



The Rolling Stone

LENT 2025

Friends in Christ,

Starting with Ash Wednesday, we begin the forty days of Lent. Lent is a time for reflection on our lives and realignment, where needed, with **Christ. For some, Lent is a time of “giving up” something that could get** in the way of following Christ. For others, Lent is a time for taking on a new, healthy practice in hopes of developing a faithful new habit. One of the blessings of Lent comes in knowing that our sisters and brothers in the faith are on a similar journey. I invite you to take part in Lent that your life of faith may grow. You will find in this newsletter a list of the messages you will hear in worship during Lent.

A brief update...You will not be surprised that I have discovered at Sampson's Mills dedicated staff, members and friends. I have found engaged church members from the Cupboard Stretchers' team to E.P.I.C. leaders.....from the choir to the liturgists and the sound/live stream volunteers. Some leaders are visible in worship and activities; others are supporting behind the scenes. Sampson's Mills' many active members and friends is a key indicator of vitality.

I am enjoying getting to know you and your stories. Some of that has happened in conversations before or after worship. Some of you have dropped in to say hello. Several conversations happened as two deacons and I recently served home communion to three church members. Some of you have shared your faith questions. A few of you shared grief stories and one person shared how he supported two colleagues during their time of painful grief. I am grateful for the different ways that you have opened to me your hearts and lives. I smile as I think of playful interactions I have had with some of you. In my thinking, the presence of humor is another indicator of vitality.

In this newsletter you will read of many ongoing activities in the church and several new initiatives. One new work is planning for your 125th anniversary. The planning team includes: **Bernie D'Antonio, Amber Keefer, Billie Kissel, Shannon McDowell, Rich Peters, Elayne Sparico, Nancy Swanson, and Joanne Welch.** You will receive updates in this newsletter and in worship.

Your Session has begun another initiative – a congregational survey that will give both the elders and your Pastor Nominating Committee key information for their work. Your participation in the survey is essential so that we may receive your perspective on various aspects of church life. Your responses will help to discern essential priorities for the coming months. **Teresa Trich is Session's point person for implementing the survey.**

In addition to Sunday mornings and early afternoons, I am in the church most Tuesdays and Thursdays except for the third week of the month when my days will likely be Monday and Friday to accommodate administrative meetings. Call, stop by, or send me an email (steve@sampsonsmills.org). I look forward to time with you.

Steve

Sampson's Mills Celebrates

Loving Our Neighbors Since 1900

A Message from Billie Kissel, member for 65 years



Old Church Building,
Sampson's Mills Presbyterian Church

SMPC began in 1892 (during President William McKinley's time!) as a simple **Mission Sunday School**.

Participation grew and grew...so that in 1900, **the church formally organized as Sampson's Mills Presbyterian Church**. The mill stone, or grist stone, at the front of our church harkens back to the old Sampson mill work, which was an early meeting place of the Sunday school.

Please note that our membership today benefits from the many, many dedicated members who preceded us and demonstrated to the younger members (at the time) the example of stewardship, faithfulness, and missionary focus that we continue today. The church now serves a much wider membership that extends beyond White Oak to McKeesport, North Huntingdon, North Versailles and more.

We are excited to kick off the celebration of 125 years of service with our **membership and the surrounding communities**. In the coming months, you'll be hearing about a myriad of ways that we can celebrate our amazing history. There will be something for everyone and we thank you in advance for your **input and participation in marking how we've been** *Loving our Neighbors since 1900*.

Mark your calendars for **Sunday, May 4th** when our 10:30am worship service will honor our long congregational history. Then, on **Saturday, September 13th**, we'll be inviting all of our neighbors to join us for a community open house event. In between those two dates, **keep an eye out for information of ALL the different ways that you'll be able to share your treasured memories.**



Submit your memories of SMPC through the years!

Scan this QR code to submit your pictures & memories to the anniversary team. Or, let us know **you need some assistance scanning, and we'll be happy to help!**

<https://forms.gle/4fn72Tj9cQjNUV3X8>

Loving Our Neighbors Since 1900



*Kitchen Staff- Edith Bell, Rachel Tennette,
and helpers*



Ground Breaking Dedication.
Sampson's Mills Presbyterian Church
April 24, 1955



Food For Hungry--Unloading a truck & a van, L-R:
Dave Shellenbarger, Walt Keefer, Bill Messinger and
Jack Campbell help stocking the Food Pantry.



5th & 6th in Crafts making puppets



*MAGICIAN HASELHOFF
SR. FELLOWSHIP*

*JACK COLE
CHRISTMAS PARTY*

Upcoming Messages for Lent

March 9th – *The Other Danger from Temptation*

Deuteronomy 16:1-11, Luke 4:1-13

March 16th – *A Better Method for Finding Your Way*

Philippians 3:17-4:1, Luke 13:31-35

March 23rd – *Do You Realize the Opportunity in Front of You?*

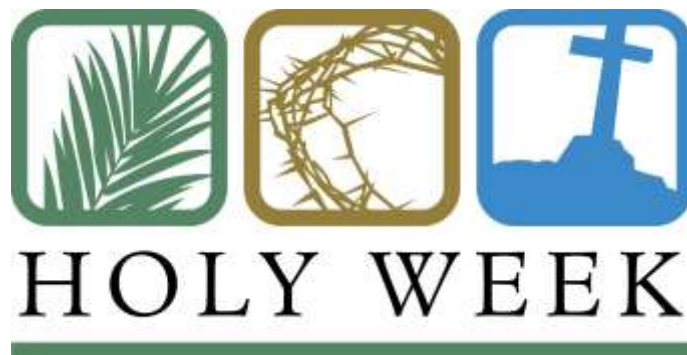
Isaiah 55:1-9, Luke 13:1-9

March 30th – *A Large, Broad, and Generous Vision of Humanity*

2 Corinthians 5:16-21, Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

April 6 – *Better than Accomplishments, Credentials, and a Good Retirement*

Philippians 3:4b-14, John 12:1-8



Palm Sunday– April 13th at 10:30am

Important Lessons from Two Unnamed Disciples

Matthew 21:1-11

Maundy Thursday– April 17th

selected readings from John 13, 14, and 17

6pm Stew Meal/7pm Worship with Communion

Good Friday– April 18th at 7pm

What Are We to Make of Good Friday?

John 19:16b-19

Easter– April 20th at 10:30am

What Jesus Might Have Preached on Easter

John 20:1-18

Traditional Service with Brass Ensemble

Love & Serve Jesus Christ

From the Deacons



EASTER FLOWERS orders due by March 16th

All selections are \$10 each.

Easter Lily, Hyacinth (blue or pink) and Tulips (red or yellow)

A list of honored/memorialized names will be on the Easter slideshow and in the next newsletter.

If you would like to purchase Easter plants for our display, please complete the online form [HERE](#). If unable to go online, please fill free to fill out the form below and submit to the church office or place in the offering plate.

To pay for your plants, please be sure to mark your envelope with “Easter Flowers” or pay online by using the “**Payment**” option in our [online portal](#).

Your name: _____

(as it will appear on the list)

Phone: _____



Easter Lily Quantity _____

Hyacinth– BLUE Quantity _____

Tulips– RED Quantity _____

Hyacinth– PINK Quantity _____

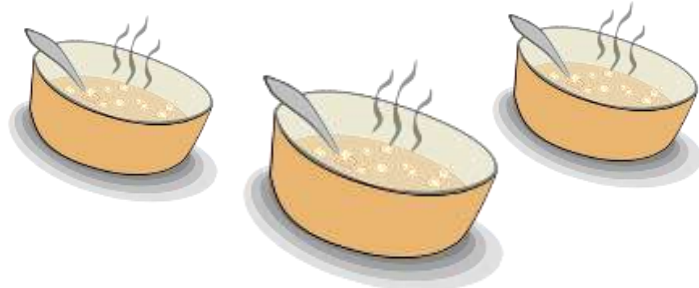
Tulips– YELLOW Quantity _____

TOTAL QUANTITY of FLOWERS : _____x \$10 = Total Cost of :\$_____

In honor of: _____

In memory of: _____

LOOKING AHEAD!



Election Day Soup Sale

Our semi-annual soup sale is coming up on
Primary Day, *Tuesday, May 20th!*

While polls open at 7am that day, our soup
sale will begin at 8am and continue until we
are sold out!

Help us reach our goal of 100 quarts sold!

Faith Formation News

It's hard to believe that EPIC will be coming to an end in just a few short weeks! The end of year EPIC Family Picnic will be on Wednesday, March 26th. Our EPIC kitchen crew will provide hotdogs and drinks and our families will all bring covered dishes to share. There will be lots of games and we will recap all the fun we had this year!

What is EPIC? EPIC is our Intergenerational Midweek Ministry. This program is for everyone ages 5 through adulthood. We meet on **Wednesdays** from 5:30 to 7:30



Love & Serve Party

The Mission Team joined with EPIC Wednesday for the Love & Serve Party this year. Also, this mission night went beyond Sampson's Mills, as our building partner, **Girl Scout Troop #20475**, also collected donations and attended the party as well! The fellowship hall was booming with dinner, games, cookie decorating, and mission projects! Our big collection this year benefited the Greater Pittsburgh Women's Shelter. Thank you to everyone who contributed!



Save the Date!

July 28th through August 1st

All are welcome to
Community

VBS
White Oak Park

vbspark.org

EPIC may be winding down...but it will soon be time for

[Community VBS in the Park!](#)

We are in White Oak Park at the Blue Spruce and Tulip Tree Pavilions
July 28th through August 1st.

With even more churches joining, this year's VBS has potential to be the biggest one yet!

Stay tuned—
registration goes live June 1st!



Music Ministry

Our choir and bell choir have both been hard at work lately preparing music for the season of Lent. If you have thought about joining either one of these groups, now is a great time to jump in! Rehearsals are Thursday evenings.

Bell Choir Meets on Thursdays at 6:00pm in the sanctuary.

Choir meets on Thursdays at 7:00pm in the choir room.

Contact Jo at jo@sampsonsmills.org if interested!

Church Choirs Unite! 2025 Tells the story of Holy Week & Easter

Our SMPC Church Choir is once again teaming up with church choirs in the area! This year, they offer a Lenten Cantata, “No Greater Love”. This fantastic musical telling of Holy Week and Easter is scheduled for Sunday, April 6th at 3pm at Mary, Mother of God Roman Catholic Parish– St. Angela Merici Church. Admission is free!



Godly Play! Our Children's Worship volunteers have taken on a new curriculum in their new space. The room upstairs that was previously the nursery is now the Children's Worship Godly Play Room! The story baskets live on the big blue shelves now and a different experiential manipulative comes out each week for the kids to work with the story through different mediums, like play doh, drawing, building, etc.



As a reminder, Children age 4 through 4th grade are invited upstairs following the **Children's Moment** to participate in *Godly Play* and will come back down to the sanctuary at the end of the service. On Communion Sundays we invite all of God's children to remain in the sanctuary so we can all celebrate communion together.

Faith Formation News

Empower our Neighbors

CUPBOARD STRETCHERS MINISTRY / WHITE OAK FOOD PANTRY

We write this article with such grateful hearts! We are constantly amazed at the efficiency and fellowship among our volunteers at our food pantry. God has blessed us with the best! We are also thankful for the local churches and community organizations such as the Lions and Rotary that send us volunteers as well as monetary donations, and we cannot forget our own **congregation's support with volunteers and donations of food and money.**

We are very excited about the new ramp into the sanctuary that enables our elderly clients and those that are handicapped easier access to our **ministry! We've had many favorable comments.**

A special thanks go to Teresa Trich for writing a grant and Amber Keefer for coordinating efforts that have enabled the pantry to purchase a much needed freezer, computers, and special dolly for our monthly distributions.

If you're wondering what you can do to help our pantry, here it is! During Lent, we have some specific suggested items you can donate each week. Bring your donations to the church on Sunday each week or drop them off during the week during the regular office hours of 9:30-1:30, Monday-Friday. The list is in this newsletter, and also available in the week-end resources email, and on our website. Monetary donations are also always welcomed and help us to provide gift cards for families to complete their holiday meals with their own traditional foods.

Let's make this an Easter full of hope for our neighbors in need!

We are most grateful for the Lord's Blessing on our church's ministry!

Yours in Christ,
Jolene Keefer and Carol Lasch,
co-coordinators



Cupboard Stretchers White Oak Food Pantry

Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank Community Impact Grant

Through our agency partner relationship with the GPCFB, we were able to apply for a grant to fund some much-needed equipment updates for the Cupboard Stretchers Ministry! This includes the replacement of the dedicated freezer, which broke in December. In the coming weeks, not only will we receive the new, larger freezer, but also a new U-boat dolly (with working wheels!), and two new laptops replacing what had become obsolete and unreliable technology.

Next Distributions

Friday, March 21st

Friday, April 18th

Friday, May 16th

To volunteer, contact

Jolene Keefer

Call or text: 724-396-0977

Email: jpkeefe@comcast.net

Don't forget to check out the

cupboardstretchers.org

website

and to like their

[FaceBook](#) Page!



Empower our Neighbors

40 days 40 food items

Support our Cupboard Stretchers White Oak Food Pantry

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Peanut Butter | 22. Hamburger Helper |
| 2. Jelly | 23. Canned Corn |
| 3. Canned Meal
(ex: Chef Boyardee) | 24. Baked Beans |
| 4. Canned Chicken | 25. Granola Bars/
Protein Bars |
| 5. Pasta | 26. Water |
| 6. Canned Spaghetti
Sauce | 27. Girl Scout Cookies |
| 7. Cereal | 28. Toilet Paper |
| 8. Oatmeal | 29. Pop Tarts |
| 9. Canned Green Beans | 30. Instant Mashed Po-
tatoes |
| 10. Canned Pineapple | 31. Microwave Meals
(ex: Compleat meals) |
| 11. Canned Carrots | 32. Crackers
(ex: Saltine or Ritz) |
| 12. Applesauce | 33. Cornbread Mix |
| 13. Rice | 34. Juice Boxes |
| 14. Canned Mandarin
Oranges | 35. Protein Drink
(ex: Ensure) |
| 15. Canned Tuna | 36. Tooth brush |
| 16. Juice | 37. Toothpaste |
| 17. Flour | 38. Bath Soap |
| 18. Sugar | 39. Shampoo |
| 19. Macaroni & Cheese | 40. Antiperspirant |
| 20. Hearty Soup | |
| 21. Chicken Noodle
Soup | |

Not sure what to give up for Lent?
Try taking on something new instead!
Similar to the popular Reverse Advent Calen-
dar concept, each day put aside an item for
our Cupboard Stretchers ministry. Drop off
what you have collected each week in our
donations corner, in the office hallway.



**HELP GIRL SCOUT TROOP 20475
GO TO CAMP THIS SUMMER**

Our building partner, Troop 20475, have cho-
sen our Cupboard Stretchers Ministry as
their recipient for Cookies for a Cause!
Purchase cookies for our food bank– they
will be distributed directly to our clients at
the April 18th distribution. Scan the QR
code below to purchase!



<https://digitalcookie.girlscouts.org/scout/>



Cultivate Community



Upcoming Vendor & Craft Show

Saturday, April 12, 2025 from 10am-2pm

Our popular hoagie sale will also be included this year –
check your weekend resources email for more details on pre-orders
as we get closer!

Spread the word! Scheduled Vendors/Crafters Include:

[Acecessorize](#)

[Lasered N'At](#)

[Almost Heaven Crafting](#)

[Lumen Resin](#)

Baby Love– Fleece & Flannel Blankets

[Miss Mae Designs](#)

[Burning Oaks Coffee Company](#)

Needle Work

[Chunky Knit Designs by Ellen](#)

Paper Pie- Usborne Books

Creative Rush

Scentsy

Door Décor & More

Tastefully Simple

Jewelry Designed by Sharon Kengle

True-ly Delicious Handmade Chocolates

Just Flags

Wood Turning

UPDATED DIRECTORY If you are in need of an updated directory, please send an email to office@sampsonsmills.org to request one. Be sure to indicate if you would like a pdf file be simply sent to you electronically, or request a printed copy.

Facility Rentals

Remember that the Fellowship Hall may be rented for private events such as birthday parties and showers. In addition, we are looking to partner with more local non-profit organizations to whom we can offer rental discounts. If you or someone you know is looking for a simple, efficient event space for a family gathering or group meeting, please have them contact the church office!

Call 412-678-5355 or

[fill out an inquiry form here.](#)



Cultivate Community



Life Line Screenings at
Sampson's Mills

Thursday, May 29th

Sign up at lifelinescreening.com
and type in zip code 15131

White Oak Senior Activities Group

Looking for opportunities to connect with others or just be more active and try new things? Check out some of the many White Oak Senior Activities!

With special speakers, yoga classes, coffee hours, and a variety of bus trips, there is something for everyone! Their monthly flyer is always available on our community bulletin board, or check out their [Facebook Group](#)

The White Oak Lions Presents "M" Saturday, May 3rd

It's like "Psycho" with dinner! Join the fun with this murder mystery dinner fundraiser here in the Fellowship Hall. Doors open at 5:30pm, with pasta dinner served at 6:30pm and mystery show beginning at 7:30pm.

In addition, auction baskets and 50/50 will be available.

For tickets, call your local White Oak Lion,
Rich Peters 412-678-3719 or
Carol Lasch 412-877-4298



Mon Yough Chorale

Hot Dog & Bake Sale

Saturday, May 10th


Our Building Partner will be holding their biannual fundraiser at
Busy Beaver of White Oak from 11am-2pm.



Save the Date The [Mon Yough Chorale](#) will hold their concert here at SMPC on
Sunday, June 8th!

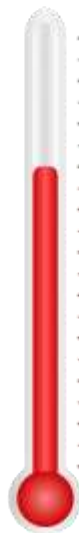
Session News

A Message from Session & Stewardship/Finance



This Lenten Season, in our 125th year!, we continue to celebrate improved accessibility and community outreach via streaming services and our many established programs of service to our Lord! Our pastoral search has begun and Church operations continue. This is only possible with your steadfast stewardship, helping us meet or exceed our monthly income projections. Given the season, please pray on our future, ways which new income is possible, even through small measure by savings realized through personal sacrifice. The anticipated cost of a full-time pastor weighs heavily on any promise for the future we seek, and so we must stay engaged to meet our financial needs ahead.

PER CAPITA 2025



Have you contributed your \$38.11? Annual Per Capita contributions support our local, regional, and national Presbyterian leadership. Our total Per Capita bill is based upon our membership statistical report submitted annually to Presbytery—so we pay this fee for each member on our rolls. Please make every effort to make your own Per Capita contribution! What is not fundraised MUST come from the SMPC operating budget. Currently, we have received 72% of our budgeted goal of fundraised per capita.

Giving Snapshot



Having issues with the online giving portal?
Contact the Presbyterian Foundation
for help by calling
1-800-858-6127

	Envelopes	Online
December	\$11,554	\$3,080
January	\$7,572	\$5,058
February	\$7,281	\$2,893

Holy Cow! The C.A.T. Survey

Soon, you will hear A LOT about the Congregational Assessment Tool. This survey will be vital to the work of the newly elected Pastoral Nominating Committee as they embark on the search for a new pastor. Please make every effort to participate! Watch your email for more details. Paper copies will also be available when requested.



Holy Cow!

The C.A.T. survey is coming !



Congregational
Assessment
Tool

We need your voice!

This survey is your opportunity to share your experiences and priorities for our congregation. If you subscribe to our weekly emails, you will receive a web link to complete the assessment. Computers and paper copies will also be available at the church.

All of our worshipers are asked to participate.

MORE INFORMATION TO COME.

PNC

Tim Dunn
Jolene Keefer
Laura McCusker
Teresa Trich
Matt VanMeter

The Work of the Pastor Nominating Committee Begins!

The Pastor Nominating Committee (or PNC) was formally elected at our specially called congregational meeting held following worship on February 16th.

Members were nominated by our Nominating Committee, and accepted by vote of the congregation. Please pray for all members as they begin this important work of the church.

CHURCH
LEADERSHIP

Cultivate Community



Support our local McKeesport High School Students!

You may even see some familiar faces in the pit orchestra, the cast, or crew as those who share their musical gifts with us here in worship, or help with our Community VBS in the Park!

Spread the word!
Kindergarten
registration is now open!
Help make sure all 5 year olds are in school this fall!



McKeesport Area School District

Kindergarten Registration 2025-2026

Kindergarten Registration for the 2025-2026 school year is now open! Please follow the instructions below to register. All registrations will be completed online.

If you require assistance, please call 412-664-3700 or email enrollment@mckasd.net.
If you need to access a computer, please visit us at our Administration Building at 3590 O'Neil Blvd. McKeesport, PA 15132.

TIGER TOTS PRESCHOOL

We are Now Accepting Applications for the 2025-2026 School Year!

Enrollment is now open for the 2025-2026 Tiger Tots Preschool program. If your child is ready for preschool or you are looking for an opportunity for your child to gain a comfort level around other children in a social environment, this is the program for you!

We accept children between the ages 2-5 who are fully potty trained.

The Tiger Tots preschool is a FREE program. Preschool runs Tuesday through Thursday with both morning and afternoon sessions. The morning session runs from 8:30 AM- 10:30 AM and the afternoon session runs from 12:15 PM -2:00 PM. You can choose the program session that works best for you and your child. The first day of school is scheduled for Tuesday, September 9th.

If you are interested in completing an application or have questions about the program, please email Lacey Siess, Tiger Tots Preschool Director, at lsiess@mckasd.net or call (412) 664-3650 ext. 8119

Mission Team Update

The SMPC Mission Team began a new monthly ministry– providing 50 bagged lunches to the newly opened Hope Ministries of McKeesport (former location of the Intersection). The Mission Team also co-sponsored the activities of the EPIC Wednesday Love and Serve Party, resulting in 83 care bags delivered to the **Greater Pittsburgh Women's Shelter**. We are now beginning plans for the this year's annual Serve Sunday, a weekend of service scheduled for April 26-27. Watch your email and listen for announcements in the coming weeks for details!

Looking Ahead.....Save the Date
April 26th-27th
A Weekend of Service for our Community!



Activities for all ages and abilities will be available, including:

White Oak Community Clean Up Day

Household Collection benefitting the
Shared Blessings Mission Store of Duquesne

Projects benefiting our students & Teachers
at McKeesport Area Schools

And More!





Cupboard Stretchers White Oak Food Pantry

A ministry of Sampson's Mills

www.cupboardstretchers.org

For more information, to give or to volunteer

Distributions are the 3rd Friday of the month

For residents of White Oak, Coulter and Versailles Borough

Worship 10:30 am

Streaming Online

Rev. Dr. Stephen Wilson

Like Us on Facebook!



Facebook.com/sampsonsmillspresbyterianchurch

Facebook.com/CupboardStretchers

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR
You Tube
CHANNEL

<https://sampsonsmills.org/youtube>

*Regular church office hours are
9:30am-1:30pm, Monday-Friday*

Amber is in the office Monday-Friday.

Steve is in the office on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Jo is in the office Tuesdays,
Wednesdays & Thursdays



Our Midweek Ministry

The ladies meet for breakfast
first Monday of each month 9:00 am
Denny's in North Versailles.

The men meet for breakfast
first Tuesday of each month at 8:30 am
Denny's in North Versailles.

The Millers Daughter's Book Club
third Tuesday 6:30 pm
(for more details contact
Linda Lawrence)



Sampson's Mills Presbyterian Church
1665 Lincoln Way
White Oak, Pa 15131

Phone: 412-678-5355

Email: office@sampsonsmills.org

Website: sampsonsmills.org