



I am writing this on Election Day and I predict someone will win. If it's a tie I suppose we could try having two presidents. Amazingly we did just that at one time.

In 2004 it was my honor and privilege to be a delegate to the Presbyterian Church USA General Assembly. Although it was billed as the 216<sup>th</sup> assembly it was actually the 21<sup>st</sup>. In 1983, the year before I was ordained, two branches of the Presbyterian Church committed to patch up their differences over sweet tea, *the War of Northern Aggression*, and the meaning of "well, bless your little heart." The rift started over whether one person could own another. The Bible clearly states that's OK. Sometime in the eighteenth century people began to hold a yardstick up to the Bible, and declared that if "Love God; love your neighbor," is the golden rule then owning your neighbor might just need to be reconsidered as falling short of the golden rule. Perhaps past practices considered normal might just be shown to be inappropriate by later generations. This criticism was easier to state in places where there were very few slaves since the industrial revolution was overtaking human muscle. The industrialized north had more abolitionists while the agricultural south had more slave owners. Then came the national election of 1860. We Presbyterians stayed together for a little bit, but by 1861 the churches in the Confederate States of America severed ties with the Union churches. Church and state might be separate, but they went away together.

In 2004 the PCUSA General Assembly met in Richmond, Virginia, the capitol of Dixie. I marveled at how unembarrassed we all were that it took us a century and more to patch up what the nation managed to do in five; albeit five bloody horribly violent wasted, years. Meeting Presbyterians from all over America convinced me that diversity is our strength and we have a great deal to learn from one another. As I write this on Election Day it is my sincere prayer that we will not choose again to be two nations. The scars of the Civil War must be remembered so that we do not count it as one Civil War out of many. If we fail to be us there will be no US.

My prayer, and I ask you to join those prayers, is also for our church. We are in a long line of Christians who see the fate of our nation as a shared responsibility. We are the salt of the earth, but when we hurl it at each other there's none left for seasoning and preservation. Since Church disagreements are family disagreements they can last over generations. This thwarts our mission while making us look ridiculous in the eyes of a skeptical world. Bear in mind **they** know we are **supposed** to love one another.

### **Church News / Reminder / Upcoming Events**

Thank you to everyone who helped with the **Church Life Committee** Bazaar! The CE building has been buzzing with helpers all week getting ready for this annual event, albeit a little bit different this year!

The **2021 Stewardship Campaign** is underway. Mary and Tom Bartha are the coordinators this year. A mailing to all members was done on October 27<sup>th</sup> so you should have seen something in your mailbox. There were delays within the US Postal Service due to the volume of mailed ballots so if you have not yet received your letter, please give it until this weekend. If not received by then, please call the Church Office and we'll be sure to get one to you! If you need additional cards for your family, you can pick one up in the Narthex or call the Church Office. Please prayerfully consider your personal involvement in this campaign, whether it is through giving, volunteering time, and/or praying for our church community.

There will be a **Congregational Meeting** on Sunday, November 15, immediately following Service. Members will have an opportunity to nominate and vote for new Church Officers, approve changes to the current by-laws, and vote to move forward on the foundation project. If you're interested in being nominated for any of the available positions or have any questions please contact the Church Office. The proposed changes to the current by-laws will be made available the day of the meeting.

**Read any good books lately?** A Book Club is not only a great way to learn about a new book, it's an awesome opportunity to fellowship with members of the church, the community, and maybe even make a

new friend or two! Meetings may be held via ZOOM. If you're interested in participating, helping to coordinate, have ideas for a book, or suggestions on how to creatively meet, please give Jil Hawk a call at 724-900-4822 or call the manse at 570-664-6829.

We continue to be a great resource for members of our community through our **Food Pantry**. Non-perishable donations are always needed. Some suggestions include: fruit, pasta, mac and cheese, drink boxes, canned chicken, white and brown rice, salad dressing, noodles, cereal, pancake mix, syrup, and paper towels. If you need to get in touch with Ginny Sodano, her phone number is 570-476-9393 and her email address is ggodano@ptd.net. A big "thank you" to Ginny for all she does with this important ministry!

**Prayer Concerns** Please pray for the following people:

*Tim and Diane Bowman –*

Tim has been hospitalized with pneumonia. He had covid-19 earlier this year as well. He is currently living at Slate Belt Nursing Home because of his Parkinson's. Diane is well. Prayers for strength for her would be appreciated.  
*104 Kistler Street, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301*

*Linda Jennings -*

Linda fell, hurt her shoulder, and is doing better, thanks to physical therapy. Continued prayers for the healing process.  
*151 Naomi Lane, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301*

*Kiki Pollack –*

Kiki has been diagnosed with brain cancer and has been undergoing chemotherapy.  
*1109 Woodland Xing, East Stroudsburg, PA 18302*

*Mary Resh –*

She fell and broke her femur. Surgery resulted in a pin being implanted in her leg. She is experiencing difficulty breathing as well. Please pray for healing.  
*Grace Park, Apt. 119, 1170 West Main St., Stroudsburg, PA 18360*

*The Wolbert Family –*

Prayers of peace and healing at Mary's passing.

### **Contact Me**

You can reach me a number of ways:

- call the church office, leave a message, 570-421-5518,
- call the manse, 570-664-6829,
- email to my new email address pastor@shawneepresbyterianchurch.com,
- on the porch (Jil and I haven't been on the porch quite as much with the cooler weather), or
- stop by my office in the CE building on Tuesday or Thursday morning between 9 AM-12 PM!

**Reminder:** If you want to get in touch with the office please use the new email address - **info@shawneepresbyterianchurch.com**.

It's great to be connected!

God Bless!

*Darcy*