



First Presbyterian Church of Hawley

August 2026
Newsletter

*Sunday
Worship Service
meets at 10:00am*

*Sermons:
August 3, 2026
Communion Sunday
“Two Point
Takedown”
Genesis 32:22-31*

*August 9, 2026
“Jesus and his Water
shoes”
Matthew 14:22-33*

*August 16, 2026
“Reunited and It Feels
So Good”
Genesis 45:1-15*

*August 23 2026
“Keys and Secret
Identities”
Matthew 16:13-20*

*August 30, 2026
“Walking in Fire”
Matthew 16:21-28*

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*Worship online with
Facebook Live:*

<https://www.facebook.com/FirstPresHawley>

From the Pastor’s Desk...

*“Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.”
Luke 6:20 & 24*

Opening lines are important; **“Four Score and Seven Years ago, We the People, Call me Ishmael, It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, All children, except one, grow up.”** A good opening line sets the tone. It captures your attention and pulls you into the narrative. It hints at a treasure that is yet to be revealed. The Beatitudes of Jesus are no exception. In the Gospels of both Matthew and Luke the Beatitudes begin with **“Blessed are you who are poor (Matthew has poor in spirit), for yours is the kingdom of God.”** This is the opening line to the newly selected disciples. It is the opening line that sets the tone for all the other Beatitudes.

This statement would have immediately captured the crowd’s attention, most of whom were poor. It would have shocked them, for it was believed wealth was a sign of God’s favor. What do you mean being poor is blessed and being rich is a curse? What’s wrong with a roof over our head, food in our belly, and clothes on our back? How exactly is being poor blessed? No one would agree with this saying!

While Matthew attempts to soften the **“poor”** both Gospels use the Greek word ptochoi, which literally means **“the very empty ones, those who are crouching.”** They are the beggars, the nobodies of this world who have nothing left. Jesus is saying, “Happy are you, you’re the freest of them all.” He is telling the impoverished you are blessed because you are not caught up in the mad dash to be rich, trying to manipulate the system to your advantage, getting the most social media followers, making false friends, and bolstering up your resumes. You are free from wealth and all the trappings that come with it, so it isn’t getting in the way of your faith.

The poor are empty of self, so they have room to set their hearts on Christ instead of what they own. Their focus is on doing the will of God, not chasing after comfort and the things of this world. Jesus warns the **“rich”** if all you’re chasing after are things and comfort you got it, but that’s all you get. Beware, all that stuff gets in the way of experiencing the true wealth of the Kingdom. It takes your energy and only leaves you wanting more. You’re blessed when you have lost it all because the true consolation of peace, joy, fulfillment, and love are yours. The opening line is inviting us to open our lives to the presence of God.

**By God’s Wondrous Grace,
Pastor Mark Juengel**

PRESBYTERY & GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Presbytery Meeting

Our next Mountain Laurel Presbytery Meeting will be held at First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem, PA on Saturday, August 15. These meetings usually begin at 10 AM and adjourn by 3 PM. Please pray for these church government gatherings. If you are interested in attending, see *Rev. Mark*.

General Assembly Recap



The 227th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, addressed constitutional governance, racial justice, gender justice, denominational finances and the direction of the church, laying groundwork for work continuing through the next assembly.

Co-moderators elected, GA228 to be held in Puerto Rico

Commissioners elected the **Rev. Marta**

Pumroy-Cordero, border ministry coordinator for the Tres Rios Border Foundation in Tres Rios Presbytery, and the **Rev. Dr. Kristopher D. Schondelmeyer**, pastor and head of staff at First Presbyterian Church in Davenport, Iowa, as co-moderators. They will preside at GA228, June 11-22, 2028, in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Commissioners also **approved full, in-person assemblies**, including an exhibit hall, beginning in 2030.

Budget and per capita

Commissioners approved a **balanced \$188.4 million unified budget** for Presbyterian Life & Witness (PL&W) and the A Corporation for the 2027–2028 biennium, about \$5.8 million more than the previous budget: \$90.45 million for 2027 and \$97.92 million for 2028. Per capita rates were set at \$13.04 in 2027 and \$12.72 in 2028.

General Assembly Relationships

The GAR Committee approved the new Organization for Mission, the structure for the General Assembly as the denomination's highest council, and **established PL&W** and its governing board.

Israel/Palestine

Commissioners approved RIW-04, declaring that the **Israeli government has violated international law** prohibiting genocide in its war in Gaza. As amended, RIW-04 directs the denomination's Office of Public

Witness to advocate against U.S. military sales to Israel and purchases from Israel. It also encourages members to avoid products from Israeli companies linked to violations of international law.

Constitutional interpretation, missiology, and mission co-worker dismissals

Following testimony on staff dismissals during **World Mission's closure**, the assembly approved CON-02, directing PL&W and the A Corporation to revise employment policies to prohibit nondisclosure covenants for employees, with a report due to the 2028 assembly. RIW-01 calls for review of the processes that terminated mission co-worker positions and World Mission. RIW-02 directs the development of a new missiological statement for global engagement.

Pastors will now be required to complete **boundary and abuse-prevention training** at least every three years.

An overture to remove the Board of Pensions' medical coverage requirements was rejected.

Commissioners referred CON-10, which seeks an authoritative interpretation of monogamy, for discussion within the theological framework proposed in GEN-09, "Beyond Changing Families."

Gender and Sexuality Justice

The Constitutional Interpretation Committee **rejected a call for a special study of the Olympia Overture amendments**, citing



PRESBYTERY & GENERAL ASSEMBLY

(Cont'd.)

General Assembly Recap

related proposals GEN-06 and GEN-09. GEN-06 directs the development of a mechanism that would allow congregations to indicate their openness and readiness to call an LGBTQIA+ candidate on their Ministry Discernment Profiles. Candidates would be allowed to view congregational responses. GEN-09, "Beyond Changing Families: Flourishing Relationships and Belonging," seeks a theological framework and a study guide on human sexuality and gender that reflect the PC(USA)'s commitment to full inclusion.

The assembly reaffirmed support for **access to medically necessary gender-affirming healthcare** and approved development of a survey collecting non-identifying information about sexual misconduct in church settings.

Climate and Environmental Justice

The Climate Justice Committee approved CLJ-02, "Changing Course for a Green Future," **directing divestment from more than 50 companies** by 2030 and barring new investments in them. All CLJ items were placed on the consent agenda, including a call for education on regenerative farming and prioritizing responses to the climate crisis.

White Christiannationalism

Commissioners voted overwhelmingly to declare White Christian nationalism and similar ideologies "**a theological error**" incompatible with the teachings of Jesus Christ; language changes in the *Book of Order* require presbytery ratification. Commissioners rejected an amendment that would have removed references to White Christian nationalism from the Special Committee on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and Race report.

Racial justice

The Racial Justice Committee advanced several recommendations **strengthening**

the denomination's anti-racism work, including RAC-04, "The Report from the Special Committee on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) on Race," directing "PL&W to create a tracking system that displays the progress/completion of all GA business... related to race, racism, and White supremacy ..."

RAC-01 calls for PC(USA) entities to report to the 228th GA on implementation of RGJ-13, the 2022 Report from the Disparities Experienced by Black Women and Girls Task Force. RAC-03, the "Resolution on Liberia Project 180," explores establishing theological learning and repair, and developing **acknowledgment and apology for Presbyterian involvement** in and support of the American Colonization Society and its lasting effects on Indigenous Liberians.

Ordered ministry

The Theological Education and Ordination Committee approved changes **modernizing preparation for ministry** while preserving Presbyterian ordination standards. ORD-02 clarifies that ministry preparation in G-2.06 and G-2.07 of the *Book of Order* applies to those training for the ministry of Word and Sacrament; it requires a two-thirds presbytery vote. ORD-03, addressing collaborative ministry teams, was approved; ORD-04, seeking removal of the time-of-service requirement for ruling elders in mid council roles, was not.

A new confession

A newly appointed special committee will continue **considering a new confession**. The draft seeks to articulate Christian faith in response to contemporary challenges including racism, economic inequality, environmental degradation, violence and political polarization.



For full stories about General Assembly or other

news from the PC(USA):

Visit our website: pres-outlook.org

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Bluesky: [@presoutlook.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/presoutlook.bsky.social)

COMMITTEE NEWS

Committee Chairs

Finance – Bill Rockafellow
Christian Ed – Jill Juengel
Co-Treasurers – Karen Lutz & Jim Brewington
Deacons – John Ehlers
Mission: Jim Mould
Music & Worship – Ann Marie Grilk
Music Director - Matthew Rupcich
Parish Life – Kika Dyson
Session – Rev. Mark Juengel
Personnel – Joe Jauss
Nominating & Clerk of Session – Chris Caruso

Stewardship Thought

God doesn't ask us to give because God needs our resources; God invites us to give because the Lord desires our hearts. Stewardship is about faithfully managing what God has entrusted to us and using it to glorify Him and bless others. "Stewardship isn't a subcategory of the Christian life. Stewardship is the Christian life. After all, what is stewardship except that God has entrusted to us life, time, talents, money, possessions, family, and his **GRACE**? In each case, the Lord evaluates how we regard what he has entrusted to us and what we do with it."
Randy Alcorn



8/2: Parish Life Meeting
8/11: 12:15pm - Worship & Music Mtg.
8/13: 9am – Finance Mtg
8/9: Deacons Meeting
8/16: 5:30pm – Mission's Committee Mtg.
8/25: 12:15pm – Personnel Committee
8/25: 6pm – Session Meeting

Vacation Leave

Pastor Mark will be on vacation from **August 5th & 6th**.
He will be back in the office on **August 7th**.

Nancy M., (the office secretary), will be on vacation from **July 29th - August 11th**. She will be back in the office on **August 12th**. If you need anything from her and/or the office *before August 29th*, *please see her at your earliest convenience*. Any other items can be left in her mailbox by the office kitchen.

COMMITTEE NEWS (Cont'd.)

August Newsletter Insert From Finance Committee

Defined by Generosity

This is the first in a series of updates to the congregation by the Finance Committee with the goal of furthering our communication and sharing information that is of interest. All information in this update is as of June 30, 2026:

Income vs. Expense

YTD Income \$122,000 (note: adjusted to prorate paid annual pledges)

YTD Expenses \$129,000

Planting Seeds in God's Garden of Life...

Our congregation and our community members are very generous:

One Great Hour of Sharing \$825

Deacons Fund \$813

Souper Bowl/Food Pantry \$1,154 (50% to St Paul's Pantry and 50% to Wallenpaupack Our Kids Pantry)

Recital Series \$503

Tags and Treasures \$4,586

In 2024 we received a \$3,000 grant from the Presbytery to offer sign language during selected services. The family utilizing this ASL service has relocated and arrangements were made to donate the remaining balance of \$2,108 to the Scranton School for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children in June.

In late 2023 we received a generous bequest that established our Living Legacy Fund with the New Covenant Trust Company, an investment arm of the Presbyterian Foundation. There are four defined priorities within the Living Legacy Fund: Buildings, Mission, Operations and Cash Reserve. The balance has grown steadily and was supplemented by an additional \$105,000 from the estate earlier this year. We are truly blessed to now have some financial flexibility, and we are considering making much needed repairs to the church building to address the dampness in the sanctuary, gutter replacement, roof repairs and repairs needed to stabilize one of the stained-glass windows.

We are looking forward to providing you with more and varied information in the months ahead. If you are interested in a specific topic or have questions please speak to Grace Laird or Bill Rockafellow who will pass the inquiry on to the committee for future inclusion in an update.

KL 7/9/2026

WORSHIP INFORMATION

Promise Land State Park Worship Service Falls Pavilion

August 23rd at 11:00am



Bring a dish to share - (a Sign-up sheet will be located in the vestibule of the church). Don't forget to bring a hat, a lawn chair or a blanket to sit on.

Directions to Promised Land State Park, Falls Pavilion:

- Route 6 (east) to 507
- 507 (west) to 390
- Turn left onto 390 (south)
- Follow 390, go under Rt. 84 overpass
- Continue onto 390 (south)
- Getting close when you pass 'N. Shore Rd' on left
- Continue on, pass 'Tree Tower Trail' on right
- Just pass 'Bear Wallow Rd' (on right) make next left into Parking lot
- Falls Pavilion straight down toward the Lake, above the spillway.

Coming from Rt. 84

- Take the Rt. 390 South Exit and follow the directions above.

WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS – AUGUST

Volunteers Needed

If you would like to volunteer, please Sign-Up in the vestibule to be an **Usher** and to host **Coffee Hour**. For **Liturgists**, see *Adele Harrison*, and to help with **Communion**, see *Ann Marie Grilk*.

August - Coffee Hour

8/2: TBD
8/9: TBD
8/16: Pat Bartleson & Eva
8/23: TBD
8/30: TBD

August - Flower Donations

8/2: Kathy & Dave Smith – 47th Anniversary
8/9: Jane French
8/16: TBD
8/23: Jim Mould
8/30: Ann Marie Grilk & Patrick Field

*(In memory of Patrick's mom, Patricia,
honoring her passing 8/30.)*

August - Good News Café

8/9: Pat Gemeinhardt
8/23: Sean Mulligan

WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS – AUGUST (Cont'd.)

August - Liturgists

8/2- Heather Caruso

8/9- TBD

8/16- TBD

8/23- Jim Mould

8/30- Chris Caruso

August - Ushers

8/2: Robert Pinkney & Bill Chicoski

8/9: Kika Dyson & Pat Bartleson

8/16: TBD

8/23: TBD

8/30: TBD

August - Communion Servers

(August 2nd)

Set Up & Clean Up:

The MacArthur's

Servers: Don MacArthur

Maria MacArthur

Jim Mould

Kathy Smith

Sue Goldbach

UPCOMING EVENTS

CRAFT
SHOW
August 15th
10am-4pm

Parish Life is sponsoring a Craft Fair on Saturday, **August 15th from 10am-4pm**. Vendor tables are \$25.00 a table. For additional information or to register, please contact **Pat Bartleson at 570-390-9624**.



FPCH Red Cross Blood Drive
August 15th
1pm-6pm

We will be sponsoring the Red Cross Blood Drive on **Thursday, August 13th** from **1pm-6pm**. Register to give blood at <https://www.redcross.org/>. To sign up for an appointment call 1-800-RedCross or Red Cross Blood.org or Download the Blood Donor App. If you have any questions, please see **Melanie Tek-Visgilio**.

CHURCH LIFE

Donate to FPCH

Thank you for your continued financial support. You may use the church's website: (<https://www.fpchawley.org>) or feel free to send a check directly to the church at *815 Church Street, Hawley, PA*. Your support is appreciated.

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Thursday Morning Fall Bible Study

In September we will begin our Thursday morning Bible Study with an exploration of the Psalms. These hymns and prayers are some of the most read and beloved parts of scripture. Their ability to comfort, inspire, and lift us up in praise is precious to our faith journey. We will explore the importance of the Psalms, how to understand them, and the impact they have on our worship of God. Come and join us on this journey through the Psalms beginning **September 10th at 11:00 am**. We meet in the Conference Room of the **Samford House**.

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Monday Small Group Study

The Small Study Group meets **Monday's at 11:00am** at the home of **Betsy Yergey, 27 Lake Drive, Hawley**. For a curriculum see the Study Sheet from the previous Sunday sermon. All are welcome.

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Good News Café

The Good News Café will be on **August 8th** and on **August 22nd**. A seated lunch meal is provided. The Café is open on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month from 11:30am–1:00pm. Please direct questions concerning signing up to cook a meal or to help serve **Eileen Brewington, Pat Gemeinhardt or Karen Rockafellow**. Your help and support are much appreciated.

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Books

There is a bookcase full of books in the Social Hall. *Please feel free to take them home.*

Joys & Concerns

For a most recent Prayer List, please go to the Church's website at <https://www.fpchawley.org/>

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Home Communion

Pastor Mark is giving Home Communion on the first Sunday of each month. *If you are homebound and would like to receive communion please contact the church office the week before.* Communion will be received in the afternoon following worship.

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The Book Club meeting is on **Friday, August 21st**. The **August** Book is *The Berrypickers by Amanda Peters (Pat)*. If you would like to know more about our Book Club, please contact **Melanie Tek-Visgilio**.

CHURCH LIFE - Cont'd.



8/2: Patrick Field & Matthew Rupcich
8/5: Dave & Kathy Smith
8/6: Donald & Maria MacArthur
8/7: Ronald & Cathy Lee

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September Newsletter

Our next Newsletter will be in **September 2026**. Articles for our next monthly Newsletter need to be in the office by **Wednesday, August 19th**. *The Newsletter will go to print on the 26th of each month. Any articles submitted after the 26th will go on the following month's Newsletter.*



8/4: Ginny Hack
8/9: Pat Schmit
8/11: Nancy Brill
8/14: Donald Hagerman
8/16: Rebecca Lee
8/20: Jane Jauss & Kimberly Protzman
8/21: Barbara Schariest
8/22: Lynn Stack
8/24: Ronald Kraft
8/25: Melanie Tek-Visgilio & Oressa Miller
8.26: Patrick Field
8/27: Tom Protzman

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Office Hours

*Monday–Thursday
8:00am-1:00pm
Closed Fridays*

*Please note that the office will be closed from **July 29th - August 11th**, while Nancy is on vacation. The office will be open on **August 12th** upon her return.*

COMMUNITY EVENTS



For those in need of support the church hosts AA meetings, **every Monday and Wednesdays at 12:00pm.**



The Lion's Club

The Lion's Club will not be meeting **Thursday, August 13th**. For more information, please contact **Pat Bartleson.**

COMMUNITY EVENTS- Cont'd.

The Wayne Highlands Quilt Guild



The Wayne Highlands Quilt Guild will meet in Blough Hall on **Monday, August 10th from 2-6pm**. There will be an open sew from 2pm to 4pm for personal projects. Beginning at 4pm we will have a short business meeting followed by 'sew and tell', a small project to work on, and time to visit with one another. Anyone interested in quilting is invited to join us. For more information contact Deb Jacobson at debszoo@gmail.com

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Hawley Borough Community Events

The Mission Committee will be hosting the following upcoming events:



National Night Out **Tuesday, August 4th from 5pm-8pm**

The church would like to be represented at the annual National Night out in Bingham Park on **Tuesday, August 4th from 5pm-8pm**. We need volunteers! If you are able to volunteer please sign up using the sign up sheet in the entryway or contact *Sue Courtright*.

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Community Yard Sale **Saturday, September 5th**

The church will serve as a host for Hawley's annual community yard sale day on **Saturday, September 5th**. If you would like to reserve a spot to sell your stuff, please contact *Michelle Westbrook*.

COMMUNITY EVENTS- Cont'd.



Hawley Harvest Hoedown

Saturday, October 3rd from 11am-5pm

The church would like to participate in the annual Hawley Harvest Hoedown on **Saturday, October 3rd** and we need volunteers. We will have morning and afternoon shifts available. If you are able to volunteer, please sign up using the Sign-Up sheet in the entryway or contact ***Jim Mould***.

August 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Communion Sunday 9am: Chancel Choir Reh. 10am: Worship 11am: Coffee Hr. Parish Life Mtg.	Nancv – Vacation Aug. 3rd – Aug. 12th					11:30am-1pm: Good News Café
	11am: Small Grp. Monday 12pm: AA	10am: Handbell Choir 11am: Chancel Choir 5pm-8pm: National Night Out – Bingham Park	Pastor Mark – Vacation 12pm: AA 5-8pm: Cub Scouts 6:30pm: Prayer Grp. (Cancelled)			
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
9am: Chancel Choir Reh. 10am: Worship Deacon's Mtg.	Nancy – Vacation Aug. 3rd – Aug. 12th			9am: Finance Mtg. 1pm-6pm: Red Cross Blood Drive		
	11am: Small Grp. Monday 12pm: AA	10am: Handbell Choir 11am: Chancel Choir 12:15: Worship & Music Mtg	12pm: AA 5-8pm: Cub Scouts 6:30pm: Prayer Grp.			
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
9am: Chancel Choir Reh. 10am: Worship Missions Mtg.	11am: Small Grp. Monday 12pm: AA 2-6pm: WH Quilters	10am: Handbell Choir 11am: Chancel Choir	12pm: AA 5-8pm: Cub Scouts 6:30pm: Prayer Grp.	5:30pm-8pm: Lion's Club	1pm: Book Club	11:30am-1pm: Good News Café
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
9am: Chancel Choir Reh. 10am: Worship	11am: Small Grp. Monday 12pm: AA	10am: Handbell Choir 11am: Chancel Choir 12:15pm: Personnel Mtg. 6:00pm: Session Mtg	12pm: AA 5-8pm: Cub Scouts 6:30pm: Prayer Grp.			
30	31	Promise Land State Park Worship Service Falls Pavilion August 23rd at 11:00am				
9am: Chancel Choir Reh. 10am: Worship	11am: Small Grp. Monday 12pm: AA					