

THE LISTENING POST

FEBRUARY
2025

Pastor Niki's Ponderings



As I write this, our family is on day 2 of “flexible instruction” with our daughter’s school. The temperature is ridiculously low, and so many districts have called for flexible instruction so that people don’t have to go out into the cold. Our daughter was in daycare during COVID lockdown, so we didn’t have to zoom into classes each day, but this has absolutely made me appreciate teachers exponentially more than I did before (and believe me, I love teachers and aides and think they’re incredible.) Here’s what I’ve learned in these two days:

1. No matter how many times you tell kids to go to the bathroom before starting class, you will inevitably

have many of them still asking to go to the bathroom during class.

2. Teachers have endless patience for children asking all kinds of questions, including if they can use the bathroom. Again.
3. Kids ask a lot of questions.

If you’re going to be a teacher, I think one of the gifts necessary is to have patience, and a lot of it. But these kids have gifts too. Some are good at drawing. Some ask really insightful questions. My daughter wanted to be helpful to the ones who were having trouble getting their worksheets done.

I have been taking a class to learn more about a church experience called “Messy Church.” I know that some of you reading this may be familiar with it, but I was not. I was attracted to it because, for some people, sitting and listening in “typical church” is really hard. For some, it’s not doable at all. In a conversation with another pastor about who we believe may be some of the outcasts, some of the modern day “widows and orphans” that aren’t being reached by the church, we thought about that group of people. How can church be open and welcoming to those who struggle with “the way we’ve done things?”

I’ve preached recently on spiritual gifts, and how we can actually use our gifts to be the church in our community. Not just by being a “church officer,” but by being God’s hands and feet in your everyday life. Some practice the gift of patience by handling the questions of 18 children on Google Meet. Some use their gift of knitting to make scarves to give to local warming shelters. But as we will also talk about in this series (specifically on February 2), none of our gifts mean much without love, God’s love for all people. Keep tuning in as we grow in these ways together.

~Pastor Niki



1. Peg Maragoni
7. Katie Goughenour (*Truffa*)
9. Amber Gartley
12. Mark Guthrie
14. Linda Gould
16. Carson Coulter
18. Kenneth Travis
21. Marisa Chetsko, Ed Daugherty (*Truffa*),
Rebecca Moyes
23. Amanda Hubbard
25. Donna Schrecengost
26. Lennon Kanish
28. Karen Travis

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



Nursery is available to parents. Young children may attend during worship.



Sunday School is back! Two classes will be available, upstairs, each Sunday during worship. The nursery is available to parents, if needed, and the Prayground will be open for little ones or those needing a break from the pew.

Volunteers with appropriate clearances will be welcome to assist our teachers.



*We're Back . . .
If you want to ring, call the church office!*



YOUTH GROUP
Calling all kids Middle school through 17 years old are welcome to participate in monthly meetings,

coming soon, filled with conversation, Bible reading and fun activities in and out of the church. We also participate in various service projects. For more information, contact the church office.

MISSION

Local Mission Happenings...



- ✓ Remember to pass along the message while you DO the mission. Meals-on-Wheels (412-400-0975) – drivers, cooks, prep people daily on M – W – F.

St. Vincent de Paul (724-478-1113) M-Sat

Food bank opportunities:

- Feb. 7 (Fri) Westmoreland County Food Bank – 7:45 AM – St. James Catholic Church Activity Center (behind the Church)
- Feb. 10 (Mon), Apollo-Ridge Food Bank (packaging) – 8:00 AM – Glenn Bush Ford, right side, around back
- Feb. 12 (Wed), Apollo-Ridge Food Bank (distribution) volunteers at 7:30 – 8:00 AM - public at 8:00 AM – Glenn Bush Ford (see above)



Through the first week of February we'll be collecting cans of soup that will be donated to the Apollo Area Food Bank and to our own Emergency Food Pantry. We're looking for many "caring hands" to carry in "cans of caring."

COMMUNITY COMPASSION



AUPC Emergency Fund

December

Food: None

Financial: 4 families \$669.70 total = Rent-\$290; Gas Cert-\$15
Previously purchased; Other-\$379.70 (\$200 Naser gift certs; \$179.70 Walmart Christmas gifts)

January (as of January 24)

Food: None

Financial: One we could not help due to the extreme amount owed on rent.



Currently we have 73 kids enrolled. Our next packing day will be Wednesday, February 19 at 3:00 p.m. Both monetary and food donations continue coming in to support this much needed program. Thanks to all!! *Candy*

MEMBERSHIP & OUTREACH



**Friday, February 14,
6:30 PM
KIDS KRAFTS
HAS RETURNED!
2ND Friday, Sept - Jun**

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

**PW Quarterly Meeting –
Saturday, March 8 @ 9 AM
Regular Meeting**

If you're looking for unique cards for any occasion, please check out the variety available in the vestibule made by our own Craft Ladies. Cost is 3 for \$2 or \$.75 each

2025 PW CALENDAR of EVENTS

- Friday, May 9 ~ Spring Salad Bar
- Saturday, June 14 ~ Quarterly Mtg. 9 am
- Friday, September 12 ~ Fall Salad Bar
- Saturday, September 13 ~ Quarterly Mtg. 9 am
- November 21 & 22 ~ Christmas Tea
- Saturday, December 13 ~ Quarterly Mtg. 9 am

STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCE

First fundraiser of the year



**SPAGHETTI
DINNER**

**SATURDAY, MARCH 22
4:00 – 7:00 PM**

**Ticket Pre-sale on Sunday after church & by calling
724-478-4807**

Walk-ins welcome!

- Spaghetti (meat or marinara)**
- Bread & Butter – Salad**
- Dessert – beverage**

Adults \$12 Children under 10 \$6 Under 3 free

Take-outs available

Proceeds benefit the AUPC Building Fund

\$\$ PER CAPITA \$\$

AUPC's 2025 per capita, as formulated by the Presbytery of Kiskiminetas, has been calculated at **\$39.24 per member**. This amount is then multiplied by the number of **active members** from the previous year. AUPC had 106 active members when the 2025 per capita was calculated, therefore being responsible for **\$4,159.44** to be paid before the end of 2025. We urge all members to pay their individual per capita during the months of January and February. The total amount collected during those 2 months is sent to Presbytery in a lump sum and the balance due is divided by the 10 months left in the year. This method of monthly payments eases any stress on the general budget that a large, one-time payment might cause. **AUPC is responsible to pay for each member listed as active whether or not those members pay their share.** Our goal is to keep our financial commitment just as we have done in the past. With your help, we will be able to meet that commitment and do it with a manageable monthly payment. Your per capita payment will be welcomed at any time throughout the year if you are unable to contribute during January or February. We thank all of our members for their continued support, financially, spiritually, and in-kind giving. AUPC is truly blessed.

Stewardship & Finance Team

CHANGES for Newsletter delivery in 2025. In order to continue moving forward with responsible fiscal policies, some things must change. We are moving toward **not** continuing with bulk mailings as there is both a permit and monthly mailing cost. New options to receive 2025 newsletters are via your private email, our church website, picking up a copy in the vestibule, or having a single copy mailed to your home if you don't have an email or computer. ***If you wish to receive *The Listening Post* by email, please email the church at office@aupc.comcastbiz.net and include your name and email address. *If you'd like to read the newsletter on line at www.apollopresby.org or pick up a copy at the church, you won't need to do anything. *If you wish to have a copy mailed to you, please call or email the church office with your name and current address.**

Beginning in **January 2025**, there will be no bulk mailing of *The Listening Post*. In order to continue to receive this publication, please choose from the selections above. Thank You ~ Stewardship and Finance

WORSHIP AND MUSIC



SUNDAYS 11:00 AM

Join us in person or
livestream on YouTube.



Schedule: Sunday, February 2

Who's Who on SESSION?

Lead by Rev. Niki Atkinson, your current Session Members and their area(s) of service are listed below.

Derek Hilty ~ Admin Team: Building & Grounds Chair and Stewardship & Finance.

Scott Hollabaugh ~ Admin Team Chair & Building & Grounds

Glenna Kanish ~ Ministry Team (combination of Membership & Outreach, Ministry and Christian Ed.)

Pam McMunn ~ Mission Co-chair

Joyce Mollick ~ Mission Co-chair

Amy Shupe ~ Admin Team: Stewardship & Finance Chair, Church Treasurer

Bill Speer ~ Admin Team

Laura Uncapher ~ Admin Team & Clerk of Session

Amy Zukas ~ Ministry Team chair, Christian Ed. chair

ATTENTION: There will be a Congregation/Corporation Meeting on Sunday, February 9, immediately following worship. Financial and team reports will be received, Financial review person & church treasurer will be elected.

Prayer List! How it works: Please list prayer concerns on the back of the attendance card found in your bulletin. We will place these names on our "Immediate" prayer list for three weeks. The *newest names will appear in italics*. On the third week we will **'bold' the name**. The prayers of concern will then move to the "Continuing" list and will remain there three more weeks and then rotate off, unless otherwise requested. If you don't see a name that had previously been there and that person still requires prayer, please list the name again. Also, please list spelling corrections, if needed.
IF WANTING TO ADD NAMES TO THE BELOW LIST DURING THE WEEK, PLEASE CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE.

IMMEDIATE *Peggy, Karen, Art Summerhill family, Lee Lookabaugh family, Martha Jane Wilkinson, Family of Nancie Allen, Vivian, Carole, Debbie McDivitt, Middle East Hostages, Butch, Nancy Joyce, Diane Grant, California fires, Kirk, Lisa, Scott & Nancy Hubbard, Ron's surgery, LaRue Mumaw family, Jordan, Caitlyn, Joe Mazur, Joyce M. traveling mercies, Wesson, 3 yr old Nora, Tim Kanish, Joy: Concordia Faith Friends doing well ☺, Pastor Niki's step-dad Dave.*

CONTINUING *Connie Kepple, Bea Blystone.* Families of house fires, Betty Bateman, **Katie, Jennie Baustert family, Steve Pavetti family, Adam Greece family, traveling mercies for Melissa & family.**

ONGOING Bob Reed, Donnie Riggle, Gary Harkcom, Donna Fry, Bill & Linda Crabtree, Frank Kovak, Josh Hanus, Shannon Pruss, LaRue Mumaw, Chris Hilker, Carol Gallagher, Linda Gould, Snedecor family, Alan Shockey, Bonnie Machak, Lani Knox, Nick Arnoldy, Benjamin Mumaw, Sean George.

MINISTRY All those affected by the Coronavirus and those working in the health care field, first responders, research, and government. Food 4 Kids, AUPC Deacon's Emergency Fund, Support for our church, EPR Mugombwa; Victims of violence and natural disasters; President Joe Biden, our country, other world leaders, our church and its leaders, the war & military personnel, wounded military at home and in hospitals, terrorist victims, Kiskiminetas' Rwanda Partnership.



