311

Website
 houstonpresbyterian.org

Sunday School
 Sunday School Begins
 Sept. 18th at 10:00am

Sunday Worship Service
September — May at 11:00 a.m.
 Nursery Available
 June-July-August at 10:00 a.m.

Bible Study
 Tuesdays
 10:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.

Gifts and Offerings

First United Presbyterian Church
 102 North Main Street
 Houston, PA 15342



Member Visitor

Name _____ No. _____

Please apply my offering as follows:

Regular Offering	\$ _____
Deacons Fund	\$ _____
Building Fund	\$ _____
Special Project	\$ _____

Memorial Fund \$ _____

In Memory of _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Thank you for your generous gift.