Our church offers many opportunities to share our blessings with others. We hope that you will find joy in helping others by choosing one or more of these options to support local and/or global mission this Christmas.

The Giving Tree
- Select gift requests from Giving Trees in Fellowship Hall November 22 & 29
- Return unwrapped, tagged items by 10:30 a.m. on December 6
- Bring joy to those served by Local Mission Partners
- Contact: Suzanne Gabel (610-696-0554) or Reid Willis (frwillis@gmail.com, 610-291-5867)

Christmas for Migrant Families
- Purchase gifts for a local migrant worker family
- Sign up in Fellowship Hall November 1, 8 & 15, or provide monetary support.
- Celebrate with families at the Migrant Ministry Christmas Party on December 13
- Bring joy to families of Migrant Ministry, our local mission partner
- Contact: Deb Shryock (dfs0716@gmail.com, 610-524-0430)

Operation Christmas Child (“Shoebox Project”)
- Follow brochure guidelines and pack a gift-filled shoebox for a young child
- Information in Fellowship Hall, November 1, 8 & 15
- Bring filled shoeboxes to the church by Sunday, November 22
- Send Christ’s love in a shoebox to children in 130 countries
- Contact: Linda Haake (mhaake1@verizon.net, 610-430-1478)

Heifer International
- Give a gift of livestock to help communities around the world end hunger and poverty and care for the earth
- Information in Fellowship Hall, November 29, December 6 & 13.
- Bring checks November 29, December 6 & 13 or send to church office by December 31 (make checks payable to First Pres; memo line Heifer Project).
- Contact: Suzanne Cresswell (trcresswell@comcast.net, 610-692-8353)

Mission Market
- Write one check to the church and specify which local mission partner(s) you would like to help financially
- Cards and descriptive inserts are available to give as gifts
- Visit the table in Fellowship Hall on November 29, December 6 & 13
- Contribute to a Local Mission Partner as a Christmas gift
- Contact: Reid Willis (frwillis@gmail.com) or Margaret Key (margaret.key@verizon.net)
Baptisms
• Sullivan Howard Grass, born June 26, 2014, son of Justin & Katherine Grass; and
• Kayla Ann Philips, born January 14, 2015, daughter of Christopher & Claire Philips.

Births
• Eloise Beatrice Gansner, born October 3, 2015, daughter of Jeremy & Rachel Gansner, granddaughter of Bruce & Vicki Gansner;
• Simon James Mrdjenodich, born September 30, 2015, son of Katie & Matt Mrdjenodich, great grandson of Judy & Boyd Mackleer,
• Abigail Grace Appletoft and Christian Alexander Appletoft, born October 12, 2015, daughter and son of Lois & Jim Kelican.

In Memoriam
• Virginia Lorgus, Member of First Presbyterian February 28, 1994 to September 28, 2015;
• Rebecca Stalnaker, Member First Presbyterian October 31, 1993 to October 1, 2015; and
• Margaret B. Cloud, member First Presbyterian April 10, 1963 to October 26, 2015.

Prayers and Sympathy
The sympathy and prayers of the congregation are extended to:
• Dean & Amy Rasmussen and family, in the death of Dean’s father;
• Ruth Clark and family, in the death of Ruth’s sister, and
• Donna Cullinan and family, in the death of Donna’s husband, Pat.

Agape Team
Every week the Agape team at First Pres does a wonderful job visiting our members who are in the hospital. Normally, Agape members visit three times a week and our Caregiving pastor visits twice a week. Since we’ve been without a Caregiving pastor for several months now, Agape has taken on the additional visits. We’d like to give Agape some relief and are looking for someone (or several people) to help out with the hospital visits until our new Caregiving pastor is on board. If you feel called to help First Pres this way, please contact Karen Goldstein in the church office, and she will get you in touch with the appropriate person from Agape. Thank you, and God Bless.

Membership
Agape Team
Food Cupboard
November: Soup (chunky preferred), noodles December: Canned meat, tuna

Please be sure to check the expiration dates on the food you are donating. Donations can be placed in the “Food Bank” cabinet in Fellowship Hall. Thank you!

Caregiving
Pocopson Home
We would like to thank everyone for their donations and support of our Pocopson Home project. By the time you receive this newsletter the November 1 deadline for receiving donations will have passed. We will provide a final report in the December Newsletter. However, we want you to know how much we appreciate your help.

Presbyterian Women

Service & Outreach
Christmas for Migrant Families
The Chester County Migrant Ministry is a year round program aimed at meeting the physical and spiritual needs of immigrant workers in our area. Since the 1980’s they have addressed the needs of several thousand migrant families who come primarily from Mexico, Guatemala, and other Latin American countries to work in the mushroom farms and other local industries. These families are coping with a new country, a new language, and our cold winters. The ministry provides English and citizenship classes, translation services for medical and legal appointments, as well as warm coats and caps, blankets and much needed furniture.

Although our Church along with other organizations supports this ministry throughout the year there is a special need at Christmas. The poorest of these families do not have the resources to provide for basic family needs and also for Christmas gifts. We can make a difference in the lives of these men and their families in a very simple and direct way by providing Christmas gifts. We can remind them that even in difficult times God loves and cares for them too. When you volunteer to sponsor a migrant family you will receive their names, ages, and a few of their needs and wishes. You will buy, wrap and deliver the gifts back to the church. Volunteers will deliver the gifts during a Christmas party at the Migrant Ministry office on December 13.

If you would like to sponsor a family, make a financial donation, help with baking cookies, or leading carols at the party, please sign up in Fellowship Hall in November or contact Anna Bentley at 610-873-3592 or annabentley@verizon.net.

The Giving Tree
The Giving Tree is a long-standing tradition at First Pres. On November 22 and 29, church members will find trees in Fellowship Hall trimmed with ornaments that have names and gift requests of 400 clients from our local mission partners. Church members select one or more gift requests to provide needy neighbors with perhaps the only gift they will receive this season. Unwrapped, tagged gifts must be returned to collection boxes at the church no later than 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, December 6. Many people choose to answer the request of a needy child or adult in place of someone on their list who will receive many other gifts. We need five volunteers to help sort and distribute the gifts from 11:30 a.m. to noon on November 29 and December 6. Youth volunteers encouraged! Please volunteer by contacting Suzanne Gabel (610-696-0554) or Reid Willis (fwillis@gmail.com or 610-291-5867).

Heifer Project International (HPI)
HPI is dedicated to ending hunger and poverty by providing livestock, trees, seeds, and training to families in 30 countries, including the US. Each farming family that receives an HPI gift passes on the gift to their neighbors and their families in over 125 countries. As the Christmas season approaches, consider making a Heifer Project contribution to honor a teacher, coach, friend, or family member. Information and gift cards will be available in Fellowship Hall or from the church office. Contact Suzanne Gresswell

Operation Christmas Child
Do you want to help make a child’s Christmas a whole lot of fun? Well gather up school supplies like, pencils, markers, and crayons then add a washcloth, toothbrush and toothpaste. Now you add the fun part like stuffed animals, puzzles, jump rope, finger puppets and balls. Put them all together into a shoebox and bring them to the church on November 1, November 8, November 15 or November 22. Now you have all the ingredients for a fun filled box that will delight a child in need. Operation Christmas Child will distribute your box to over 130 different countries! Look for our table in Fellowship Hall for more details.

Don’t have time to do a box? You can still help by donating such items as pencils, pens, notebooks. Maybe you have items like calculators with your company logo on them, you can donate them to Operational Christmas Child by bringing them to our table. Thank you for your support! Questions? Call Linda Haake at 610-430-1478.
Service & Outreach

Stop Hunger Now!
Sunday, November 15, 2015 – JOIN US!
Make a dish to share with friends, Bring a can for your community, Pack a bag for the world. Let’s wipe out world hunger by 2030!
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Social Hall - Setup for Stop Hunger Now! events (Muscle needed!)
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Social Hall - First Meal Packaging Event
3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Fellowship Hall - Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner
4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Social Hall - Second Meal Packaging Event and Load the Truck (Muscle Needed!)

Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner: Join with your church community and friends to share a meal between the two Stop Hunger Now! Meal Packaging Events. Gretchen Huebner will supply the turkey and gravy. You supply your family’s favorite Thanksgiving dish (vegetable, dessert, starch – anything!) to serve 8 – 10 people. Label your dish with its name, your name and the contents (for allergies). Bring a can of meat or soup for the West Chester Food Cupboard and set it in the center of your table. Joining our church family will be the visitors from our sister church in Getsemani – this will be their first American Thanksgiving celebration!

Community Service Credit Available: Do you need community service hours for your high school or college requirements for National Honor Society or other organization? Contact Dory Speer in the church office to obtain them for your participation in Stop Hunger Now! Participation enhances your college resume too.

Muscle needed: Unloading and reloading the truck is hard work. We especially need those individuals who can lift a 40 lb. bag of foodstuffs!

Donations are still being accepted: One generous member has graciously donated a matching gift because the thought of children starving and their parents not being able to fulfill this basic human need is appalling to him. Won’t you donate to match his gift and help us wipe out world hunger by 2030?

THANK YOU!
- For all of those who have donated this year to help First Pres pack thousands of meals that fed over two hundred thousand children in schools around the world.
- For all those who gave their time to pack the meals and truck.
- For all of the Stop Hunger Now! planning team members without whom, none of this would have happened.

Getsemani Partnership
We are honored and excited to have Pastor Alfredo Barrios, Betty Barrios (Pastor Alfredo’s wife), Donal Signor, and William Signor (Donal’s son - age 18) visiting West Chester. They are arriving the evening of November 16 and returning the morning of November 16. During the week there will be plenty of opportunities for you to meet and interact with our visitors. We will have a potluck dinner in honor of their arrival on Saturday evening November 7 at the church. It is a great opportunity for our guests to meet members of our church and for you to experience our partnership with Getsemani. Another opportunity will be Wednesday night November 11 at 7:30 p.m. Our guests will be leading a discussion about the current political situation in Guatemala and its impact on the people. On Sunday November 15 Pastor Alfredo will be participating in our worship services.

- There are many ways for you to have direct involvement with their visit. That includes:
  - Prayer for a safe trip and wonderful visit to West Chester.
  - Prayers that they feel our Radical Hospitality and love throughout the week.
  - Providing a lunch or dinner one night during the week, either in your home or a restaurant.
  - Hosting them at one or more of the activities during the week. A translator will be provided.
  - Transporting them to activities. We will have a 7 to 8 person van available for use during the weeks.
  - Translating for them. We will need translating services throughout the week, both day and night.

If you are willing and able to help with any of the above mentioned needs, please contact either Jim Austin (judyandjimauslin@verizon.net) or Elizabeth Guman (ecgum@verizon.net). We are so thankful for this partnership and our brothers and sisters in Guatemala, and look forward to a blessed visit with our four guests this November. Thank you so much for your ongoing support of this very special relationship with Getsemani and the Radical Hospitality you will show our guests.

Blessings,
Getsemani Partnership Committee
Co-chairs - Elizabeth Guman and Jim Austin

Congregational Life & Membership
JUST CALL HER JEN-TERTAINER
Meet Jen Drap, Bucket School Director
First Day: July 2, 2015
by Kristy Douglas, Personnel Chair

I sat down with Jen for a one-on-one interview...here’s what she had to say:

Welcome - we are so happy to have you here at First Pres! Tell me a little bit about why you feel you were led by God to lead our Bucket School.

Well, I have a teaching background – and I absolutely love First Pres. I always thought it would be an awesome place to work – and although I had been searching for a job for some time, nothing seemed to pan out. Then this position opened, I applied, and I was offered a job that uses my leadership skills, my knowledge of elementary school curriculum, and my experience in piloting a preschool curriculum project. So I honestly believe it all must have happened for a reason.

What’s your favorite thing about our preschool – something that is maybe unique to us?

I am very passionate about ways we can connect with younger adults. I have already started discussions about a collaborative effort with Westminster, researching how we can best minister to people post-high school. I am excited to explore building relationships with West Chester University as well.

OK – we’ve talked enough about “work”...what do you like to do in your free time?

Oh my goodness! How could I ever choose just one...there are SO MANY! I like The Day the Crayons Quit by Drew Daywalt. Oh – and I absolutely LOVE anything by Jan Brett – the illustrations in her books are AMAZING. Geeze – that’s such a hard question because I enjoy books so much...it’s almost an addiction (if you ask my husband, Scott).

So what do you like to do in your non-preschool, grown-up life?

I walk a lot...about 6 miles a day. Part of my route comes right through town, so some members may have seen me walking in the borough! I also belong to a book club.

Now wait – a REAL book club...or a wine with book club?

Well, there’s both! But we do actually read. In fact, next weekend we are scheduled to have a meet-and-greet with Lisa Scottoline – who lives in Chester Springs, and recently authored Every Fifteen Minutes. I’m very excited! In addition to reading, I love to host parties. My family jokes and calls me JEN-tertainer. H? Also, we have three boys – Alex, Jake & Sam. Alex is at Penn State this year – I tried really hard NOT to be the sobsing mother on drop-off day!

We heard last month that you were born in Germany...where else have you been?

We were all over Europe when I was very young...but I don’t remember much of it, since we moved back to the States when I was 2. I typically like warm, tropical places – but my absolute favorite trip was to Sonoma/Napa for my goddaughter’s wedding. I loved it there and would love to go back again!

Next month I’ll chat with Linda Simunov, our new Event Coordinator - so stay tuned!
Come Out for Fun, Family and Friendship  
100+ attend the Bridge Dinner every week!  
Come join us for an evening of laughter and delicious meals with your fellow members from all generations!  
November 4  Faith Circle  Sloppy Joes & Tater Tots  
November 11  Team Volkman  Burrito Bowls  
November 18  Team Gansner  Grilled Cheese & Tomato Soup  
November 25th  NO DINNER  Happy Thanksgiving!  
Each week, a team of wonderful volunteers make family-friendly meals that won’t leave you hungry! All meals include our salad bar with plenty of healthy choices and PB&J is always available. Vegetarian option is now available. Please let us know when you make your reservation. Reservations are due by Monday at 12:30 noon to Nakeya Hovington at 610-696-0554 or nhovington@firstpreswc.com. Please remember, if you cannot make dinner, please call cancel your reservation.  
Note: parent/responsible adult presence required at all family friendly events.

Nursery Open House/Playdate This Month!  
All nursery age friends and their parents are invited to a nursery open house/playdate on Saturday, November 21st from 3:00 – 4:30 p.m. Join us for a very casual afternoon of playing, crafts, snacks, and music with Ms. Sommers. If you are new to the nursery, this will be a great way to check out the space, meet some of our nursery team, and let your child see all the fun the nursery has to offer. It will also be a fun time to meet other families with little ones at First Pres.  
The Nursery is open each Sunday morning for both the 9:00 and 10:30 a.m. services. Our nursery friends are brand new through age 2. They are the cutest and smallest bunch at church!  
We hope to make this a regular event for our young families. Please RSVP by emailing Mary Hambleton at mhambleton@firstpreswc.com by Monday, November 16. We hope you’ll join us!

Moms’ Groups at First Pres!  
Did you know we have two moms’ groups at First Pres?  
Moms’ Morning Group meets the 3rd Wednesday of each month from 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. It’s a time to hang out, share, hear a devotional, socialize, and celebrate all the craziness of being a mom. We have some food and something for the kiddos to do as well. This is a judgment free, come as you are group, so come in your sweats, come without a shower, come with a pajama-clad toddler! We mostly just want you to come and hang out with other moms just like you. We’re all in this together! Our November meeting is November 18.  
The sister group of our Morning Group, the Moms’ Evening Group, meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month from 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. in the Herron Lounge. Same concept as the Morning Group! Childcare is provided for this one – so drop your kids in the Nursery or at Bridge Kids and enjoy some time with other moms just like you! The Moms’ Evening Group has its next meeting on November 11. These are drop in groups. So add them to your calendar and join us for some socializing, sharing, and celebrating God’s gift of motherhood. Contact Mary Hambleton at mhambleton@firstpreswc.com if you have any questions.

Nursery News  
If you’ve been on the lower level of First Pres in the past few weeks, you may have heard lots of chatter at the bottom of the stairs. Our nursery friends are growing in numbers! We have enjoyed welcoming many new babies born in the last six months, along with our toddlers who are now the “big kids”.  
We have a special theme each month, and November is “God Gives Me Food,” just in time for Thanksgiving! We love to color, use Play-Doh, paint, sing, dance, and of course, play! We have an amazing group of little ones who would love to meet you. So stop by the nursery for a visit sometime, or better yet, join our Nursery Team. We are always looking for happy grownups to care for, play with, and cuddle our youngest members. Questions about the nursery? Contact Mary Hambleton at mhambleton@firstpreswc.com.

Christian Education  
Coming to a Location Near You  
Our Bucket Preschool will sponsor a Scholastic Book Fair here at church in the New Lounge on Sunday, November 8 through Thursday, November 12. The Book Fair will be open during all Sunday Services, Wednesdays during Bridge, and 9:00 - 11:00 a.m. Monday through Thursday.  
Come early for our biggest selection of books! This is a great opportunity to find the perfect books for the little ones in your family, just in time for the holidays.  
All proceeds benefit the Bucket School. Thank you for your support.

COMING TO BRIDGE IN ADVENT  
“The Journey to Bethlehem”  6:30 – 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays in December  
Pastor Steve Clark leads a three-week series that will use scripture, music, video, and prayer to explore ways of opening our lives more deeply to the work of God through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.  
December 2: “Expanding Our Hope”  
December 9: “Enlarging Our Imagination”  
December 16: “Deepening Our Trust”  

Congregational Life & Membership  
ADVENT WORKSHOP  
Mark your calendars now for a cozy night at the church to welcome in the Christmas Season! The Annual Advent Workshop is Friday, December 4 from 5:30 p.m. – 7:15 p.m. Sign up on-line or in Fellowship Hall to attend this night of crafts and dinner for all ages! The cost is $5.00 for adults and $2.50 for children (up to age 10) includes your dinner and the crafts. Chef Karen Goldstein will be in the kitchen serving a delicious meal again! You can grab a cup of hot chocolate to go, so you can walk uptown to enjoy the West Chester Old Fashioned Christmas Parade at 7:15 p.m. Don’t miss this annual favorite at First Pres. Any questions, please contact Linda Simunov, Event Coordinator at lsimunov@firstpreswc.com or 610-696-0554.

The Grateful Recipient  
Paul thanked God for the church in Philippi, from inside a prison cell.  
He was thankful in his prayers, and in his memories as well.  
The church gave Paul a financial gift, that Epaphroditus brought to him.  
Paul was acknowledging the favor, by sending his praise to them.  
As good financial stewards, the Philippians supplied Paul in his need.  
Paul was forever grateful for their kind deed.

Amy Lidle  

Note: parent/responsible adult presence required at all family friendly events.

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Amy Lidle
column classics presents

the Beech Trio

Sunday, November 1, 4:00 p.m.
free, offering accepted

Chancel Choir Open House

Have you always wanted to try the Choir? Here’s your chance! Thursday, November 5, will be an Open House at Chancel Choir rehearsal. Beginning at 7:30 pm, come for a brief time of fellowship. Then, we’ll all get started learning music for the Advent and Christmas seasons. You are invited to join us for Candlelight Christmas on December 6, mini-lessons and carols on Sunday morning, December 20, Longwood Gardens on December 21, and of course, on Christmas Eve! There will be music available for you – come join the fun! Questions? Call Marcia at 610-696-0554 ext. 118.

Christmas Poinsettias

Help participate in the decorating of our sanctuary with a memorial or honor gift of poinsettias this Christmas Season, please fill in the form below or use the “Holiday Flowers” envelope in the pew racks. They can be dropped in the collection basket or returned to the church office during the week. The donation is $12.00. The deadline for ordering is Sunday, December 13.

Community Thanksgiving Service

This year, the Religious Council of Greater West Chester will hold the community inter-faith Thanksgiving Service on Sunday, November 22, from 4:00 - 5:30 p.m. at St Paul’s Baptist Church, 1 Hagerty Blvd in West Chester.

In addition to a worship service, there will be an environmentally focused community service project. First Presbyterian members who attend the service are asked to bring empty cereal boxes, to be used in creating repurposed coffee cosies. If you have questions, feel free to contact Suzanne Cresswell at tncresswell@comcast.net.

A Listener’s Concert Review

After 3 straight days of 50° days and steady rain, followed by a blustery gray Sunday on October 4, it was nice to look forward to the Column Classics concert featuring The Brandywine Singers. The choir filled in along the side aisles to begin the concert with an a cappella piece by Bruckner. The heavenly, beautiful piece filled the room, washing away any cares or concerns of the day. Glorious!

Several moments into the piece, the sanctuary lit up when the sun broke through, shining brightly on the stained glass windows along the west wall. How perfect was that?

We are fortunate to have Marcia Sommer’s musical leadership, providing us with the opportunity to share special concerts such as The Brandywine Singers. If you missed this concert, I hope you will put the next one on your calendar to support Column Classics.

Worship

Helping participate in the decorating of our sanctuary with a memorial or honor gift of poinsettias this Christmas season, please fill in the form below or use the “Holiday Flowers” envelope in the pew racks. They can be dropped in the collection basket or returned to the church office during the week. The donation is $12.00. The deadline for ordering is Sunday, December 13.

Name______________________________
Phone ____________________________

Amount Enclosed ____________________ ($12.00 each)

In Memory of ____________________________
In Honor of ____________________________

In Honor of ____________________________

In Memory of ____________________________

If you are interested in beginning the Direct Debit program, contact Dory Speer in the church office to get started.

Thank you for your continued generosity. It does make a difference!

Personnel Committee Report

We are truly blessed for the staff of First Pres who give their energy and devotion to the Church to glorify God. Personnel is especially appreciative of the following employees, who have been recognized through our “Kudos” staff recognition initiative:

• Willie Oliveras who I call the hardest working guy in West Chester! Thanks, Willie!
• Suzanne Gabel for being very sweet, a great friend & listener.
• Brian Claeys for the eye-catching big screen announcement for the beginning of adult Sunday School.
• Karen Goldstein for her helpful, courteous, happy demeanor in dealing with all kinds of requests...it is such a pleasure to speak with her and she is always willing to do whatever she can to help – no matter what the request.
• Gretchen Huebner for making the Stop Hunger Now information table (despite being in pain before her knee surgery) - and then leaving there to volunteer more time for a pet rescue mission that afternoon.
• Jennifer Rosenberg for making the Bridge Dinner a FUN place for volunteers - her calm, organized manner is wonderful.

From time to time, we also receive Kudos cards for volunteers – and this month we’re pleased to recognize Barbara & Amy Liddle for being attentive & friendly ushers!

Kristy Douglas, Committee Chair

Howard Lembold, Rail Rader, Joe Schorn, Debbie Shergood, Craig Single, Rev. Dr. Greg Stowell

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Still confused over what is required by First Pres in order to volunteer in a position that works with children? See our website for requirements. Please note that the requirements are different for volunteers than they are for staff members.

Staff members: Background checks must be run by the church and are only transferable to other volunteer positions. They are not transferable to other paid positions elsewhere in Pennsylvania.

Volunteers: Background checks are run by you, provided to First Pres and are transferable to any other volunteer position in Pennsylvania. They cannot be used for employment in Pennsylvania.

Mandated Child Abuse Training: First Pres will be providing Child Abuse Training in house beginning in early 2016. Steve Douglas, a church member with extensive familiarity with the Darkness 2 Light, Stewards of Children program offered this past summer, will be training as a facilitator. He will bring this powerful program to First Pres to fulfill this state mandated requirement. If you were unable to take this program this summer, you will be required to take the program at its first offering in 2016 to complete your background clearance requirement. First Pres has chosen this program to fulfill the Pennsylvania state requirement because it is one of the best programs around, offering opportunities for discussion as well as real life stories to help us all understand the ramifications of child abuse as well as more easily identify signs of child abuse. If you need to attend this course, you will be notified in early 2016.

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November 22

Did I get a Donut from the Youth at their last sale? Save the date to stop by their table in Fellowship Hall to purchase them in between services. All money raised goes towards youth retreats and mission trips.

February 19-21

Looking ahead to 2016, Parents, save the date of the MidWinter Advance Retreat. Signups are open now! Find more information on the Youth page of the Church’s website.