



The First United
Presbyterian Church
of Crafton Heights

The Runner

David B. Carver, Pastor
www.chup.org
March 2023

As I write these lines in late February, I am fresh from a gathering of members of Pittsburgh Presbytery who are planning to take a Pilgrimage to Malawi, Central Africa, in March of this year. For most of the people in the room, this is their first such venture. If you've known me very long, you know that I've made this trip nearly two dozen times.

In all my years of joining with partners there, and seeking God's face in that spot, however, I cannot recall having traveled during the season of Lent. I often think of Lent as a spiritual pilgrimage, and today I am reflecting on the ways that our spiritual and geographical pilgrimages offer many of the same opportunities for reflection. Consider...



What is your goal or intention? Many of the people in the room planning a trip to Africa talked about wanting to grow closer to God, or to experience the presence of the Holy in connection with others in the Body of Christ. Do you have a thought as to what you would like to see happen in your life this Lent? By the time we are finished with this six-week season that started on Ash Wednesday, we'll be knee-deep in softball or T-ball practices, planning our gardens, or starting to worry about cutting the grass again. That's all great. But what else is there? How do you want to grow and be shaped by the presence of Jesus along your journey during this season?

What will you take with you? That's one of the questions I'm asked the most as pilgrims prepare for mission travel. "What should we bring? Do we need...?" And when you're on the road, you want to make sure you have the right sunscreen or medication or appropriate clothing. But more than that, I invite travelers to be aware of their expectations, hopes, and cultural ideas about what is "normal" or "right". Similarly, those of us who are traveling through Lent here in Pittsburgh will do well to consider the hopes, attitudes, and preconceived notions we carry into each day. What if we checked ourselves for gratitude and hope each day as we left the house? Could we make sure that we always had a supply of flexibility and resilience in our daily walks?

What must you leave behind? Whenever you take a trip, you leave most of what you have at home. On a trip to Africa, most of us are restricted to a 50 pound suitcase and a carry-on. As we continue to walk through Lent, will you decide that there are things that you don't need to carry with you through each day? Perhaps you can set down some of your anxiety about the things you can't control today, or maybe you need to release a little of your time, talent, or treasure into the world by making the gift of finances or presence in someone's life.

How will you be sustained on the journey? "But what will we eat?" is a question I heard many times last evening from people who were afraid that their usual diet would be disrupted. I assured them that it would, in fact, be very disrupted – but that they'd be sustained in ways that they didn't yet realize. In the same way, my prayer for you on this Lenten journey is that you will be surprised by the ways that God fills some of the empty places in your life. When we decide to let go of some of the things we've held for a long time, we find that we have a greater capacity for engaging the Holy One in different ways.

My hope is that some of what you'll find inside: invitation to Wednesday pot-luck dinners, or participation in an Adult Study time on Sunday mornings, or opportunities to connect in other ways might be useful to you as you engage in your own Lenten pilgrimage. May you be blessed with noble intentions, discernment about what to hold onto and what to release, and an awareness of God's provision for you each day. I'll look for you in church!

Pastor Dave

Fellowship Opportunities

Tech Team: The worship team is looking for individuals who could help run our technology! Are you interested in helping with the sound system? Would you like to help run the slide show or camera? Do you want to help get us started with the new ProPresenter system? If any of this sounds interesting to you, please reach out to Megan Veltman or Adam Simcox for more information!

Weekly Pot-luck: Don't forget CHUP family! Weekly pot-lucks will continue through March! Every Wednesday, you are invited to join with other members of the community to share a meal and conversation. There won't be much in terms of a "program" — just gathering around some good food and building relationships with those with whom we share the road. Each Wednesday in March, from 6-7 pm.

Meeting Jesus at The Table: For those who are interested in a little more spiritual "meat", we'll be walking through a Lenten study and discussion entitled Meeting Jesus at The Table on Sunday mornings at 9:45. Adults and teens are welcome to join in this conversation as the younger kids participate in Sunday school or child care.

Youth Mission Trip: The youth group is planning for their annual Mission Trip to the Seneca Nation of Indians in Western New York state in early August. You can support the group in this venture (and take advantage of another opportunity to eat at church!) by coming to the annual Baked Potato Luncheon after worship on March 26. We'll have giant spuds with all kinds of fixings, available for you to share with your friends! We will even have some take-out containers for you to bless your friends. There are no tickets— just a donation of your choosing.

Ladies Fellowship: Ladies - you are invited to join us on Tuesday mornings at 10:00 in Fellowship Hall when we gather for study, fellowship & prayer. During Lent we will be using a video series by Max Lucado "He Chose the Nails". All are welcome & bring a friend!



Reflections from Texas

We feel very deeply blessed to have participated in the Texas Mission trip. It's easy to think of the trip in terms of giving our time and effort to help families in need, but the experience was so much more than that. The sense of community and gratitude that we were immersed in throughout the trip far outweighed the physical exertion. It was heartwarming to be welcomed by the local community. We were:

- Met at the airport
- Provided a comfortable place to stay for the week
- Served a hot breakfast the first morning
- Offered home cooked meals throughout our stay
- Supplied with the tools and supplies that were needed for the home renovation



And, to unite us in spirit, the welcoming of Pastor Dave and Hannah to the pulpit for Sunday Worship at the First Presbyterian Church of Mission, Texas.

Through the local community and, of course, the Castillo family and the families at the Respite Center, we felt a pronounced sense of gratitude for our presence, compassion, and work. But the sense of community and gratitude didn't stop there. Within our own group of nine people the kindness, teamwork, mentoring, support, and generosity overflowed. Bonds of the heart have been created and strengthened. Throughout the trip we also felt the support and gratitude of the CHUP congregation. From the commissioning of our mission team in worship to the show of support on social media throughout the week, we felt proud to represent the Crafton Heights community. Lastly, the gratitude that WE feel for the opportunity to serve with such a wonderful crew and the appreciation that we received from the Castillos, Respite Center Families, and the our host community was a gift and blessing that lifts our hearts in ways that are beyond words. Thank you all for making this possible.

Dave & Michelle Tang

I was honored to be with the team from Crafton Heights in Mission, Texas last week and truly humbled by the spirit or love demonstrated by this group to the mission, the family we served and to each other. I was welcomed as family and not once did I feel like the outsider. This congregation is rightly proud of the work you have done in the Rio Grande Valley over the past twelve years. Clearly, this team and the congregation at Crafton Heights United Presbyterian have embraced the “love your neighbor as yourself” charge as found in Mark. I am better for have worked alongside you all and look forward to doing so again.



In Christ, and your friend,

Gerald Ostlund



Open Door

Youth Group: The youth group continues to meet every Sunday (7:00PM to 8:30PM) in the 3rd floor youth room for 6th-12th graders. We've been averaging around 15-20 youth every Sunday. Each night starts off with crazy fun games and group songs led by Pastor Dave. We are excited to see the on-going spiritual growth in them as the youth leaders take turns every Sunday sharing Bible stories and Bible characters to the group. Then having thought provoking conversations on how they can apply various Christian principles to their lives to help them navigate situations that they face on a daily basis. If you have or know a youth in 6th-12th grade, please have them join us on a Sunday evening to see what the fun is about. In addition, have them join us at our upcoming youth retreat in April or our annual youth mission trip in August. If you have any questions about youth group please don't hesitate to contact me.

Friday Night Rec: Since changing the time and combining the sessions for rec night from 6PM to 9M for all grades K-12th the numbers have steadily increased with several new youth showing up on Friday nights. Our volunteers from Waynesburg have adjusted and make sure that all of youth who come out get a fair share of play time on the main floor and participate in the arts and crafts room throughout the evenings. The snack shack opens up @730pm for the youth to enjoy snacks and a drink.



Open Door Chess Club: The chess club along with a rep from the Queens Gambit Chess Institute continue to meet the last Wednesday of every month (6:00 PM -7:30 PM) until May 2023. We have been blessed to have a 14 yr. old international chess champion come and teach neighborhood youth how to play chess the right way. There are also opportunities for the youth to try their chess skills in chess tournaments around the city. If you are interested in a night of chess with youth, be on the look out on our Facebook page for up to date information and other communications.



Kids of Steel: The Open Door is hosting the Kids of Steel running club again! Every Thursday from 6-7:15, kids in grades K-6 should meet at the Open Door for exercise, fun, and a delicious snack. On occasional Saturdays, we will meet at the Dunbar Park for a group run around the neighborhood. On Saturday, May 6th, the group will run the final mile of our marathon at the Chick-Fil-A Pittsburgh Kids Marathon. If you have any questions, please reach out to Jessica Simcox for more details.

Important Dates:

Friday Night Rec, every Friday (6-9) until May 2023 for all grades

Youth Group is every Sunday (7-8:30) for 6th-12th graders, 3rd floor youth room at CHUP

Chess Club every last Wednesday of the month (6-7:30) in CHUP fellowship hall

Youth Retreat—March 31st-April 2nd at Faith Ranch

Open Door golf fundraiser May13th at Moon Golf Club

Cross Trainers Summer Day Camp—June 26th—August 4th

Youth Missions trip August 6th-12th

Preschool

Love each other as I have loved you. Luke 6:31

Love was in the air all month long in February.

We felt the **Love** shared by all of you by your support for our vacation raffle, thank-you for your purchases. We **Love** Litterini Travel for being a premier travel agency and providing us with an awesome travel package. The lucky winner of the \$2,500 will be listed in the church bulletin on Sunday March 5! We felt the **Love** from our classroom volunteers, dedicating their time and **Love** for kids. We felt the **Love** on Valentine's Day from our preschool families, Thank you for the cards, candy and flowers! I'm grateful and thankful for the **Love** our dedicated teachers share each day, by nurturing, caring and guiding the children, through their creativity, thoughtful lesson plans and **Love** for each child. For the **Love** given by everyone who have supported this preschool ministry through prayers and donations. Your support really makes a difference.

Do everything in Love. Proverbs 17:17

Register Now- We have two Open House Tours planned for new families on March 7th and March 13th 12:30-1:30pm.



Prayer Concerns

Members: Carl Martelli, Florence Hall, Marge Freeman, Eleanor Arlet, Megan Salinetto Yelley's brother in law, Karren Sites, Tina Dame

Friends & Relatives: Sue Whitaker, Than and Ruthina Veltman, Pastor Michael Weller, Wayne Arlet, Jr., Lisa Myers, Teresa Stacy (niece of Mary Stacy), Helen Barto (Kitty Kistler's mother).

Worship Opportunities

In-Person Worship: Services are Sundays at 11:00 am. Please read our updated safety guidelines before attending in person worship: <https://files.constantcontact.com/7a16d75f001/80d3381d-f76d-4188-8553-c263835f868e.pdf>

Online Worship: Each Sunday at 11:00 am, our worship service livestreams on our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/CraftonHeightsChurch/> And then later on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLU5XsLRABddh2dgu38_W9bbRu9wYaOB4

March Birthdays

1 st	David Salinetro Julia Imler
2 nd	Fred Sam
3 rd	Linda Dawson Cheryl Reed Carter Padula
5 th	Shayden Butti
6 th	Joanne Holt
8 th	Jayden Musko
9 th	Eric Barth
10 th	Don Weaver
12 th	Fay Reynolds
14 th	Michelle Salinetro
17 th	Marge Freeman Cody Schrenker
18 th	Season Ciechanowski
19 th	Rebecca Weaver
21 st	Mya Austin Josh Mehl Megan Yelley
26 th	Jeffrey Voeltzel
27 th	Caleb Connor
28 th	Justin Barth Erika Locke
30 th	Arlene Donovan

Electronic Giving

Go to <https://chup.org/giving/> to find easy options for sending your donation electronically. Feel free to contact the office chup@chup.org to find out more about how you can designate where you would like your donation to go: the Church, the Preschool, the Open Door, the Food Pantry... the list goes on! Thank you for supporting our many ministries and enabling us to spread God's love in our community and throughout the world.

CHUP Online

Did you know that you can view the Runner in full color on our website? Back issues, too! Our website is mobile friendly and easier to navigate than ever. <https://chup.org/>

Blood Drive

Please mark your calendar for the next drive scheduled for, Sunday, June 4, 2023, from 8:00 am - 12:30 PM. Hope to see you there!

Need Help?

Do you need help of one kind or another? If you are in need of food, or someone to run an errand for you, or a friendly voice with whom to speak, or prayer... please let us know!

Email dave@chup.org and we will marshal the resources to help you face the challenges of your day. You are not alone!



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