



The First United  
Presbyterian Church  
of Crafton Heights

# The Runner

David B. Carver, Pastor  
[www.chup.org](http://www.chup.org)  
February 2021

Ash Wednesday, which is February 17 this year, begins the liturgical season of Lent. We in Crafton Heights will join the church around the world in marking the onset of this roughly 40 day period of fasting, reflection, confession, and spiritual growth with a worship service tentatively scheduled for 7 pm that evening. We'll gather for a simple service offering the imposition of ashes and the opportunity to share in the Lord's Supper.



*Ash  
Wednesday  
February 17*

Our word "Lent" comes from an old Anglo-Saxon term, "lencten", meaning "lengthen" or "spring". If ever we were eager for our days to lengthen, for growth to come, for Spring to arrive – it is this year! It was in the midst of Lent 2020 when the novel coronavirus pandemic forced the cancellation, closure, or re-arrangement of many of the aspects of our lives we saw as "normal." In fact, several of you mentioned to me last year that those opening weeks of the pandemic were "the Lentiest Lent we've ever Lented." Since then, of course, the situation has ebbed and flowed; we've lost some dear friends and more than 400,000 of our neighbors here in the USA. To say that this past year has been unusual, or different, or problematic – well, that doesn't even scratch the surface.

And yet, here we are again, once more embracing the path of the cross; we are waiting, with hope and maybe a bit of anxiety, for the light to be revealed. And as I write this, there are reasons to believe that we are coming through the worst of things. Vaccines have been developed in record time and are being distributed, we are planning to offer limited in-person gathering for worship here at church, and the nation as a whole is thinking about what it would mean to "open up" again – for travel, or outings, or dining, or school. We are not "there" yet, wherever "there" is, but we are beginning to plan for the "there" to emerge.

Lent is a good time for us as people of faith to continue the process of planning what kind of people we will be when we emerge from this year of dis-ease and anxiety. Every Lent is an opportunity to take stock, but this year especially it seems fitting to do so. Are there new habits we'd like to maintain or develop? Are there parts of our pre-2020 lives that we think we can release or let go? How do we continue to be faithful in our walk as disciples in this place we didn't think we'd be in?

Inside, you'll find information about studies and worship opportunities. As we move into these lengthening days, you'll hear more about ways that you can grow in mission and service. We'll pray together for a thawing, an enlightening, and for signs of new life.

I hope you've been able to be with us in worship – in person or online – and I'll look to continue that practice with you in the weeks to come.

*Pastor Dave*

## 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](mailto:dave@chup.org) and we will marshal the resources to help you face the challenges of your day. You are not alone!

## Open Door

*Two Open Door Alumni and current Steering Committee Members have offered to share their childhood experiences as participants in the Open Door's ministry. Here's one from Joe Orbovich:*

Circa 1985 I learned that a few friends were attending a Youth Group in Crafton Heights on Sunday night. My brother had already been attending for a few years, and I thought it would be a cool thing to do. I remember all of us sitting in the church, singing songs and playing games like Chubby Bunny or Sardines!

A year or so later, we learned that the church had purchased an old movie theater. During the demolition and renovation of the building, my 12 year old self had the opportunity to work both with professionals as well as a few Jack of All trades. My 46 year old self and my bank account are grateful for that experience for teaching me the skills to remodel my kitchen and game room over the last two years.

Once the work was completed, it was time for the Open Door to open for all of us. My fondest memories involve watching movies with Colleen Lovell, Square Dancing with Mary Prepelka, and playing Hockey with Jenn Mikula and her crew. There were also Volleyball tournaments with my best friend Tim St Clair, and a few scuffles with my buddy Skip Dauer. I can't count the many friendships that were created and solidified at the Open Door. Most of these friendships have lasted over 30 years now!

I also connected with a couple of the Open Door leaders: Dave Carver, Bob Salinetto, Dave Lee, and Dennis Piper. These men played a huge part in making sure that I kept myself out of trouble, and are great examples of the man I strive to be today.

When asked to volunteer my DJ Services for their Halloween Party a few years ago, I jumped on the opportunity! I've thoroughly enjoyed each of the events that I have been a part of since. As an adult, it is truly an honor to serve in this place that served me well for so many years!

I love seeing how the Open Door has transformed with the community over the years. Crafton Heights is blessed to have this space available to the community, and I look forward to what the future brings for this wonderful place.

Joe Orbovich

*And from Jamie Klein:*

Over the last few years I reconnected with the place that I grew up in. As a kid, The Open Door was a safe and fun place to go to. There are so many memories etched in my mind; being a ladybug in the play "Going Buggy," lip syncing in a talent show ("Old Time Rock & Roll"), Friday night recreation, retreats, dances and street fairs.

I was a member of the Youth Group. I believe this is the place that shaped me. All of us kids would meet weekly with our wonderful Youth Group Counselor Dennis. There, we would talk, support each other, and we never left the room without a good guitar sing along. We were taught responsibility by actively participating in community outreach, soup kitchens, and once a year taking it on the road for "Work Camp." I don't think us silly teens really understood at the time the impact this would have on us. All we knew is we were having fun.

After being inactive for so many years I made the decision to become a member of the Open Door Steering Committee. I want to give back to the place that gave me so very much as a kid and teen. I realize the world is not the same, which makes this outreach only that much more important now.

We as a committee are working to ensure the outreach thrives and continues to support the children and families of the community. In current times, it is even more important to have opportunities for the families we serve to have a safe place to learn (The Learning Hub), opportunities for socialization (online Youth Group), and a place that can help with other needs. A major piece of what has kept the mission going are the volunteers and the financial support through donations. We thank those who have supported, continue to support and will support this wonderful and important outreach.

Jamie Klein

## Mission Opportunity

*The Deacons are asking for help to raise \$1000.00 in donations to support the mission of The Open Door. We will start off this donation goal by contributing \$300.00. We are asking for your support to help us achieve the \$1000.00 goal. If you are unable to contribute monetarily at this time, we are asking that you take the time to pray for this mission.*

# Preschool

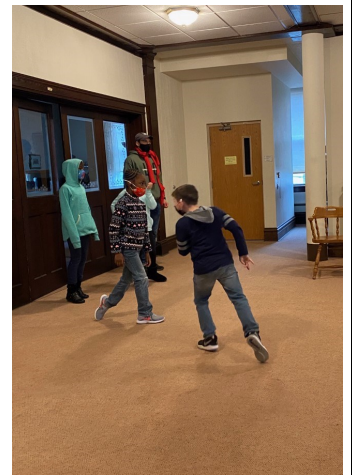
Our preschool families continue to work on the activities provided by preschool and the WQED Education team. This month's pack included weather related activities, scissor skill activities, matching and category sorting games, as well as learning how animals stay warm in the winter, with special ingredients to make puffy art paint. Families continue to attend zoom learning that always includes lively songs, fun conversations and stories. We are all grateful for these opportunities that allow us to stay connected during this time of school closure.

We will begin Fall registration in late February for the 2021/22 school year. We will post information on CHCPreschool Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/pg/Crafton-Heights-Community-Preschool-139844839409785/about/> with details. The preschool board is seeking various available grant funding as well as other fundraising options, so that we will continue to be a vibrant early education preschool for families in our community. If you would like to support our ongoing efforts, please send your donation into the church, Attn: Preschool on the envelope as well as in the memo line.



## Scenes from the Open Door Learning Hub

While the primary purpose of the Open Door Learning Hub is to provide young people with a safe place to engage in remote learning, we do have the opportunity to engage them in activities that foster community and promote healthy social engagement.



## Lenten Opportunities for Spiritual Growth and Fellowship

As mentioned on the front page of this newsletter, the season of Lent invites us to embrace the call to serve and follow Jesus in new and vibrant ways. Here are some of the ways that you can explore the paths of faithfulness this Lent:

Our friends at Busted Halo have produced an excellent introduction to the season of Lent. You can view it here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xo1mjuy1NA0&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xo1mjuy1NA0&feature=emb_logo) The team at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary has developed a series of daily online devotionals for the Lenten season. Written by seminary alumni, you can either view the devotions each day or have them emailed directly to you. More information is available here: [https://www.pts.edu/devotional\\_1](https://www.pts.edu/devotional_1) An additional devotional is being offered by Presbyterians Today and can be found here: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/today/lent2021/>

Here at Crafton Heights, we will have several tracks with which you might engage in Lenten worship and study. On Ash Wednesday, we will have an evening service of worship (tentatively scheduled for 7 pm) in which congregants will be offered the imposition of ashes as well as an opportunity to partake in the Lord's Supper. For those who are unable to attend a group worship gathering, Pastor Dave will offer "Ashes to Go" at some point during the day: if you would like to receive ashes you can simply come by the church at several points during the day and receive them in your own vehicle. Watch the website and worship announcements for specific times.

Our Sunday morning worship during Lent will focus on the Beatitudes – the blessings found at the beginning of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount in Matthew Chapter 5. As we think about what it means for us to walk with Jesus in 2021, what can we learn from his call for us to be poor in spirit, meek, merciful, pure in heart, and more? For six weeks, we'll use our time in worship to explore these sayings. In so doing, we'll note both their context within the Bible as well as their implications for us today. As usual, worship will take place on Sunday mornings at 11, and you can choose to participate by being here in person (assuming that the virus numbers continue on their present trajectory), via livestream, or on YouTube. This series will begin on February 21.

While we are not able to plan for our traditional Lenten Pot Luck Dinners, we will once more have an evening study and discussion during Lent. This year we will gather on Wednesday evenings (tentatively at 6:30, but watch for more details) to learn from renowned Biblical scholar Amy-Jill Levine in a course entitled "Entering the Passion of Jesus: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Week". Using a combination of booklet, video, and group discussion, we will enter into the biblical and historical literature surrounding the last days of Jesus' life. One participant had this to say about this resource: *"At a time of year when many of us are content with mere abstinence, Prof. Levine calls us to real risk in the life of faith. Her retelling of the events of Passion Week in terms of Jewish culture (essential to any understanding of what is happening)... makes this a terrific read for the Lenten season and for any time thereafter. Rarely have I read a book that made so clear how radical and all-consuming the call of Christ is."* At present our plan is to offer this as a virtual meeting through Zoom, but we may be in a position to develop a "hybrid" option that would include both virtual and face-to-face participation. Please call or email the church if you'd like a book of your own (books will be very helpful for participants, but will not be required).

## February Meetings

Session  
Feb 23  
7:00 pm

Deacons  
Feb 14  
1:00 pm

Steering  
Committee  
Feb 11  
7:00 pm

Preschool  
Board  
Feb 2  
7:00 pm

## Prayer Concerns

**Members:** McConnell Family, Tim Prepelka, Cheryl Shaw, Arlene Donovan, Adler Family, Marge Freeman, Eleanor Arlet, Aliza Ciechanowski & Family, Peter Veltman, Kitty Kistler, Maryanne Richardson.

**Friends & Relatives:** Ray Seiler, Gretchen & Dan Persinger, Zack Schneider, Margie McClure, Debbie Beatty, Tom Musko, Rich Boyle, Steven Ball, Judy & Ed Moskovitz, Patricia Sullivan, Dawn Sedlock, Tim Murray, Ellie Musolino, Lorraine Barth, Lisa & Nicholas Daugherty, Eadie Children, Krieger Family, Mark Mattern.

## February Birthdays

1st Timothy Durkin  
Trinity Locke  
2nd Marcy Davis  
6th Jonathan Mack  
Jackson Dix  
Hazel Donovan  
7th Becky Schrenker  
10th Nicole Zeller  
11th T. J. Schramm  
12th Denise Musko  
14th Jonathan Walker  
16th Paige Neidbala  
17th Katie Phelps  
18th Glenn Mack  
Sharon Niedbala  
19th Cori Shrader  
21st Paul Creely  
22nd Linda Schramm  
23rd Brittany Schrenker  
25th Bob Mikula  
Levi Veltman  
27th Leslie Fisher  
28th Gabe Kish

## Food Pantry Needs

Apple Juice  
Granola/fruit bars  
Rice  
Instant potatoes  
Pasta sauce and pasta  
Tuna  
Noodles/Rice packets  
Peanut butter/jelly

## In-Person Worship Guidelines

**Registration:** Seating is currently limited to 30. In order to ensure proper contact tracing, we ask you to register yourself and each additional family member, with contact information, at [chup@chup.org](mailto:chup@chup.org) or calling the church office at 412-921-6153. We request this information be submitted before 12:00 noon, Friday of each week.

**Entry/Exit:** The Stratmore St. doors will be the only ones used. If you need the lift, please let us know when you register, and we will be sure to accommodate you.

**Masks are Required** – Please wear your mask when entering and during the entire service. If you do not have a mask, or forget yours, one will be provided to you.

**Sanitize Hands** – Sanitizer stations are available near the entrances to the building.

**Maintain Social Distance** – With the exception of family groups we ask you to maintain a 6 ft. social distance from others. Worship facilitators will be directing seating and exiting each Sunday. Even though we will have Plexiglass shields installed, we will ask that the front pews remain empty as the worship leaders will be unmasked while speaking or singing.

**At this time, we are not able to provide childcare.**

**The unisex restroom in the back of the sanctuary will be available.**

**Please be patient with the congregational leadership as we navigate this crisis.**

***WE WILL CONTINUE TO LIVESTREAM OUR WORSHIP SERVICE VIA THE CHURCH'S FACEBOOK PAGE <https://www.facebook.com/CraftonHeightsChurch/> AND THEN AGAIN ON YOUTUBE [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLU5XsLRAbBddh2dgu38\\_W9bbRu9wYaOB4](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLU5XsLRAbBddh2dgu38_W9bbRu9wYaOB4)***

## 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. Please visit [www.chup.org](http://www.chup.org) to find online newsletters, sermons, prayer concerns, giving opportunities, announcements, online worship links, and clickable information on how you can become involved in our many ministries.

## Electronic Giving

**Online giving:** Go to [www.chup.org](http://www.chup.org) and click "Donate."

**App Giving:** Go to the App store or Google Play and search for "Give Plus Church" to download for FREE.

**Mobile Giving:** Text \$amount to 412-888-0842.

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