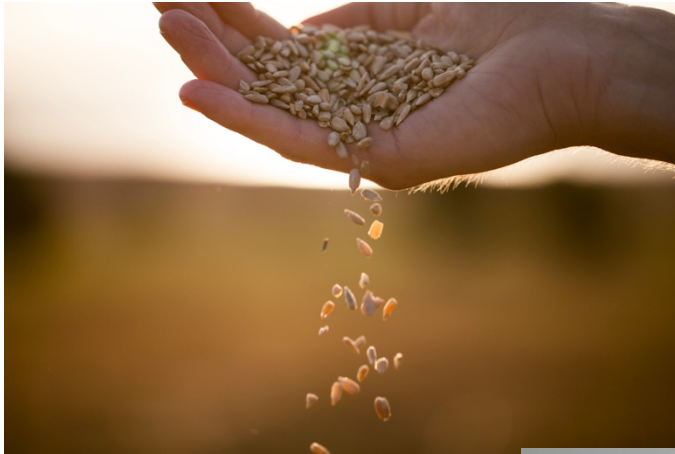


Presbytery of Carlisle



Budget Narrative 2024



God's Abundance, God's Purpose

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*For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.
Isaiah 55:10-11*

Dear Friends,

In last year's message, our Interim Executive Presbyter, Cheryl Galan, drew wisdom from a book called *Holy Currencies* by Eric Law. In it he describes a 'Cycle of Blessings' that flow inward and outward, making ministries both missional and sustainable. In short, he speaks to the idea of **God's abundance and provision**. I find myself deeply connecting with that idea as expressed through the words of the prophet Isaiah. Seeds give rise to bread for nourishment. Seeds also give rise to more seeds so the cycle of growth may continue. God provides abundant blessings and the blessings flow in many directions.

This idea also resonates with me through my work as a chaplain. When I served in a community hospital, nurses were asked to name what inspires them in their work. Something a nurse wrote has really stayed with me: *the healing flows both ways*. At first blush that seems impossible. After all, the nurse is working hard, all hours of the day and night to provide top quality medical care to give the patient's body the tools needed for rest and healing. The healing seems to flow in one direction, from caregiver to patient. Energy exerted, care received.

Yet over time I began to experience the deep truth of the healing and the blessing flowing both ways. Sometimes it was very tangible as when a patient offered to pray for *me*, the chaplain. In other ways, it was very subtle, a shift happening deep within my soul as past hurts and deep wounds began to heal through the sacred work of being present to a person in pain.

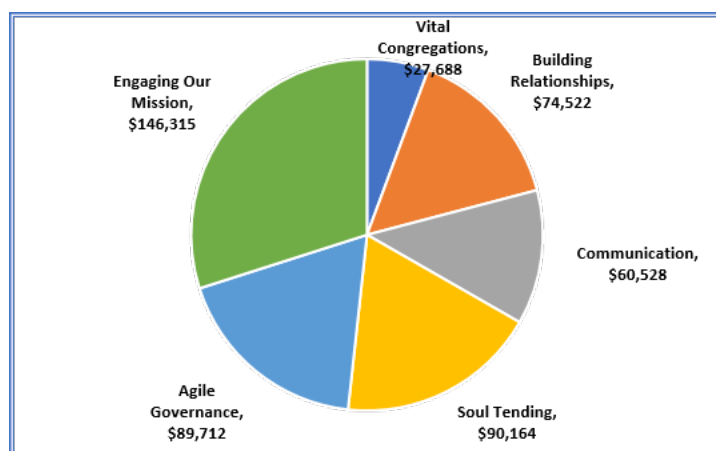
And isn't that the way of God? The healing flows both ways, the blessing flows both ways, the receiver becomes the giver and the giver becomes receiver. Seeds are sown, they grow, and give rise to new seeds. Seeds go to the eater AND to the sower. As we engage in Christ's ministry and mission, Spirit empowers and God's abundance is revealed, over and over again.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,

Kristal Smith

Presbytery Leader for Governance and Congregational Leadership

2024 Budget: Intentions and Purpose



2024 Expense Budget = \$ 488,929

2024 Projected Income = \$ 490,278

Our presbytery budget tells a story. It reflects our common calling, our shared values, and the intentions to which we give our lives and resources, in faithfulness to Christ's call, within and beyond our congregations. As we open ourselves to God's abundance and seek to accomplish God's intentions for us and the world, we see the blessings already flowing throughout our presbytery including:

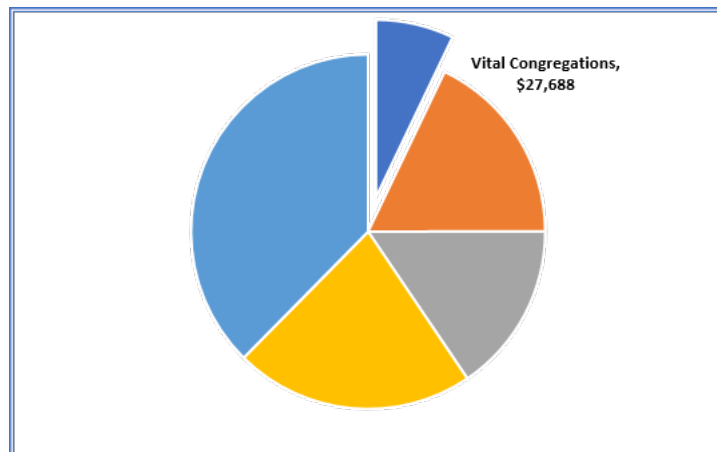
- Transforming and empowering congregations for engagement with community needs.
- Cultivating space and creating structures to support emerging expressions of the gospel beyond the walls of institutional forms of church.

- Addressing the compelling crises of our day, such as systems of poverty, structures of racism, environmental devastation, and re-building of congregational vitality.

We do not take for granted, the faithful Per Capita, Designated Mission and Shared Mission giving of our Sessions. We know that the resources of congregations are increasingly stretched, so the flow of blessings in this budget include the potential use of \$85,000 in anticipated gains from the presbytery's reserves. The Administration Committee is also taking action to be more intentional about managing investments and tapping other resources for the future.

Vital Congregations: Thriving in Our Witness

What is the purpose of vital congregations? ***To go deeper into following Jesus Christ, so our own lives are changed, our congregations are transformed, and the mission of God spreads through our particular communities and the world.***



What would God have us do next?

Many congregations continue to hold this question as the model of one pastor, one congregation no longer seems to serve well in some places. To explore other possibilities, representatives from 15 churches attended a workshop called "Choose Your Next Church Adventure" at the February Presbytery meeting. Some of these congregations are ready to move forward in the search for a pastor. Others are asking more questions about themselves and taking time to better understand the needs of the community they seek to serve.



In March a Communion training was held for Ruling Elders so they may be prepared to preside at the table in the absence of a Minister of Word and Sacrament. This was intended to assist churches without an installed pastor to be able to offer the Sacrament.



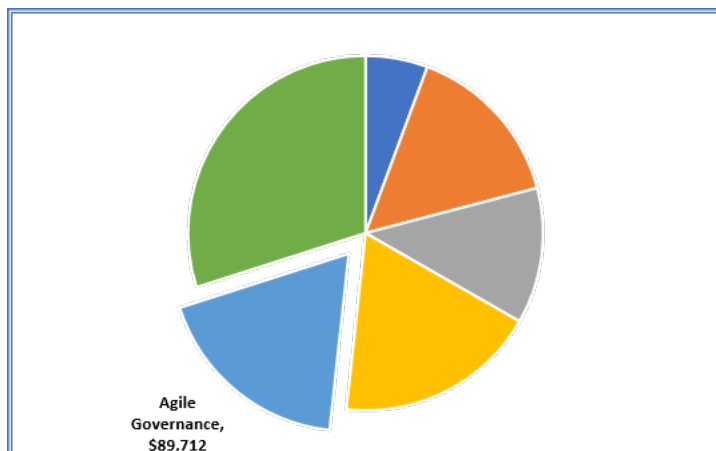
"Certifying Elders to serve in this capacity is a gift; as Worship Chair I have scrambled more than once."
~Communion Training Participant

The Committee on Preparation for Ministry is gearing up to promote awareness of the formation process to become a Commissioned Ruling Elder, a lay person who is equipped to serve in specific ways. CREs provide much-needed support in word, sacrament, and congregational care and are a viable alternative to the one pastor, one congregation model.

Agile Governance: Nurturing New Life and Growth

What is the purpose of our agile governance?

That we may reflect the goodness, wisdom, beauty and love our Creator intends for us...and for all of Creation!



Moving with God's blessings requires agility! We live in liminal time - between the breaking down of structures we thought were durable, even 'permanent' and the emergence of new forms of religious expression, education, government, business, community, etc.

As Presbyterians, we stand with one foot in the forms of institutional church we know and love...and one foot on the threshold of God's future yet to be revealed. Our polity gives us a framework of governance. With agility, we're better able to adapt to the needs of a changed world. What does agile governance mean for Carlisle Presbytery?

Staffing for A New Normal



Lucy Bowerman

Now that the full-time position called Presbytery Leader for Governance and Congregational Leadership (encompassing the role of Stated Clerk AND empowering leadership) has been filled, a search is underway for another full-time position called Presbytery Leader for Vision and Transformation (formerly known as Executive Presbyter). This new person will guide congregations and individuals in exploring new ways of experiencing and sharing the love, peace, and hope of Christ. In the meantime, Lucy Bowerman is serving as our Bridge Presbytery Leader to assist with Administration, COM, New Worshipping

Communities, and Coordinating Council until the new Co-Leader is called. We are also blessed to have a Director for Communications, Carolyn Simpson, who is able to manage the routine office operations and has graphic design and social media skills we are eager to put to use.



Carolyn Simpson

Streamlining office operations: We now occupy a one-room office at 2601 N. Front St., Harrisburg, and store additional things at Faith-Immanuel Church. We continue to dispose of things and have donated office supplies and furnishings to churches, individuals and non-profit organizations who could use them. Several boxes of materials were recently delivered to the Presbyterian Historical Society and we plan to further reduce our storage needs by digitizing our files and records.

Building-in Flexibility:

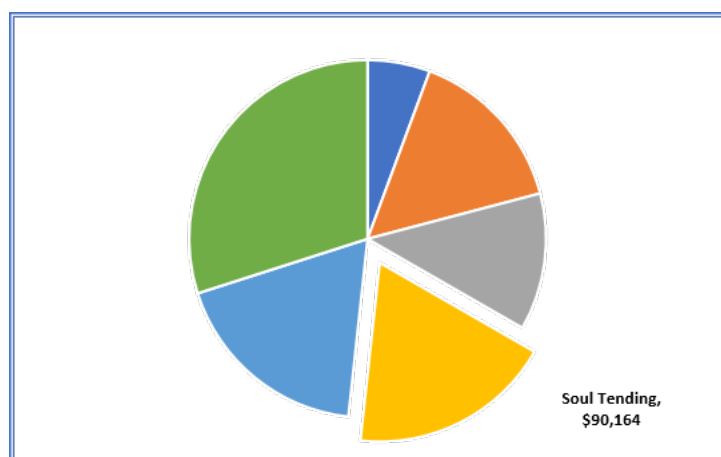
Gradually, we're revising our by-laws and policy documents and processes to bring greater flexibility to the work we share. And we're not alone! The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved 33 proposed amendments to the *Book of Order*—including a replacement for the entire *Discipline* section, expanded boundary training requirements, and family leave,

antiracism, and harassment policies for all councils (i.e. sessions and Presbytery). Look for more information on these important topics in the months to come.

Cultivating a culture of risk-taking and experimentation: About half of the churches of the presbytery continue to be in pastoral transitions; some can no longer afford a full-time pastor, while others are eliminating or revising positions formerly held by an ordained pastor. With a denomination-wide shortage of pastors and continuing decline in church membership/attendance, we must experiment with different models of leadership. Some Sessions find pastoral leadership across denominations. Some link to share a pastor. Others are served by a Commissioned Ruling Elder. CPM will continue the work of preparing leaders while COM will provide guidance and opportunities for experimentation.

Soul Tending: Our lifeline to God

What is the purpose of our soul-tending? ***That we may be lifted out of ourselves and be gathered together in God's love.***



Spirit-Inspired worship - at Table, font or pulpit, through music and metaphor, in visual imagery and spoken words of prayer – helps us receive the grace that sustains us. This can be accomplished on a Sunday morning with traditional liturgy and hymns but can also happen in other ways ...



The choir at Pine Street leads the congregation in song



St. Andrews offers lay-lead Wednesday Outdoor Worship services during the summer to provide alternative worship options

Mt. Olivet enjoys outdoor worship at Tomlinson Run State Park



In September Monaghan is starting a worship service designed for people who have sensory sensitivity.



McConnellsburg winter meal

Soul-tending can happen around the table of grace as Christ is made known to us in the breaking of bread and sharing of the cup. We may also experience God's presence among us as we share a meal together.

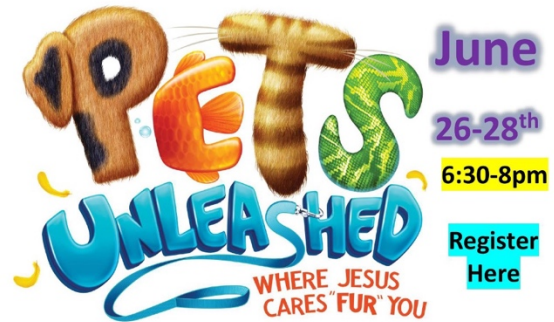
It may also be as we experience wonder and beauty in the world God made and loves. Or, in quiet contemplation or embodied action that we tend our souls.



St. James youth at Krislund



St. James Church VBS



Vacation Bible School at Derry and St. James where the souls of children, youth, and adults are nurtured

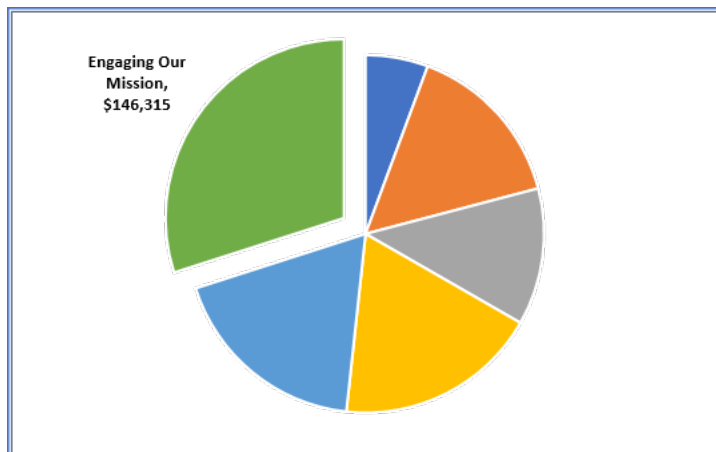
"We transcend ourselves when we pray and when we play" - Anonymous

Engaging Our Mission: Christ's Love in Action!

What is the purpose of engaging our mission through neighboring?

As we receive and welcome our neighbor, we all may receive God.

We love and serve our neighbors in countless tangible ways through acts of service and generosity.





Youth at Silver Spring engaged in Backyard Missions Outreach - Buckets and buckets of weeds pulled, produce picked, paths cleared, garages cleaned, and MORE!



Hope United helping in the neighborhood

Intertwined is the name for a new ‘Neighboring’ initiative in our presbytery. Candidate Kevin Long (Market Square) is following a sense of call to create ***a new worshipping community*** that will explore the intersection of faith and the environment. This community will not be based in a building, but in common concern for a world injured by climate change. In early stages of formation, you can find Intertwined on line, [here](#).

The New Worshipping Communities Commission was formed by the Presbytery in January 2023 and seeks to equip ministry leaders like Kevin in their efforts to seek and form new disciples, engage in meaningful worship, and create mutually life-giving relationships. Additional New Worshipping Communities are beginning to emerge! Check upcoming Presbytery e-newsletters and meeting reports for more information.



Intertwined:
a faith community





For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat...

Lost Creek, Mechanicsburg, Lower Tuscarora, and Highland United are just a few of the churches that collect items for their local food bank!



Friendly faces and willing hands from Middletown pack food at the Central PA Food Bank.

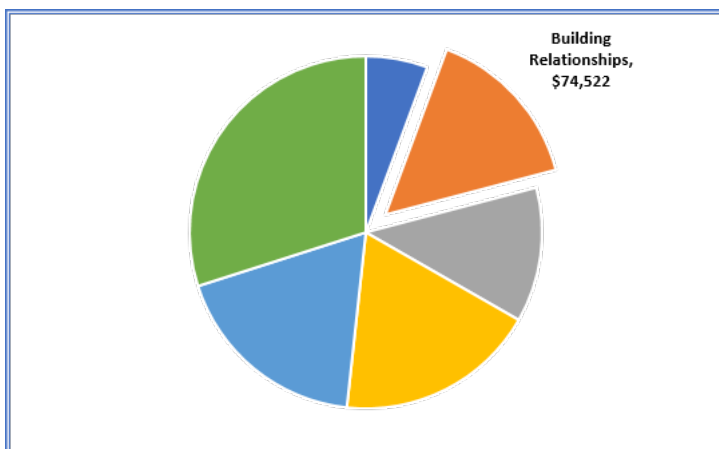


Pine Street folks caring for the feet of those experiencing homelessness

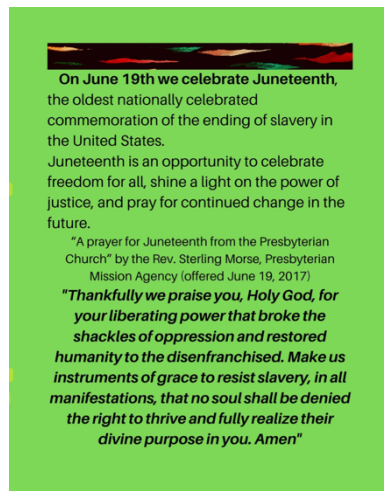
Christ has no body but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes with which he looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good. Yours are the hands with which he blesses all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are his body. Teresa of Avila

Building Relationships: Recognizing Christ in the other

What is the purpose of our relationship-building? ***That we may pursue justice and participate in the beloved community the Spirit of Christ is creating in the world.***

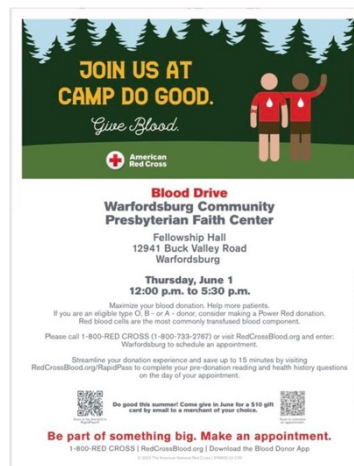


Those who are marginal in the world are central in the Church, and that is how it is supposed to be! Thus we are called as members of the Church to keep going to the margins of our society...The Church will always be renewed when our attention shifts from ourselves to those who need our care. The blessing of Jesus always comes to us through the poor. **Bread for the Journey**, HJM Nouwen, November 1



Facebook post by Faith-Immanuel in honor of Juneteenth

The Upper West Conococheague Church opens its Reading Room to the community twice per week...

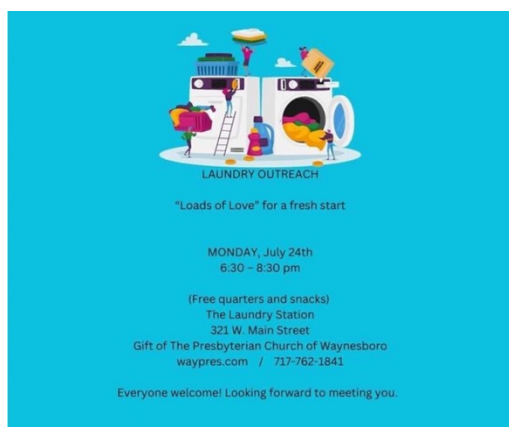


...while Warfordsburg hosts a community blood drive.

Many church members in the Presbytery support programs like Meals on Wheels,



providing food for the hungry and a friendly greeting to the lonely. This picture is from First United Newville.

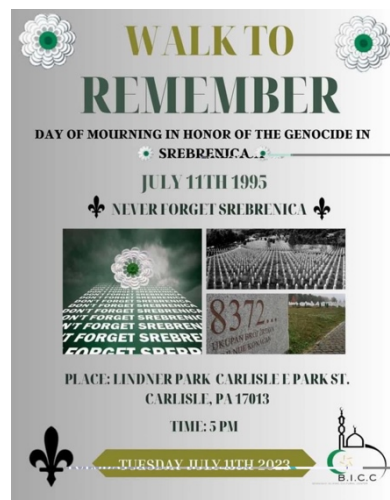


Waynesboro serves and connects with their community through cleaning clothes



Standing with those who are marginalized, Mechanicsburg provides a message of hope and inclusion.

Like Second Carlisle and Capital, many churches partner with local faith communities to remember the violence of the past and choose the path of peace.



Several churches in the Presbytery are extending hospitality by hosting refugee families. On World Refugee Day, Second Carlisle treated their family to a day at Hershey Park.

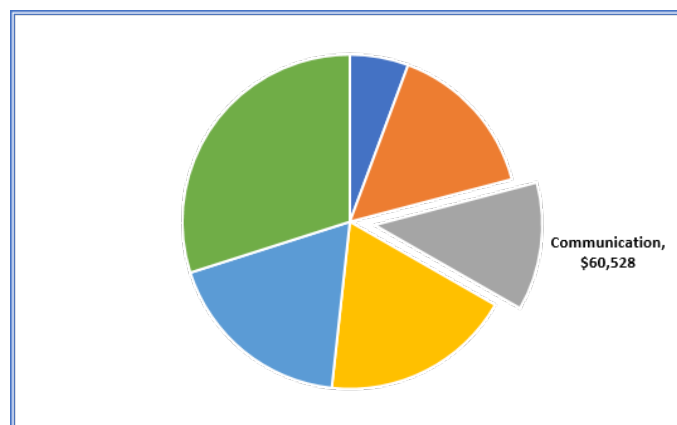


Lost Creek has a ministry of prayer where the congregation prays for people having a particular name each week...and the community knows it!

*What does it look like when we form relationships with to those marginalized, whom Jesus calls ‘the least of these?’
(Matthew 25:45)*

Communication: Common Calling. Common Values.

What is the purpose of our communication? That we may lift up our common calling and make visible our common values, partnering in God’s healing work, mending our world.



May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 15:5-6

Most literally, communication involves the sharing of a message in a way that is accessible and understood by the other. In recent years the importance of digital presence has emerged as an important tool for communication whether through web sites, social media platforms, or in email correspondence. The February Presbytery meeting offered a workshop on Using Digital Tools for Growth and 12 churches attended. Many churches within the Presbytery are using their digital presence in creative ways to raise awareness of community activities, invite people to

contemplative practices, and broadcast worship services.



Online Bible study class from First Carlisle.

When we lift our heads out of the weeds of our individual congregations, we see our common values in action, across the presbytery. These common values fuel the actions that shape our witness. We are unique congregations, in different communities, gifted by the spirit to show and tell about God's love for all.

How can we continue to improve our communication and connection to one another in the name of our common calling and values, revealing the love of God given to us in Christ Jesus?