

THE LISTENING POST

SEPTEMBER 2025

Pastor Niki's Ponderings



It is currently Sunday, August 24. I am sitting in the church office and rustling through a bunch of thoughts in my head. Some of

them are about people in our churches, some about the people whose backpacks were blessed this morning, some thoughts are about programs and settings for the upcoming church program year, and other thoughts are about home and my husband and daughter, like what they are up to in my absence (Lucky Jr., Lyanna's goat stuffy, is getting a "bath" in the laundry, of this I am certain.) But all of my thoughts are centered around one particular area for all of those things: needs.

One of the things I think that's been hard to teach and learn in the human mind is the difference between a want and a need. I could sit here and logically argue the need for a day at a spa. Stress relief, relaxation techniques, lower blood pressure, migraine prevention, tension headache relief, etc. But it's also possible to logically argue how to achieve those things in ways that don't require a trip to a day spa. So is it a need, or a want?

Jesus took great care in listening. He knew what people wanted from him. He knew that many of the religious leaders wanted him to stop talking, preaching, healing, etc. (particularly on the

Sabbath, but all the days were good too.) Jesus knew that those who were sick or in pain wanted healing. He knew those who were blind wanted to see, that those who struggled wanted an easier way. But Jesus also knew what people NEEDED. When 4 people let down their paralyzed friend on a mat through a roof in front of Jesus, they did it so that Jesus would heal their friend. It was what they wanted. But Jesus knew that his sins needed to be forgiven, and so that came first. Then, the paralyzed friend was healed.

We can learn a lot from Jesus and the ways in which he cared for others. We may not be able to banish demons like he could, but we can provide a listening ear when a friend struggles with the demons of addiction, loneliness, or fear. By being there for one another, by opening our hearts and our ability to listen, we can help others with what they need. This fall, we'll spend some time hearing about some of Jesus' most pastoral moments and what we can learn in how we can meet the NEEDS of others. I look forward to hearing and seeing the ways in which we can meet the needs of one another and our community...together.
-Pastor Niki



3. Shane Guthrie
6. Cathy Piper-Bikle
7. Ron George
10. Deana Waters
14. Gil Filer
16. Cindy Bidlack, Lani Knox
19. Shirley Dick, Rylee Hannigan
22. Matthew Fulton
26. Ashleigh Hannigan
27. Ethan Heffernan
29. Linda Ault
30. Maggie Mullooly, Bennett Zukas

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

WOW! Get ready for this NEW year!! We have NEW rooms, a NEW curriculum, some NEW teachers mixed with your familiar ones, and a NEW time!!! Be ready for class at 10 AM each Sunday. *(Parents may wait in the conference room where there will be coffee, tea, and maybe a snack or two, along with reading material.)* **Sunday school will end at 10:45 AM, just in time for you and your family to join us in Worship at 11 AM.** *(The Pray-ground remains available during worship and for any tiny-teenies, there is a pack & play in the Pray-ground.)* **EXPERIENCE ALL THIS “NEW” ON SUNDAY, SEPT. 14!** Also, this year’s **THIRD GRADE STUDENTS** will receive a Bible during worship that day: Edward Hall, Gunner Hanus, Lennon Kanish, & Natalie Uncapher!

MISSION

ATTENTION: COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL: APPLY AT FOOD BANKS, MEALS ON WHEELS, FOOD 4 KIDS, HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

You get the idea!

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:
 - Sept. 5 (Fri) Westmoreland County Food Bank – 7:45 AM – St. James Catholic Church Activity Center (behind the Church)

- Sept. 15 (Mon), Apollo-Ridge Food Bank (packaging) – 8:00 AM – Glenn Bush Ford, right side, around back
- Sept. 17 (Wed), Apollo-Ridge Food Bank (distribution) volunteers at 7:30 – 8:00 AM - public at 8:00 AM – Glenn Bush Ford (see above)

COMMUNITY COMPASSION

AUPC Emergency Fund June & July

Food – 2 Families, 5 bags food

Financial – 7 Families, \$372 Rent. \$692 Utilities

We are underway planning our 8th year of the F4K program. A variety of food donations have been made over the summer as well as monetary donations. A big Thank You to Grace Assembly of God whose congregation selects and collects one food item per month and then delivers to F4K housed at AUPC. F4K is truly blessed with community support. Program enrollment forms will be delivered to A-R for Pre-K through 3rd grade. The first distribution will be in mid-September (date TBD). Once again, your support of this much needed program is greatly appreciated.

MEMBERSHIP & OUTREACH





WE'RE BACK!

Free Community Program -

Everyone Welcome

Friday, Sept. 12,

6:30 PM

KIDS KRAFTS

has a spot for YOU!

2ND Friday, Sept -June

Don't forget . .
You may

purchase/sponsor a bulletin, at any time during the year , to remember/honor a loved one. Donations of \$20 per bulletin are requested. Your donation will be used to defray copying costs of our weekly bulletin

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

**PW Quarterly Meeting –
Saturday, September 13 @ 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, 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

WHERE WE STAND at the END of JULY 2025

July Income: \$9,465.89

July Expenses: \$11,568.78

July Income to Expenses: -\$2,102.89

YTD Income: \$69,907.10

YTD Expenses: \$86,768.34

YTD Income to Expenses: -\$16,861.24

WORSHIP AND MUSIC



SUNDAYS 11:00 AM

Join us in person or
livestream on YouTube.



**Sunday, September 7
at the Church picnic.**

CALLING ALL ACOLYTES: So far we have 12 volunteers willing to carry Christ's light! What a blessing! All of you should have received this year's schedule from Miss Shelly. If not, or if you need another copy, just call the office.

Thank you all for your service!

Worship And

At the GROVE

On Sunday, September 7 at 10:00 AM, at Owens Grove, AUPC and BSPC will have a joint worship service followed by a picnic luncheon. AUPC will provide hot dogs, buns, condiments, paper products and drinks. Those attending will be asked to provide:

Names A-L: side dishes

Names M-Z: desserts

The **Children's Bell Choir** will be starting soon with the first performance on **September 28 during worship.** Please contact Miss Shelly if you're interested in The Children's Bell Choir.



Beginning after Labor Day, the Bell Choir is inviting new members. Performances will be announced at a later time. Call Peggy Landon or the church office for

more info.

First Practice Wed. Sept. 10 @ 6:00 PM.

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 *David Churchill, Traveling mercies for Chris & Cassie, Family of Colton, Family of Buddy Riggle, Sr., fire at AUPC, Ron & Candy 56th Anniversary, Pat, Jim, Missy, Carol, Back-to-School kids, Butch Schrecengost, Victims and families of Clairton US Steel accident, Shirley Dick, Paula Petrulak, Family of Tom Hoffer, Family of Kim McCain, Lenny Shellhammer, Eric.*

CONTINUING *Lenny, Pastor Phil, Mat Hilty, Michelle, Jim, Carol Kopnick, Chrissy Jacobson, Nora, family of Alice Cook, Remembering those who have passed, Texas flood victims, Cindy, Ronan, Dan Peppler, Julie, Isaiah, Ann, Mandy.*

ONGOING

Missy, Katie, Donnie Riggle, Gary Harkcom, Bill & Linda Crabtree, Frank Kovak, Josh Hanus, Shannon Pruss, 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, flu, and RSV 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 Donald Trump, 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*