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Connect Newsletter

Friends:

I am new in many ways: new as your pastor, new to town, new to the Presbyterian denomination. Though I am not new to Missouri, it has been over forty years since I last lived here. As you may imagine, there is a lot of catching up that I need to do. I am pretty good at remembering faces and stories, but it takes me a while to remember names. I am counting on your patience.

I was attracted to this congregation because of your culture of participation. There is such a high level of involvement in the life of the congregation. It is impressive. I look forward to getting to know all the ways folks are involved in the life and ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Washington.

Rev. Rich Gamble
Pastor



Thank you to everyone who helped prepare our building to open on Sunday, January 12, in spite of the snow, ice, and frigid temperatures. We were closed for worship on January 5, 2025.



Our church parking required multiple plowings and some hand shoveling on sidewalks due to layers of ice. The photo above was taken Saturday, January 11. The photo at the left was taken a few days earlier.



Thank You



The Mission Committee wishes to express sincere gratitude for the very generous gift giving for our 2024 Giving Tree this past Christmas. We collected 75 gifts for the Pregnancy Assistance Center and a local family. In addition, we received money to purchase gift cards for both of our recipients. We purchased Walmart gift cards for our local family and will be providing gas cards for the Pregnancy Assistance Center to help their families for necessary travel. Thank you again for your enthusiastic giving.



Clerk's Corner

By Nancy Sebastian

Boundary Training for Ruling Elders. The Presbytery recently mandated Boundary Training for all Ruling Elders. Rev. Rich Gamble, along with each Session member, completed this training on January 16, 2025. Fran Lane Laurence served as moderator and trainer for this important educational session. The training emphasized boundary reminders to ensure the safety and well-being of everyone involved.

PCW Annual Meeting. Rev. Rich Gamble has rescheduled the PCW Annual Meeting for *Sunday, February 16, 2025*, immediately following the church service. Rev. Gamble will moderate the meeting, which will open and close with prayer. The Annual Report will be available Friday, February 7, 2025.

Elder Installation and Ordination. The installation and ordination of elders will take place on *Sunday, February 23, 2025*, following the worship service. The following individuals have graciously agreed to serve:

- ♦ Jim Glamann: Two-year term
- ♦ Scott Marcus: One-year term
- ♦ Mike Becker: One-year term

Thank you to Jim, Scott, and Mike for your commitment to serve our congregation.

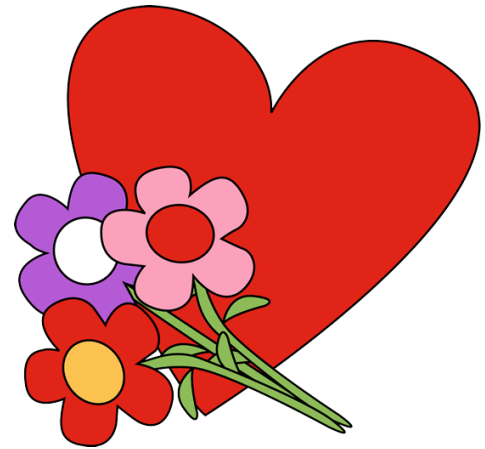
Presbytery Annual Report. It is necessary to submit a yearly statistical report to the Presbytery. This report will be in by the end of the month.

Grace and Peace,
Nancy

Scrip Gift Cards

Make Perfect Valentines

Surprise your friends and family members with a Scrip gift card. See page 9 of this newsletter for the large selection of stores that offer them. When you purchase a Scrip card through our church, our church receives a percentage of the amount. YOU receive exactly the amount you paid. Our Scrip team—Gretchen, Becky, and Kathy—will be taking orders in person on Sunday, February 2, immediately after the worship service. You can also submit your order to the church office at any time OR order your Scrip cards online. Thank you for supporting this successful fundraiser for our church.



**Order Your Scrip
Gift Cards
on
Sunday, February 2**



If you didn't attend last year's Valentine Dinner, you missed this marvelous surf and turf dinner prepared by Tom and Gretchen Farrell and a host of volunteers. Sign up for this year's dinner outside the church office on the corkboard.

Make Your Dinner Reservation Now

Valentine Dinner
Saturday, February 8

5 p.m.

Fellowship Hall

\$35 per person

Open to all adults

If you miss the days when people dressed up to attend church, here is your chance to leave your jeans and sweatshirts and boots at home. You won't find a paper plate at this dinner, and the servers will be using the church china we seldom see!

Our Finance Committee Manages the Church's Very Complex Piggy Bank

About 65 years ago, Pittsburg State Teacher's College in Pittsburg, Kansas, offered a basic accounting class for underclassmen. Sam Farrell took it. "I'll be honest," remembered Dr. Sam Farrell, "I didn't like it at the time and was pretty sure I didn't want a career in accounting, so I switched to a pre-med major. But that accounting class has served me well." Indeed. Sam was on our church's Finance Committee for about 30 years, serving as chairman most of that time, and credits what he learned in that accounting class for being able to pick up almost any financial statement and understand it.

From spearheading a campaign in 1991 to raise \$250,000 to buy the land and start the building fund for the structure we now occupy, to refinancing the church mortgage several times for a better interest rate, Sam has experienced it all, even the low moments. "Many years ago, we couldn't pay our bills," he said. "We needed \$23,000 just to meet payroll and other basic operations. The money we had received from pledges wasn't covering our expenses because quite a few members had pledged but hadn't yet paid the church any amount." So the Finance Committee authorized Sam to address the congregation during a worship service. Like the doctor he was, he was truthful and candid. "We've got a problem, folks. And here's what we can do about it." To the relief of everyone, the pledged money that was due arrived in a timely manner.

A few years later, the church was once again in a dire financial condition, partly due to the burden of the mortgage. So again the Finance Committee appealed to the congregation during a worship service. The solution that was presented and approved would later be known as Miracle Sunday. A date was chosen and publicized in advance of the special event. On the appointed day, the congregation arrived at Sunday worship service bearing cash and checks. When the Finance Committee counted the last coin at the end of the day, they cheered for the miracle that occurred hours earlier. "The church received more than enough money to pay those bills, with some left over," said Sam. "We applied the leftover donations to the debt reduction fund. People were very generous."



We got a new roof in November 2021. See the bottom page 6 for the REST of the story.

The generosity of members has continued, sometimes in breathtaking amounts. The estate of the late Esther Jaeger (1912-2004) donated \$200,000 to our church, and the estate of the late Jean Van Der Kamp (1925-2017) donated \$120,000 to our church. With a church building that's no longer new, the Finance Committee is now dealing with some major repairs or conversions to new systems. Making decisions about these costly improvements is a committee with broad financial experience.

"I do not have any accounting or financial training and certifications," said chairman Dr. Tom Farrell, "but other members of the Finance Committee do. Bruce Weise, Karen Ladd, Elda Seener, Gary Brehe, and Phyllis McElhinney all have spent their careers in either an accounting or financial field. Additionally, Ann Hart, PCW Office Administrator and Financial Secretary, is a big part of our Finance Committee and has extensive experience in accounting and auditing. They have all been a tremendous asset to our church regarding our money management. The Finance Committee is primarily responsible for the overall financial oversight of PCW. We handle income, expenses, payroll for employees, stewardship, and maintain a budget every year. We meet monthly to continually monitor all accounts." Tom is the son of Sam and Mary Eleanor Farrell and is starting his fifth year as Finance Committee chairman.

Although some revenue and expenses remain about the same for a stretch of several years, the Finance Committee is always learning something new about maintenance issues. In 2020 for example, the committee agreed to use our capital reserve fund to pay \$26,204 for an entirely new lighting system. LED lights replaced incandescent lights which had been standard lighting for more than 200 years. The committee also paid for major boiler repair, roof repairs, and electrical work. Those expenses totaled almost \$12,000.



In 2021 the Finance Committee filed a claim with our insurance carrier about our damaged roof. The claim was accepted, and by November we had a handsome new roof at no cost to us. The company honored other claims of ours but discontinued our coverage on January 1, 2024, which was allowable and legal in the insurance industry. We secured another insurance company but our annual premium has more than doubled. The Finance Committee continues to wrestle with this serious fiscal issue.

“By far, our biggest expense last year was the repairs made to the parking lot,” explained Tom. “The ice that formed in the winter due to poor drainage was a risk not only to us, but to anyone using our facilities, such as volleyball players and pickleball players. It was a matter of time before someone fell and became seriously injured. In working with the Property Committee, initial estimates were well in excess of \$150K and included a comprehensive, multi-project plan. After prioritizing the various projects and many discussions between our committees, a reasonable, yet still expensive plan was approved that focused on the drainage problem, concrete repair and partial resurfacing of the parking lots. This solution totaled approximately \$80K. So far, we have had no further drainage problems, significantly less ice, and certainly a more aesthetically pleasing appearance to the exterior of our church.”

The Finance Committee also prepares a budget for each church committee and submits an extensive report each January for the Congregational Meeting. The committee documents every dollar received, saved, or spent. While the Finance Committee knows the total number of pledges each year, committee members do not know the amounts pledged by individual members and families. Only the Financial Secretary/Office Administrator (Ann Hart) and Corporation Treasurer (Linda Booher) have access to that information. “Roughly 85 percent of our income from members comes from pledges,” noted Tom. “We are truly blessed to have such a giving and supportive congregation.”

“I think of the Finance Committee as an oversight committee that takes its responsibility very seriously. We are very frugal, conservative, and analytical in all things. We truly are stewards of our church’s finances. We aren’t investing our money in penny stocks and high-risk investments, but rather in interest bearing accounts and bank CDs that will pay tangible interest. Basically, we want to make sure that when someone contributes to our church, the money they give will go 100% to our church operations and mission.”

**Tom Farrell, M.D.
Chairman
Finance Committee**



Happy Birthday Shirley Coulter

On January 10, 2025, Shirley Coulter turned 90, and we celebrated her birthday at the Fellowship Hour nine days later. Shirley joined our church in April 1957 and is a joyful member who seldom misses a worship service.



The ***Connect Newsletter*** is published monthly by the Presbyterian Church of Washington (PCUSA). Articles are due the 20th day of each month. Please deliver to the church office or email to:

Aneeta Brown, Editor
missouriwriter@yahoo.com

Editorial Review Board: Rev. Rich Gamble,
Phyllis McElhinney, Nancy Sebastian, and Mauri Truesdell.

PRESBY SCRIP PROGRAM ORDER FORM

Customer NAME: _____ Email (if new customer only): _____ Date: _____

Customer PHONE: _____ *****All Sales are Final ** No Returns ** No Refunds**

Merchant terms and conditions as well as additional forms are available at The Presbyterian Church of Washington.

	Vendor	%	QTY	\$ Total
	AUTOMOTIVE			
•	BP \$50, \$100, (\$250, 2.5%)	1.5		
	Fischer's Phillips66 \$25, \$50, \$100	2		
•	Casey's General Store and Gas \$25	3		
	CLOTHING/DEPT.STORES			
•	JCPenny \$25, \$100	5		
•	Kohl's \$25, \$100	4		
•	Marshall's \$25, \$100	7		
•	Macy's \$25, \$100	10		
•	Maurice's \$20	7		
•	Ross Dress for Less \$25	8		
•	Sam's Club \$25, \$50, \$100, \$250	2.5		
•	Shoe Carnival \$25	5		
•	Target \$10, \$25, \$50, \$100, \$250	2.5		
•	Walmart \$25, \$50, \$100, \$250	2.5		
	DRUG STORES			
	Schroeder Drug \$5, \$10, \$25, \$50	5		
•	Walgreens \$25, \$100	5		
	GROCERY STORES			
	Williams Bros.Meat Mkt. \$25	5		
•	Honey-Baked Ham \$25	12		
	HOME IMPROVEMENTS			
•	Ace Hardware \$25, \$100	4		
•	Lowe's \$20, \$25, \$100, \$500, \$1000	4		
	MAIL ORDER-ONLINE			
•	Amazon \$25, \$100	1.7		
•	Apple/iTunes \$15, \$25, \$100,\$500	5		
•	Barnes & Noble \$10, \$25, \$100	8		
•	Lands End \$25, \$100	15		
•	Overstock.com \$25	8		
•	LLBean \$25, \$100	16		
	SPECIALTY STORES			
•	Bass Pro Shop \$25, \$100	10		
•	Bath & Body Works \$10, \$25	12		
•	Big Lots \$25, \$100	4		
•	Cabela's \$25, \$100	10		
	Cinema One Plus \$20	5		
	Designer Threads \$25	15		
•	Dicks Sporting Goods \$25, \$100	8		
•	Five Below \$25	2.5		
	Fricke Photography \$20	5		
	Great 8 Cine \$10	10		
	Hillermann Nursery \$25, \$50	5		
	I.B.Nuts & Fruit Too \$20	10		
•	Jo-Ann Fabric \$25	6		
•	Michael's \$25, \$100	4		
•	Ulta Beauty \$25	7		
	Wolf Hollow \$20	5		

PAYMENT METHOD

If Cash, Amount

	If Check, Amount
1. Estimated cost of goods sold	
2. Inventory at beginning of period	
3. Purchases during period	
4. Freight-in	
5. Purchase discounts taken	
6. Sales returns and allowances	
7. Inventory at end of period	
8. Cost of goods sold	

If Check, check number _____

Make checks payable to *The Presbyterian Church*

[illegible]

TOTAL ORDER AMOUNT = \$

• (This DOT indicates a National Brand, no DOT indicates a Local Merchant.)

Sign when Receiving Order: _____

Filled by:

Date Received: _____

Scrip Order Form 11-3-2024

2024 PCW Committee Members

The 2025 PCW Committee List Will Be Published Soon

Christian Ed. Committee

Kathy Rogers, Co-Chair*

Gerry Urban, Co-Chair*

Beth Brehe

Micki Brehe

Craig Matzes

Ian McCracken

Heather Miller

Jolene Patterson*

Church Life Committee

Linda Booher, Co-Chair*

Sarah Spear, Co-Chair*

Beth Bonney

Jane Bugele

Shirley Coulter

Barb Hagen

Karen Ladd

Vivian Marshall

Francie Turnure

Jean Weekley

Lee Westerhoff

Finance Committee

Tom Farrell, Chair*

Linda Booher, Treasurer*

Gary Brehe

Karen Ladd

Phyllis McElhinney

Elda Seener*

Bruce Wiese

Mission Committee

Debbie Bandy

Christy Eckert

Gretchen Farrell

Lois Kempf

Kathy Rogers*

Sarah Spear*

Outreach Committee

Tom Farrell, Chair*

Aaron Bounds

Alicia Brehe

Katie Farrell

Ian McCracken

Heather Miller

Nancy Sebastian*

Personnel Committee

Mauri Truesdell, Chair*

Mary Ellenberger

Gretchen Farrell

Joe Hagan

Nancy Sebastian*

Elda Seener*

Tim Urban

Property Committee

David Brunworth, Chair*

John Bugele

Bob Eade

Jim Glamann

Joe Hagan

Barbara Schofield

Steve Sebastian

Worship & Music Committee

Tom Ellenberger, Chair*

Mike Becker

Aaron Bounds

Emily Bounds

John Bugele

Katie Collins

Tom Kempf

Vivian Marshall

Jolene Patterson*

*Session Members

Nancy Sebastian, Clerk

Linda Booher

David Brunworth

Tom Ellenberger

Tom Farrell

Jolene Patterson

Kathy Rogers

Elda Seener

Sarah Spear

Mauri Truesdell

Gerry Urban

MEETING TIMES:

Christian Ed. 2nd Sunday 11:30 AM

Church Life 2nd Tuesday 9:30 AM

Finance 2nd Monday 12:00 PM

Mission 1st Tuesday 10:00 AM

Outreach 2nd Wednesday 6:30 PM

Personnel 2nd Tuesday 6:00 PM

Property 2nd Sunday 11:30 AM

Session 4th Thursday 6:30 PM

Worship 2nd Thursday 7:00 PM

Updated 8/19/2024