

# *THE NEXUS*      FEBRUARY 2023

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## **Nicki's News**

Dear Congregants,

I came across a great article written by a pastor and author of books and multiple articles. This particular article was focused on something I personally continue to work on, which is letting go of control. In the article, she mentioned some questions to ask ourselves when we are feeling anxious to see if we are not letting go of control. Sharon Hoddle Miller shares that in our anxious moments, first ask yourself, am I trying to control something right now that God has not given me to control? If the answer is yes, then the next question should be, Do I want to continue feeling this way? Personally, her response was the same as mine and likely yours, No. No, we do not want to continue feeling this way. This is the crossroads decision time. We can continue to try and control the person or situation and continue feeling anxious or we can surrender this to God and entrust God to guide us forward. Next time we find ourselves anxious about situations or people, may we remember to ask ourselves these questions and ultimately turn our anxieties over to God.

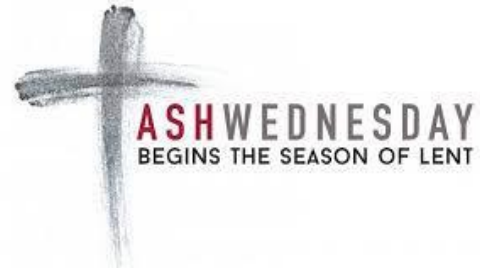
In His Peace,  
Pastor Nicki

## **Nexus Deadline**

The Nexus deadline for the March issue is Monday, February 27<sup>th</sup>.

## **Nexus Sponsor**

This month's issue is being sponsored by Frank Lanterman. You may choose to sponsor an issue of the Nexus. There is a new sign-up sheet for this year. The cost is \$35.00.



## **Ash Wednesday Services**

You are invited to join us for an Ash Wednesday Worship service on February 22, 2023 at either 12pm or 6pm. The 6pm service will be live streamed.

## **Celebrations:**

Celebrating **Birthdays in February** are:

Diane Huffman, Chris Finelli, Frank Lanterman, Dick McNally, Cort Huffman, Bill Cramer and Kylee Vogel.

Celebrating an **Anniversary in February** are:

Ed and Anna Mae West  
Dennis and Jenny Collins



## **Men's Lunch**

The Men's Lunch group will meet on Wednesday, February 8<sup>th</sup> at noon in the Lounge. Please join us for soup and sandwiches and great conversation.



## **Youth Group**

Our combined church youth group will be meeting again this month on February 26 at 2pm. This month's meeting will be at Presbyterian Church of the Mountain in Delaware Water Gap. Like we've been doing, both the confirmation and youth groups will meet at same time. We will begin with team building activities as a combined group then separate out in our perspective groups. We have some fun things in store. Hope to see you there.

## **Inspirarity Dialogue's**

You have a chance to meet your neighbors of differing faiths through conversations with them. This dialogue time is one hour and each month a different topic is chosen for the next month's discussion. Each person is to bring their faith traditions or own personal beliefs take on the chosen topic. Currently we are still doing this remotely on Zoom, but the hope is to do it in person in the future.

The next meeting is Sunday, February 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting ID: 811 4459 9578      Passcode: 621686

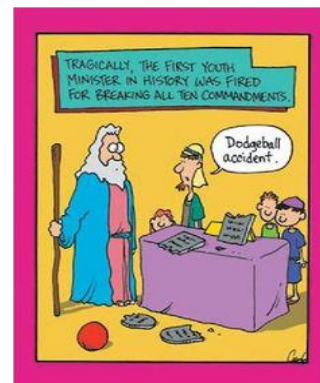
## **Living Into Our Mission**

Here are ways we have brought God's light to our community in recent months:

1. We have helped someone move into a new apartment with furniture and home furnishings they needed.
2. We have provided meals for Family Promise members in need.
3. We have supplied food to individuals and have also taken lots of food to the North Timberwolf Pantry.

4. We have provided temporary room and board for people traveling through our area.
5. We supplied, blessed and delivered backpacks to kids in need in our area and donated more up north.
6. We provided practice space for a summer choir.
7. We baptized a baby, 3 children and their father!
8. We completed and are starting a new TOALC session.
9. We have had several Walk & Talks.
10. We have helped in giving rides, meals and visits to our congregants.
11. We have donated money to Ukraine.
12. We donated funds to Common Threads, Angels & Dragonflies, Angel's Closet, Meals On Wheels, 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming Thrift Shop and Timberwolf Pantry.
13. We contributed to One Great Hour of Sharing.
14. We contributed to the Peace & Global Witness Offering.
15. We contributed to the Alice Visionary Project.
16. We provided space to the Lehigh Presbytery for some of their activities.
17. We support Cares. Once a week we have young adults, with special needs, come in and volunteer to do small chores around the Church.
18. We provided for several families for Brighter Christmas.
19. We sent 36 boxes overseas to children for Operation Christmas Child.
20. Some members volunteered to Ring the Bell for the Salvation Army at Christmastime.
21. S.S. kids made cards and we delivered the cards and cookies from the cookie exchange to 10 different shut-ins for Christmas.

## **Humor Corner**



## **Shared Ministry**

A small group of leaders from our church, Christ Presbyterian Church of the Slate Belt and First Presbyterian Church of Stroudsburg are beginning to meet to discuss more ways to collectively do mission and ministry together. The feedback from the combined Christmas Day and New Year's services, as well as the Advent wreath making and Pot Pie lunch were very positive. These events are helping us get to know one another and see where we can work together to make God's kingdom on earth more visible.

## **Lenten Luncheon**

To start this Lenten season, we will be having a Lenten Luncheon, which will take place shortly after service on February 26, 2023. This will be a potluck style lunch. The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the foyer/Narthex area. We hope to begin this Lenten season with fellowship and reflection. If you have questions, please reach out to the office, Pastor Nicki, Hollie Falzone or Bonnie Miller. We hope to see you there!

## **Lenten Theme**

Over Advent we did a Pastor Swap that was very successful. Many who were unsure about this experiment shared how wonderful it was. The leaders of the cooperating churches have tasked us with exploring more things like this. As such, over the season of Lent, we will be doing a shared Lenten theme with Christ Presbyterian Church of the Slate Belt and First Presbyterian Church of Stroudsburg.

This year's theme is "Where New Life Might Yet Begin..." Throughout the season of Lent, each week, the pastors in their individual churches will be preaching on the same scripture passages. The season of Lent is a time of reflection, preparing ourselves for the Resurrection Sunday of Easter. Each week we will explore where New Life Might Yet Begin preparing as we reflect on what might die in order to be resurrected into New Life.



## **Looking ahead...**

Lenten Meal and Message- Like in past years, we will be offering an opportunity to take time during Lent to focus on growing in God through a Wednesday evening Bible Study. Like in years past we, will begin with a light meal, followed by a Bible Study. However, this year being tasked by the leaderships to do more shared ministry opportunities, we will be rotating the Bible Study location. The first one will be on March 1 here at ESPC. The Bible Study is based on the book *Hard to Dance With the Devil On Your Back* which is a Lenten study that looks at the transcendent struggle in the lives of believers, while helping us to enter the continually crumbling world surrounding Jesus and the disciples in the days preceding Easter.

Here is the schedule of rotation:

Week 1 March 1- ESPC

Week 2 March 8 CPCSB

Week 3 March 15- 1<sup>st</sup> Stroudsburg

Week 4 March 22- ESPC

Week 5 March 29 CPCSB

Week 6 April 5- 1<sup>st</sup> Stroudsburg

April 7 Good Friday combined service ESPC 7pm

## **February Meetings & Events**

Feb. 8 <sup>th</sup>	Men's Lunch, noon
Feb. 12 <sup>th</sup>	Session meeting Inspararity Dialogues, 7:00 pm
Feb. 14 <sup>th</sup>	Women's Circle, 1:00 pm
Feb. 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Ash Wednesday – services at 12:00 and 6:00 pm
Feb. 24 <sup>th</sup>	K-Group, 1:00 pm
Feb. 26 <sup>th</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent Lenten Lunch, following worship Youth Group Gathering, 2:00 at Church of the Mountain
Feb. 27 <sup>th</sup>	Nexus Deadline

## Man and a Fork

There was a young man who had been diagnosed with a terminal illness and had been given three months to live. So as he was getting his things 'in order,' he contacted his Priest and had him come to his house to discuss certain aspects of his final wishes.

*He told him which songs he wanted sung at the service, what scriptures he would like read, and what outfit he wanted to be buried in.*

**Everything was in order and the Priest was preparing to leave when the young man suddenly remembered something very important to him.**

*'There's one more thing,' he said excitedly..*

*'What's that?' came the Priest's reply.*

*'This is very important,' the young man continued.*

**'I want to be buried with a fork in my right hand.'**

*The Priest stood looking at the young man, not knowing quite what to say.*

**That surprises you, doesn't it?' the young man asked.**

*'Well, to be honest, I'm puzzled by the request,' said the Priest.*

*The young man explained. 'My grandmother once told me this story, and from that time on I have always tried to pass along its message to those I love and those who are in need of encouragement.*

**In all my years of attending socials and dinners, I always remember that when the dishes of the main course were being cleared, someone would inevitably lean over and say, 'Keep your fork.**

*' It was my favorite part because I knew that something better was coming .... like velvety chocolate cake or deep-dish apple pie.*

*Something wonderful, and with substance!'*

*So, I just want people to see me there in that casket with a fork in my hand and I want them to wonder 'What's with the fork?'*

*Then I want you to tell them:*

**'Keep your fork ... the best is yet to come.'**

**The Priest's eyes welled up with tears of joy as he hugged the young man good-bye. He knew this would be one of the last times he would see him before his death.**

**But he also knew that the young man had a better grasp of heaven than he did. He had a better grasp of what heaven would be like than many people twice his age, with twice as much experience and knowledge.**

*He KNEW that something better was coming.*

*At the funeral people were walking by the young man's casket and they saw the suit he was wearing and the fork placed in his right hand. Over and over, the Priest heard the question, 'What's with the fork?' And over and over he smiled.*

*During his message, the Priest told the people of the conversation he had with the young man shortly before he died. He also told them about the fork and about what it symbolized to him.*

*He told the people how he could not stop thinking about the fork and told them that they probably would not be able to stop thinking about it either.*

*He was right. So the next time you reach down for your fork let it remind you, ever so gently, that the best is yet to come.*

## **Church Elders**

Sharon Laverdure    Ellie Buff  
Sandra Rydell    Judy Schreck    Jim Hall  
Phil Lawrence    Debbie Prince    Lisa Swanson

## **Church Staff**

Nicole Vogel	Pastor
Jen Carmella	Secretary
Linda Schaller	Music Director
Sami Carmella	Nursery Attendant
Keith Karkut	Tech/ Sexton

## **Nexus Staff**

Pastor:            Nicole Vogel

Editor:            Jen Carmella

Contributing Editors:  
Sandy Rydell, Tim Swanson

# February 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Adult Ed. 9:00  Every Sunday			1	2	3	4
5 Worship, 10:00  Communion Sunday	6	7	8 Men's Lunch, noon	9	10	11
12 Worship, 10:00  Session meeting  Inspararity Dialogues, 7:00 pm	13	14	15	16	17	18
19 Worship, 10:00	20	21	22 Ash Wednesday  Services at 12:00 and 6:00 p.m.	23	24 K-Group, 1:00 p.m.	25
26 Worship, 10:00  1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent  Lenten Luncheon	27 Nexus Deadline	28				