

THE LAMPLIGHTER
October 2020



IMPORTANT UPDATES FROM THE SESSION MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2020

Interim Pastor: Committee: Kathi Durkin, Sharon Richards, Mike Clopp, Peggy Flynn, and Jim Hixon. Committee has a Session-approved position description for an Interim Pastor. They will seek to find candidates to interview for the position.

Washington Presbytery Meeting – Tuesday, September 8 at Center Presbyterian Church from 4-5PM. Reported that the meeting included the installation of The Rev. Tom Moore as Pastor of Center Presbyterian Church and the retirement of The Rev. Stuart Broberg as Pastor of Church of the Covenant.

Nominating Committee: Lina will send a list of committee members to the Clerk of Session. The committee will begin the process of nominating individuals to fill vacancies on Session, Deacons, and other boards/committees of the church.

Building and Grounds: Session approved a request for pickleball groups to meet at Thomas after amending the schedule to Monday through Friday. The groups will complete the necessary applications, and insurance and COVID waiver requirements before beginning their programs.

Mission Team: The Food Drive benefitting the City Mission was a success. Two (2) requests for Day of Caring support have been met or are in progress and requests are being received for individuals to be included on the list of those who will receive help in 2021. The Boy Scouts have indicated their willingness to help support mission causes.

A full version of the Session meeting minutes can be viewed in the Meeting House office upon request.

SUNDAY MORNINGS
at
THOMAS CHURCH

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL
9:00 AM

SUNDAY WORSHIP
10:00 AM

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR
CHILDREN
Ages Preschool—5th Grade

Meets in Room 7
following the
Children’s Message
during Worship

COMMUNION
The first Sunday of every
month

DEADLINE: Information to be included in the *Lamp-lighter* must be received by the 20th of the month . We reserve the right to edit all submissions for content and space .

THOMAS CHURCH SESSION ELDERS

CLASS OF 2020

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Class of 2022

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THOMAS WHOLISTIC CARE DEACONS

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Class of 2021

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Class of 2022

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October Monthly Mission:

Domestic Violence of Southwestern PA

In Pennsylvania, more than ten million are abused each year in the United States. One in four women and one in seven men experience severe physical violence by an intimate partner. The mission for October is Domestic Violence Services of Southwestern Pennsylvania.

The mission of Domestic Violence Services of Southwestern Pennsylvania is to increase awareness of domestic violence and its effect on the community, to empower those victimized by providing advocacy and safe and effective services, and to work for social changes designed to eliminate domestic violence.

DV Services currently offers a variety of "violence-free" presentations to students, pre-K through college.

Pre-K through Middle School program focus on identifying and naming feelings, positive communication, self-esteem, conflict-resolution and bullying-prevention. Middle School-College programs address Dating Violence and Cyberbullying.

Coaching Boys into Men

Coaching Boys into Men (CBIM) is an evidence-based program that provides high school athletic coaches with the tools they need to address critical topics with their players: respectful relationships with dating partners, consent and what to do if a player witnesses harassment or sexual assault. The program empowers athletes, who are often leaders in school culture, to model healthy, respectful behaviors for their peers.

The #MeToo movement has focused on sexual harassment in the workplace, but sexual harassment begins much earlier. Middle and high school students say that sexual harassment from classmates, teachers and staff is a regular occurrence at school, that it is not taken seriously, and that perpetrators are rarely held accountable. The NO MORE K-12 video series features local high school students talking about the pervasiveness of sexual harassment in school.

Facts about sexual harassment in school:

- While any student can experience sexual harassment, girls are targeted more frequently than boys with girls of color experiencing higher rates of being kissed or touched without their consent. And, the majority of LGBTQ students have experienced some form of harassment at school

- More than 20% of middle school age male athletes admit to having sexually harassed someone in the last three months

- More than half of 7th-12th grade girls have experienced some form of sexual harassment

Schools have a legal obligation to protect students from sexual harassment, to intervene when it occurs and to take steps to prevent sexual harassment from happening. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX") is a Federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities. *Title IX requires schools to take steps to prevent and respond to sexual harassment including sexual violence.*

Domestic Violence Services of Southwestern PA provides safe houses in Washington and Fayette Counties to women and their children who are victims of domestic violence. All services are free of charge and completely confidential. They can provide transportation to the safe house if located in Washington, Greene, or Fayette counties.

The safe house is staffed 24/7 by trained domestic violence Counselor/Advocates and volunteers. Those staying in the safe house who wish to talk one-on-one to a Counselor/Advocate may do so at any time of the day or night.

Support groups are held strictly for residents in the safe house on a regular basis. While they are not mandatory, most women find them to be informative and helpful.

Safe house residents are asked to identify the goals they wish to accomplish during their stay. The safe house staff are available to help those during their stay achieve their goals by providing information and referrals, options, advocacy with area agencies when needed, and various applications.

Children's Advocates are available to work with children in the safe house. Children may be seen individually or in a group setting to talk about age-appropriate topics relating to domestic violence, such as hands are not for hitting, bullying, and safety planning.

Many women who are in need of safe housing are unable to bring their personal belongings, and they often do not have access to money for food, clothing, or personal care items. Food and donated clothing are provided and always available to women in the safe house.

Your contribution matters! Every day, DVSSP works to empower those who have been victimized by partner violence and reassure them that they deserve to be safe and free from violence. By supporting Domestic Violence Service of Southwestern PA, you are helping women and children who may feel alone and providing them the comfort of knowing there is a safe place to go.



It is with much sadness that we inform you of the death of Donald Craig. He was at home with Theresa at the time of his passing. Theresa has requested no phone calls, text messages, emails or meals during this time. Her family is with her. Funeral arrangements are private. Please keep Theresa and her family in your prayers as they grieve the loss of Don. The following is from Don's obituary:

Donald W. Craig, age 79, of Finleyville, passed away, August 27, 2020. He was the beloved husband of Theresa; loving father of David (deceased) and April; Proud grandfather of Autumn, Laura, Scarlett and Ella; and great-grandfather to Braylynn and Kailynn; son of the late Curt and Helen Craig. He is also survived by a host of nieces, nephew and cherished friends and neighbors.

Theresa and Don were married for 50 years. Don was an Army Veteran, stationed in the U.S. and Germany. Don loved the Corvettes, driving them and working on them.

Flu Clinic at Thomas

We will be holding a flu clinic at the church on Sunday, September 27th, from 9:30 to 11:30 am in the CLC main entrance anteroom . It is especially important to protect yourself from the flu this year . All insurances cover the cost of the flu vaccine. Please bring insurance info with you. Also, if you have a desire to receive a pneumonia or shingles vaccine it may be prearranged with the pharmacy for administration to you at the flu clinic. Insurance pre-authorization and payment needs to be done by calling Rite Aid pharmacy at 412-384-2890. Ask for Jessica who will arrange this for you. I hope you take advantage of this opportunity to protect yourselves. Masks required and social distancing will be practiced.

DAY OF CARING UPDATE

The Day of Caring so many of you are familiar with will be returning to Thomas Church in 2021. Although I have chosen to step aside from organizing our traditional Day of Caring for 2020, three of our fearless Members, Kristen Heinze, and Jeff & Becky Bowman have offered to organize volunteers to help Members of our Congregation who may find themselves in need of some TLC for their homes. Please reach out to Kristen, Jeff, Becky or leave a message with the Church Office if you could use some help. Work date still to be determined!

This has been a most unusual year for all of us and many Mission projects and activities have had to be cancelled for the safety of our Members and those in the community we strive to help. We plan to be healthy, reenergized and ready to roll in 2021, so friends be ready to put your Thomas Church t-shirt on and get back to doing what we do so well, which is reaching out in a variety of ways to help those in need at the local, national and international level.

Stay safe, stay healthy and I look forward to being with you all again, hopefully sooner rather than later!

Patti Korintus



PUMPKIN PATCH UPDATE – 2020

We have received word from our pumpkin supplier Rusty that he will not be supplying us with pumpkins to sell this year but will return in 2021. Just a reminder: Money raised by the pumpkin sales is used to fund Literacy Centers in Ethiopia. Like so many countries around the world, Ethiopia is on lockdown and Rusty is uncertain if the money raised by us and other local Presbyterian Churches last year has yet to be used to open the new Literacy Centers that had been planned. We will keep you informed as we learn any new information.

The Mission Team

THOMAS STAFF

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Continuing on the Path to Financial Recovery

We are thankful for the faithfulness of many of our members in sustaining their financial stewardship to Thomas Church throughout the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. The Finance Team reports that the deficit in our Operating Funds was reduced by another ~\$11,900 in July to <\$32,000, a \$50,000 reduction from the beginning of the year. We continue to receive significant contributions through the mail and, since we have now resumed in-person worship, we anticipate continued progress in reducing our Operating Funds deficit.



Recreational Activities to Resume in the Christian Life Center

Session has approved limited resumption of recreational activities in the CLC. We are in contact with the groups that were regularly using the CLC prior to the pandemic shutdown to develop a schedule for resumption of activities. We will also set aside open time for Pickleball play by members and friends of Thomas Church. We expect activities can resume by September 1 and an announcement will be made when a schedule is developed

2020 Monthly Mission Offerings

MONTH	MISSION	AMOUNT CONTRIBUTED
January	<i>Family Promise</i>	\$2071.16
February	<i>Pittsburgh Women's Clinic</i>	\$275.87 + Diaper Collection
March	<i>Pine Springs Camp</i>	\$250.00
April	<i>One Great Hour of Sharing</i>	\$298.40
May	<i>Pentecost</i>	\$195.00
June	<i>Habitat for Humanity</i>	\$125.00
July	<i>Deacons</i>	\$90.00
August	<i>City Mission</i>	\$1255.00 (April special collection) \$200 + food drive (August)
September	<i>Peace & Global Witness</i>	
October	<i>Domestic Violence Services</i>	
November	<i>Adopt-a-Family</i>	
December	<i>Christmas Joy</i>	

THOMAS CHURCH'S COMMITMENT TO SUPPORT SPECIAL MISSION PROGRAMS CONTINUES

Each month Thomas Presbyterian Church designates a particular mission to be the recipient of the monthly mission offering. With the exception of the mission programs designated by the Presbyterian Church, the congregation chooses the mission programs that will receive these offerings. The chart to the right provides information on the 2020 mission programs and the church's response.

