



This is the story of discovering the true Presbyterian Bible.

The story begins with Colonel John Irwin, a British soldier, who came from Ireland to settle in western Pennsylvania. He became a successful fur trader. He joined the Continental Army, and after helping to win our independence he lent his name to the town that grew up around his home.

No, the story begins in Carboniferous era because it has to do with coal.

The Irwin area was found to be rich in coal attracting miners from all over. Each mine had a village attached. Irwin became a market town in the center of the area.

Well, the story actually begins with the Pennsylvania Railroad main line that runs from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh. Once the railroads came through the mines had a way to send coal to the steel mills and homes of the area. That set of tracks runs past Irwin along a creek that became a boundary line. People living north of that boundary created a separate borough called North Irwin.

Perhaps the story begins when a young man, Darcy, from the other side of the tracks became involved with a young lady, Jil, from the upper reaches of North Irwin. Her great-grandmother was a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution; mine came from somewhere in the Welsh valleys. Her family traced their origins to folks who sailed from Scotland by way of Northern Ireland when we were still colonies. Mine arrived in steerage through Ellis Island. They brought the Bible with them. We brought carbide miner's lamps.

Now that I think of it the story begins in Palestine which was languishing under Roman rule when an itinerant preacher gathered disciples. After suffering a horrible death he was found to have risen from the grave. Those disciples wrote his story and gathered it along with founders' letters and older historic scriptures into a single volume. That volume was pretty much written in Greek. It was already mostly a translation from Hebrew and Aramaic sources. In time the followers fell into two camps as the Roman Empire split. One kept up with Greek while the other spoke and read Latin. Later Latin was being forgotten so there was a move afoot to translate the whole thing into vernacular.

Not all stories begin with powerful people who didn't really want everyone reading the revolutionary stuff in the Bible. Brave first translators suffered similar fates as Jesus. I thought the story of the English Bible began when Elizabeth Tudor died and James Stewart became king. He ordered an authorized translation into English that we know as the King James Version. When Jil's family Bible came into our possession I was truly baffled. It was in Shakespearian English but wasn't a King James Version. In the conservative circles I once traveled James Stewart wrote the first and only true rendition of the "Word of God." Here in my hand was a Bible in English; older by a generation than the King James Version. Its existence conveys the rebellious nature of our spiritual ancestors. This "Geneva Bible" came off ships that sailed to the colonies bearing the dreaded Scottish Presbyterians and English Puritans to America. It wasn't translated in a way that reinforced the divine right of kings. It included a lot of notes clarifying what the Bible was saying. It displeased the Stewarts so they tried to create a more royal friendly translation. I like to think our spiritual ancestors were rebellious in things besides theology because they kept on using the Geneva Bible. Rather than pacify the masses this older translation preserves the revolutionary nature of the Bible that has driven people to be loyal to God by resisting human tyrants that demand loyalty above all else.

The story of Shawnee Presbyterian Church begins with the Bible read at the first service here. I like to think it helped sow the seeds of American independence and democracy.

Geneva Bible Galatians 5

Notes: ¹ Having declared that we came of the free woman, he sheweth the price of freedom, ¹³ and how we should use the same, ¹⁶ that we may obey the Spirit, ¹⁹ and resist the flesh.

¹ Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Church News / Reminder / Upcoming Events

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 and approve changes to

the current by-laws. There is an open position available on Session. If you are interested in volunteering as a member of Session, please contact me as soon as possible.

Revised **Safety Guidelines** for Service during the fall and winter months, sharing how we safely continue to have in-person Service, is included as an attachment. Copies will also be available in the Narthex.

The **2021 Stewardship Campaign** is underway. Mary and Tom Bartha are the coordinators this year. A mailing to all members was done on October 27th so you should have seen something in your mailbox. If you have not yet received your campaign letter, 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.

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, the manse at 570-664-6829, or email her at jilanhawk2@gmail.com.

Shawnee Presbyterian Women are busy as always, the SPW are still collecting shoes for the Girls on the Run shoe drive. They are also collecting donations for the Church Women United Christmas Stockings. Rather than stuff stockings this year, it is suggested we make a \$10 donation per stocking, and the organization will stuff the stockings. Donations for both of these opportunities can be made until Thanksgiving weekend.

The next SPW meeting is scheduled for Friday, November 20, at 2PM, via ZOOM.

Feel free to contact Maggie at 570-460-3466 if you have interest or any questions regarding any of these items.

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 gsodano@ptd.net. A big "thank you" to Ginny for all she does with this important ministry!

We are in the process of planning a **Christmas Pageant!** This year's event will be a covid-safe, socially distant, maybe digital, maybe live, maybe hybrid, mask-wearing entertaining event, without a doubt, organized by our very talented and creative Midge McClosky. If you're interested, please give Midge a call at 917-873-5829. I can't wait to see how this unfolds to a fun event for the whole family!

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

Vince DellaFera

Vince recently had arthroscopic shoulder surgery and is healing nicely.
PO Box 123, Shawnee on Delaware, PA 18356

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 had an MRI after radiation and it shows that there has been no growth in the tumor. Praise the Lord for that news.
1109 Woodland Xing, East Stroudsburg, PA 18302

Mary Resh –

Mary continues to heal from her fall and surgery, and still has some respiratory challenges. 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