



# The Highlander

The Presbyterian Church of Punxsutawney  
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August 2020

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Welcome to August!
- 2 & 3 At-home Worship
- 4 Robin's Ponderings
- 5 Finance & Generosity
- 6 Membership & PCOP Updates
- 7 Session & The Board of Deacons
- 8 Fellowship
- 9 Who Do I Contact?
- 10 Calendar



*Don't forget to join us every Sunday @ 11 AM  
for worship in the sanctuary!*

*For information on reopening procedures,  
please read the "PCOP Reopening" letter at*

*<https://www.punxsypc.net/events/>*

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*Please stop in, call  
or email the office  
by **TUESDAY**  
**SEPTEMBER 1<sup>st</sup>**  
with any  
information,  
announcements,  
updates, etc. that  
you would like to  
see in September's  
newsletter!*

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## ~GREEN TEAM SIGN-UPS~

Please contact the office or Property Committee Chair Dana Hartman to sign up to volunteer to mow the garden lawn and/or water the flowers! Stop down any time during your week (weather-dependent)



# AT-HOME WORSHIP FOR AUGUST

Adapted by Debra Dinsmore from lectionary resources

**AUGUST 2, 2020** Readings: Genesis 32:22-31 ✠ Psalm 17:1-7, 15 ✠ Romans 9:1-5 ✠ Matthew 14:13-21

**Opening or Morning Prayer:** Holy One, as I walk through this day, help me to see each experience as an opportunity to reflect on what it means to be your servant and a chance to help Jesus feed those in need, guided by your steadfast love for me. Amen.

**Read about "A Prayer for Deliverance": Psalm 17:1-7, 15**

**Prayer for Illumination:** Life-changing God, you have touched me and transformed me to reach out to all who hunger for what only you can give. Keep my feet in your paths and awaken and illumine me by your Word that I may behold your likeness. Amen.

**Read about "Jacob Wrestling at Peniel": Genesis 32:22-31**

**Questions for Reflection:** "Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak" (Gen. 32:24). Why do you think God allows times of struggle in our lives? How have times of struggle affected your walk with God? How does your relationship with God affect your view of overwhelming problems in the world, such as the virus, hunger, poverty, violence, or injustice?

**Prayer before Gospel Reading:** Holy God, as I read your Word may I be touched, changed, called, and empowered in the power and provision of Christ to heal the sick, feed the hungry, and serve the world.

**Read about "Feeding the Five Thousand": Matthew 14:13-21** **Question for Reflection:** The disciples were amazed at Jesus' feeding of the multitudes. How have you seen him make a way when there was no way?

**Prayer of Intercession:** God who hears me, holds me, and helps me; you are my eternal source of blessing. You are my endless source of provision. In your compassion, you see my need; you heal my sickness and satisfy my hunger. Hear me now as I pray for the church, the world, and those in need: Bless your church and help all to move forward in mission with you. Heal and preserve your creation in heaven and on earth. Provide wisdom for leaders and vindication and relief for the oppressed. Attend to those who are hungry or ill, vulnerable or a victim of injustice. Grant peace to those who grieve and compassion to those who call out to you in their distress. Wondrously show your steadfast love, that all may behold your face in righteousness and be satisfied, when awakened, to behold your likeness; through Christ our Lord I pray. Amen.

**Read about "God's Election of Israel": Romans 9:1-5**

**Closing or Evening Prayer:** Gracious God, thank you for being with me throughout this day. I give this day back to you, trusting in you and in your unearned gift of grace to give me peace and rest, for you are just in all your ways and kind in all your doings. Amen.

**AUGUST 9, 2020** Readings: Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28 ✠ Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b ✠ Romans 10:5-15 ✠ Matthew 14:22-33

**Opening or Morning Prayer:** Holy God, the new day begins with such promise. Help me to enter into this day with joy and confidence in your power and goodness. Whatever challenges I may face, help me to trust in your presence, remembering that you are stronger than any difficulty or threat. If you will surround me in the embrace and affection of steadfast love and faithfulness, of righteousness and peace, then I will be lifted up and strengthened to follow you. In Christ's name, I pray. Amen.

**Read about "Joseph's Dreams of Greatness and Joseph Being Sold by His Brothers": Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28**

**Read about "God's Faithfulness to Israel": Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b**

**Prayer for Illumination** Son of God, you walk on the waters of turmoil to meet me in the midst of your purposed journey for my life. Help me to recognize your presence, remember your promise, rely on your power, and receive your peace. Amen.

**Read about "Jesus Walking on the Water": Matthew 14:22-33**

**Questions for Reflection:** Why did Jesus send the disciples ahead while he stayed to pray alone? How do times of turmoil and anxiety affect your trust in God? After Jesus caught Peter in the water, was Jesus' question, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" a reproach? When you are facing a great difficulty, do you doubt God's power? Do you doubt yourself? Can you recall other biblical stories or a story from your own life, when God reached out to rescue or to overcome doubt and fear with the gift of increased faith?

**Prayer of Intercession:** God of power and love, you are with me in every circumstance of my life. I thank you for your steadfast faithfulness. I thank you for the gift of your peace, which comes to me even in times of chaos and fear, trouble and doubt. I thank you for your powerful arms of mercy that grasp me when I am sinking; for your powerful Word that coaxes me even when I am hiding and afraid. I put my trust in you, for you alone can save me. Increase mutual understanding and a sense of unity in my community, in my congregation, in the church around the world. I entrust to your providence and care all those who suffer; all who are hiding from you, from others, or even from themselves because of fear or feelings of unworthiness. To one struggling with doubt, increase faith. To one enduring persecution or prejudice, bring freedom. For those caught in the grip of anxiety and uncertainty, grant the calm rest that your peace alone gives. And for all who face illness, pain, or even death, I pray for restoration and wholeness to fill them—in heart, mind, and body. I ask all things in the name of Jesus Christ, who truly is your Son. Amen.

**Read about "Salvation for All": Romans: 10:5-15**

**Closing or Evening Prayer:** Gracious God, favor me with the sheer silence of your presence. Quiet any voices of fear and doubt that would trouble me. Grant me, and anyone who is troubled with anxiety or pain, your perfect peace. Favor me with calm and rest, with healing and renewal, and keep me forever in your arms of mercy. In your Son's dear name, I pray. Amen.

# AT-HOME WORSHIP FOR AUGUST

Adapted by Debra Dinsmore from lectionary resources

**AUGUST 16, 2020** Readings: Genesis 45:1–15 ☩ Psalm 133 ☩ Romans 11:1-2a, 29–32 ☩ Matthew 15: (10–20), 21-28

**Opening or Morning Prayer:** Merciful God, this day is full of your possibilities for healing and reconciliation, for new beginnings and restored relationships. Unite my heart with your will so that your abundant anointing will flow through me. Amen.

**Read** about “Joseph Revealing Himself to His Brothers”: **Genesis 45:1–15** **Read** about “the Blessedness of Unity”: **Psalm 133**

**Prayer for Illumination:** Lord, by the power of your Spirit give me your words of life that my faith may increase and my heart be made whole. Amen. **Read** about “Israel’s Rejection Is Not Final” and about “How All Israel Will Be Saved”: **Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32**

**Questions for Reflection:** Paul declares, “The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.” How do the gifts and calling of God support us? How might they support us when we are not aware of them or even when we reject them?

**Prayer before Gospel Reading:** Merciful Savior, your suffering has saved my life, secured my future, and restored me to relationship with God. Remove the shame and fear that causes me to cower in your presence. By the power of your Spirit, open my eyes and heart to your Word of love, mercy, healing, and blessing; through Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen

**Read** about “Things That Defile” and “the Canaanite Woman’s Faith”: **Matthew 15: (10–20), 21-28**

**Question for Reflection:** Why do you think Jesus resisted the Canaanite woman’s request? How does this fit with your idea of Jesus’ mercy and love? What changed his mind? How does this influence your faith in God?

**Prayer of Intercession:** In your own words, offer a prayer. There are no wrong ways to pray. Plainspoken or wordy. General or specific. Long winded or short and to the point.

**Closing or Evening Prayer:** Thank you, God, for the gift of this day. Continue to bless me, Lord, and make your face clear to me that I may see your will for my life and know the power of your salvation. Amen.

**AUGUST 23, 2020** Readings: Exodus 1:8-2:10 ☩ Psalm 124 ☩ Romans 12:1-8 ☩ Matthew 16:13-20

**Opening or Morning Prayer:** Loving God, thank you for the gift of this new day. You have blessed me in so many ways in days that have come before. Today I will look and listen for signs of your joy and gladness present in my life, in the lives of others, and in the beautiful world you garden. As I begin this day, I pray that you will strengthen my soul and that whatever your purpose for me will be fulfilled in faithfulness and love. In Christ’s name I pray. Amen.

**Read** about “How the Israelites Are Oppressed” and about “the Birth and Youth of Moses”: **Exodus 1:8-2:10**

**Read** about “Thankfulness for Israel’s Deliverance”: **Psalm 124**

**Prayer for Illumination:** Holy God, renew my life through the reading of your Word so that I may discern and do your will, what is good and acceptable and perfect. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

**Read** about “Peter’s Declaration about Jesus”: **Matthew 16:13-20** **Read** about “the New Life in Christ”: **Romans 12:1-8**

**Questions for Reflection:** Paul urges us not to be conformed to the world’s standards, but to be transformed and renewed by God’s will. Is there an area of your life that is in need of transformation and renewal? Paul goes on to name a variety of gifts that members of the church have been given, all of which contribute to the overall functioning of the body (the church). Is there a gift in that list which you possess? Which one? How are you making use of that gift among God’s people? Is there someone in your church or in your life who shares a particular gift of the Spirit faithfully? Offer a prayer of thanksgiving for that person and for any others who use their gifts to enhance your life or the life of your worshiping community.

**Closing or Evening Prayer:** Holy God, help me receive your revelation that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the living God. Amen.

**AUGUST 30, 2020** Readings: Exodus 3:1-15 ☩ Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45c ☩ Romans 12:9-21 ☩ Matthew 16:21-28

**Opening or Morning Prayer:** God of love, today encourage me to live peaceably with all. Help me live in genuine love: to love my neighbors, and to love you, O God, with my whole heart, mind, and strength. In Jesus’ loving name, I pray. Amen.

**Read** about “God’s Faithfulness to Israel”: **Psalm 105: 1-6, 23-26, 45c**

**Read** about “Moses at the Burning Bush” and about “the Divine Name Revealed”: **Exodus 3:1-15**

**Prayer for Illumination:** Holy Spirit, who spoke to Moses from the burning bush, speak to me now in the reading of the word. Amen.

**Read** about “Jesus Foretelling His Death and Resurrection”: **Matthew 16:21-28**

**Read** about “the Marks of the True Christian”: **Romans 12:9-21**

**Questions for Reflection:** What does it mean for me to take up my cross and follow Jesus? How do I practice that in my daily life? How is the cross I am asked to bear related to the cross of Jesus?

**Prayer of Intercession:** In your own words, offer a prayer. There are no wrong ways to pray. Plainspoken or wordy. General or specific. Long winded or short and to the point.

**Closing or Evening Prayer:** Lord Jesus, when I stray re-center my life. Set me on the path of sincere discipleship, and lead me in the way that leads to eternal life. Amen.

Robin's Ponderings

In an effort to develop a less rigid, more Spirit filled worship time for Sunday Worship, some tweaking as been done. The offering has been enriched by allowing each of us a time to consider where our gifts may be serving the LORD. A brief "Minute for Mission" will be shared signifying our ministry through out the world, including our activity in Punxsutawney and our own PCOP family.



Several years ago, I was blessed to take a class on the Russian Orthodox Church which included a ten day journey to the country. The purpose of the class was to give a chance to explore what the Orthodox church might offer those of a more Reformed tradition, if indeed there is anything. Secondly, it allowed for exploration of a Church which was able to freely emerge after 70 years of Communism under the Soviet Empire.

It was here I first met Ellen and Alan Smith. Alan, as I explained this past Sunday, works closely with the Roma people (Gypsies).

Ellen and I sat together on the train ride making our way to the village of Davydovo, about half way between Moscow and St. Petersburg. We had time to chat about her work in the Smith's mission field of Eastern Europe, where she acts as liaison for our denomination. Part of her ministry is to work with Fr. Vladimir Klimzo and his own outreach ministry. Father Vladimir has started a ministry in the village for special needs children and their families. "He sees that these children may have various health issues, but they are still able to love Jesus." This community provides hospitality to those unaccustomed to being accepted within "normal" Russian culture.

The church in Davydovo extended great hospitality to us. The photo above was taken after our last worship service together. From the moment we arrived until our departure they did everything possible to make us welcome. For centuries the Eastern Christian Churches and the Western Christian Churches have not acknowledged the "One body of Christ". That visit, and this photo, indicates a new openness to that truth. The first line of the Nicene Creed binds us together; "We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen."

I pray this insight, and those to come, provides a richer and fuller understanding of our mission gifts of time, prayer, and fiscal resources throughout the Almighty's creation.

May grace and peace be yours in abundance.

Robin

Student Pastor

P.S. In the near future, the Tuesday at 10:00 study group will be resuming. Further information will be available shortly.

## FINANCE & GENEROSITY

Thank you for donating funds, time, and energy to PCOP!

Date	Attendance in worship	Weekly offering	% to General Fund
July 5	37	\$3,305.00	100.00%
July 12	36	\$2,465.00	97.16%
July 19	30	\$525.00	100.00%
July 26	46	\$5,645.00	80.69%

JULY 2020 FINANCIAL HEALTH			
	Current	Year to Date	2020 Total Budget
Receipts	\$11,940.46	\$88,726.35	\$182,771.00
Expenses	\$7,821.39	\$128,393.01	
Excess or [Deficient]	\$4,119.07	[\$39,666.66]	

*If you are not comfortable coming to worship, **PLEASE MAIL** your regular weekly offering envelopes to the office.*

*As we are now officially into summer, we would like to remind everyone that we still have bills to pay, supplies to purchase, and a building to maintain.*

At this time of year, PCOP typically experiences a “summer slump” in giving. Contributions may even slow to the point that we are deficient in funds by the end of each month.

*Please do not be a part of this summer’s slump!*

Your continued support is both appreciated and requested!

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**Monthly Giving  
Spotlight:  
Summer Giving  
at PCOP**

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# MEMBERSHIP & PCOP UPDATES

Birthdays, prayer requests, moving and more!

*Please remember to contact the office if you have any changes in mailing address, email address, or phone number to ensure you are still receiving PCOP updates!*



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO...



## Those Needing Our Prayers

Karina Blose	Marge Brennan	Betty Brumbaugh
Duane & Pam Carr	Betty Cessna	Jane Crawford
The Graham Family	Martha Irvin	Kathy Kopp
	The Ward Family	

August 5	Evelyn Chambers William Cooper Kathy Dinsmore
August 7	Holly Hartman
August 9	William Ward
August 14	Kaitlyn Cessna
August 17	Gilbert Young
August 19	Carole Haire
August 24	Barbara Burkett
August 26	Kay Nesbitt

*Please contact the office to add a name to the newsletter/bulletin "Needing Our Prayers" list. Please contact **Rex Lettie** at [pcop.prayer.chain@gmail.com](mailto:pcop.prayer.chain@gmail.com) to join or to add a name to the PCOP Prayer Chain.*

***Our Christian sympathies to Joe Karetski on the passing of his sister, Pamela S. Tobin on July 7, 2020.***



Just want to send a special thank you to everyone for their cards, emails, and phone calls of sympathy and encouragement during the passing of my sister Pam. Definitely a shock to all of us, but with all of your prayers and support it helped me get through it pretty well and it really meant a lot to me and my family.

Thank you all so very much.  
Sincerely, Joe Karetski



## SESSION & THE BOARD OF DEACONS

Keeping up with the committees and officers of PCOP!



### MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The next meeting of the Board of Deacons will be:  
**SUNDAY TBD**  
 9:30 a.m.  
 Memorial Parlor

The next meeting of Session (Unicameral Board)  
 will be:  
**MONDAY TBD**  
 7:00 p.m.  
 Lester Seminar Room

### *From a note received July 23:*

I cannot thank you enough for the care bag that was given to me at Punxsutawney Hospital on Friday evening when my husband was life-flighted to UPMC Presbyterian Hospital in Pittsburgh after a golfing accident. I had panicked when I received the call that he had been hurt and had a brain bleed and was pretty banged up. My niece was driving me to Pittsburgh as I opened the bag and saw everything that was in there. What touched me the most was the scripture card with Isaiah 41:10. It calmed me down. I felt God's love and the prayers and it brought tears to my eyes because a \$10 bill was wrapped around it. What a wonderful thing for a church to do. I know all churches are struggling now so I am sending it back to you to let you know how very much I appreciated it.  
 Sincerely, Marsha V. Salsgiver  
 P.S. My husband is home and healing and by God's grace he will be okay.



*Beautifully the sanctuary with flowers*  
 Write "Deacons Flowers" in check memo line (\$25) and call the office to place your order. Available dates:  
 August 9, 16, 23  
 September 6, 13, 20, 27



## FELLOWSHIP

Have fun and spend time with your PCOP family!

Yay!

We are back to worship, but do you still feel disconnected from your church family? There is no Coffee Hour, Sunday school, Tuesdays @ 10, or Community Meal prep. These are all times for fellowship. Would you like to be part of a brainstorming meeting to look for new and safe ways to reach out? Call Debby Elder or the church office if you would like to participate, or if you have an idea.

From a submitted article clipping:

I dreamed of Heaven the other night ...  
 And the Pearly Gates swung wide.  
 An angel with halo bright ...  
 ushered me inside.  
 And there to my astonishment,  
 stood folks I'd judged and labeled ...  
 As quite unfit and of little worth and  
 spiritually disabled.  
 Indignant words rose to my lips,  
 but never were set free.  
 For every face showed stunned  
 surprise ...  
No One Expected ME!

Crosstown Ministries Food Pantry  
 Woodland Avenue United Methodist Church  
 203 Woodland Ave.  
 August 17<sup>th</sup> @ 5:30 P.M.

Volunteers are always needed throughout the month to:  
 donate food, unload the food truck, prepare boxes for the distribution,  
 and distribute the boxes to those who need them

*Please contact Woodland Ave @ (814) 938-8160 for more information*

***If you are in need of help while church activities are suspended or have any questions or concerns, please contact a current member of the Board of Deacons or a current member of Session (listed on page 9)***



# WHO DO I CONTACT?

“I have a question about . . .”

Schedules, quarterly financial statement, newsletter, ordering flowers, bulletin information, ordering church supplies, using church facilities, etc. <i>And anything else!</i>	Keri in PCOP office
Hospitalizations, Emergencies, Member Care	Keri in PCOP Office Board of Deacons
PCOP Property & Grounds, maintenance requests	Property Committee Co-Chairs Dana Hartman & William Cooper
Worship information, pulpit supply	Worship Committee Chair Roberta Dinsmore
Baptisms & Weddings	Clerk of Session Doug Chambers
Funerals & Memorial Services	Keri in PCOP Office Funeral Director
Mission & Fellowship Opportunities	Mission & Outreach Chair—Rex Lettie Fellowship Chair—Barbara Burkett
Youth Group & Children’s Sunday School	Youth Group—Dana Hartman Christian Education Chair—
Finances & Giving	Finance Chair—Nick Suntheimer Stewardship Chair—Richard Fetterman
New Members (Joining PCOP)	Clerk of Session Doug Chambers
Choir & Music	Music Director Nancy Pearce
First Tuesday Community Meal	Donna Anderson
Current Members of Session	William Cooper, Dana Hartman, Rex Lettie, Barbara Burkett, Deborah Elder, Nick Suntheimer, Roberta Dinsmore, David Divelbiss, Richard Fetterman
Current Board of Deacons	Lee Blose, Kathi Cessna, Jean Hughes, Debra Dinsmore, Carole Haire, Donna Grabany, Richard Cessna, Barbara Endress, Pam Hogan

## AUGUST 2020 CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<i>At time of publishing, all other PCOP activities (besides worship) remain suspended until further notice.</i>						1
2 18 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time	3	4	5	6	7	8
9 19 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time	10	11	12	13	14	15
16 20 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time	17 5:30 P.M. Crosstown Food Pantry	18	19	20	21	22
23 21 <sup>st</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 22 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time	31	Sept. 1 September newsletter info deadline	<i>Please note that the church picnic usually held in August will not occur in 2020. We look forward to having it in 2021!</i>			

### ~ Sunday Morning Schedule ~

11:00 A.M. Worship in Sanctuary  
 During worship: A Time for Young Worshippers  
 No Fellowship Coffee Hour following Worship



106 East Union Street  
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Office hours: 9 A.M. to 1 P.M.  
Monday thru Friday

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