



Recently, I've been reading information written during two different "church visioning" programs completed by Lewistown Presbyterian Church back in 2009-2011 and 2017-2019. My goal was to gain some insight on work completed in both programs to articulate the future of Lewistown Presbyterian Church.

Many of you may remember the Elders and committee members working on The Missional Church project and the Natural Church Development project over the last decade. Some of you were involved in the committees or, perhaps, completed surveys and interviews while both committees gained vital information from church members and friends.

During the Missional Church project, a key question was asked that became a missional challenge for the current Session in the spring of 2010: "How do we address the spiritual and physical needs of the children and youth in our community and bring them and their families closer to the kingdom of God?"

A year later, after surveying the congregation, the Session approved the following vision statement in April 2011. The vision statement reads, **"Our church is called to proclaim the reign of God and to be a sign of the reign of God—to speak, to be and to do. Our church is called to proclaim Jesus Christ and to make Jesus Christ visible in our life as the body of Christ so that grace may extend to more and more people and God will be glorified. (2 Cor. 4:5-15)**

***Our confidence in Christ encourages us on our journey to do God's will. With our energy and diverse talents, we strive to minister to people in our congregation and reach out to people in our community. We seek to build relationships with others in our church and community, share the love of God with them, and be examples of Christ's servants with them. We enthusiastically join together in shared visions, goals, and the joy of the Holy Spirit working among us to bring the Kingdom of God closer."***

Needless to say, I was quite excited to read of the faithful work completed by the church through this program. What a foundation to lay for the future of God's church! Even after almost 10 years, it remains a solid, well thought-out statement for us today.

Everything I read and hear these days about the future of the church states that it has and will keep changing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In many ways, this is helpful and needed. Churches in general aren't entities that embrace change easily. We find comfort in hanging onto the, "way things used to be."

And yet, COVID-19 has reminded us that to move forward as a church we had to embrace new ways to be the church. Many churches embraced new technology to maintain communication with members throughout the week and on Sundays. Some churches, like ours, adapted ministries like the Deacons so that they could "shepherd" small groups of people throughout the pandemic.

This isn't the first time Lewistown Presbyterian Church has adapted to the needs around them. During the Natural Church Development program, survey results showed a lacking quality of loving relationships. Based on annual reports regarding the program in 2017 and 2018, the church set out to develop this quality with intentional activities that increased and strengthened loving relationships between church members and the community. Many good initiatives were planned and completed during this three-year period.

Which goes to show this pastor that LPC is a church that is resilient when needed and forward thinking when a challenge is presented or discovered. That resiliency is an important characteristic as we (hopefully) move into a period post-covid.

The good news is that the foundation for church ministry has been laid by faithful members who participated in these two helpful projects. I think the vision written in 2011 is still a faithful, accurate vision for the church today. Our methods of meeting the vision statement may change (and maybe should change), but the intention to be a church, "**called to proclaim the reign of God and to be a sign of the reign of God—to speak, to be and to do,**" remains a viable task for us to work together to achieve.

That's my plan moving forward with you as the pastor of Lewistown Presbyterian Church – to help us all articulate and plan out the vision of our church in new, relevant ways. Your desire to know your community was evident in 2011 and remains evident today. One of many truths that led me to serve alongside you.

With the Session, the Deacons, and YOU, I look forward to discovering and discerning how God may ask us to proclaim our vision. We must keep asking the questions that help us to love Christ and our neighbor, too. But not just ask questions and then stop – but to ask questions that bring us to a plan that enables us to "speak, be, and do," as the body of Christ in a broken world.

My prayer is that you will join me in discovering where God leads us together!

*Blessings,*

*Pastor Sarah*

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## SPRING 2021 CONFIRMATION CLASS

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Meet our 2021 Confirmation Class! Members include: Gracelynn Beckenbaugh, Bailey Cullen, McKenzie Donahue, Caleb Noerr, and Bo Reeder. Sunday, March 28, during worship we prayed for the class and encouraged them to embrace the journey as they articulate their belief in Jesus Christ as their own.

Classes will be held on Sunday afternoons before youth group at the manse. Classes will teach youth about church membership, the sacraments, church polity (structure), mission, spiritual disciplines, basic tenets of reformed theology, and more, as they explore with Pastor Sarah what it means to be a Christian. The class will end with participants writing their own Statement of Faith and being given an opportunity to join Lewistown Presbyterian Church on Pentecost Sunday, May 23.

You are encouraged to pray for these confirmands as they begin their Confirmation "process."

***Lord, You send out Your Spirit to touch the hearts of all people, so that they may believe in You and in Jesus whom You sent. Look kindly on our candidates for Confirmation as they listen to Your voice.***

***Open their hearts to Your Spirit and bring to fulfilment the good work that You have begun in them. As we prepare these youth for Confirmation, make each of us an instrument of Your love. Teach us to appreciate what is holy in others, and to be patient with what we do not understand. Deepen our faith in the Gospel and help us to pass it on by our example. We pray that You will continue to guide us and sustain us. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.***

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## CHRISTIAN ED

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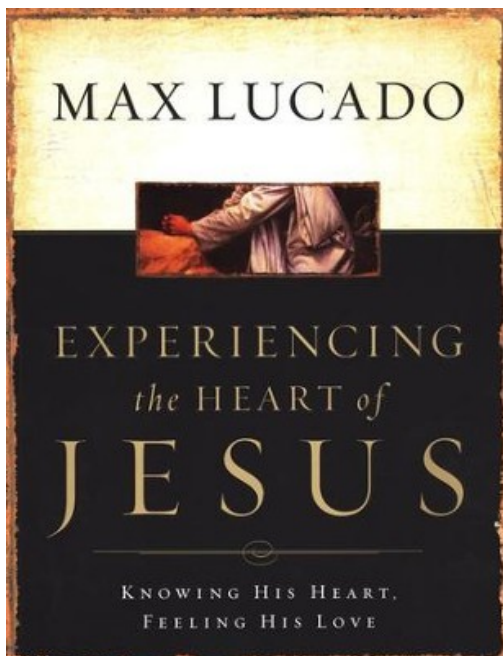
Ginny Westover, Christian Ed Director

Spring has officially sprung! Warmer days are here at last! The landscape is greening, buds are pushing and birds are cheering each step of the earth's re-awakening! Sunny daffodil blooms will soon be joined by tulips and other spring beauties. Then soon, butterflies will make their appearance, breaking free from their chrysalis "tombs" and unfurling damp wings to the sun's warmth. Evidence of transformation is all around!

The work of transformation has been happening all along, of course, even when we can't see it. Bulbs, buds and butterflies all go through a long and mostly invisible process before they burst into sight with color and grace. This is a beautiful metaphor of our spiritual growth. The Spirit of God is always at work, silently shaping believer's hearts into the image of Christ. Our work in Christian Education is to join with God as the Spirit guides us to resources that encourage us to grow in our relationship with Jesus Christ. "That Christ may be formed in you" is the hope and objective of each curriculum. Information is important; truth is essential, but the end goal is always transformation—to become more and more like Jesus.

To that end, here's a look at what is being offered through the ministry of Christian education:

**Adult Class**—meeting Sunday mornings at 9 AM in the Library, Pat Brown is leading the continuing study of *Experiencing the Heart of Jesus*, by Max Lucado.



**Kidz Zoom Zone**—begins "*The Early Church*" discovering God's exciting work in the book of Acts. Kids in PreK through grade 5 join together online from 9:30—10:00 AM each Sunday morning.

Kidz Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89183651105?pwd=ZEFoZkp5a3h6RGtYLOxuSVZ3MzRqUT09>

Meeting ID: 891 8365 1105

Passcode: Church2021

**Youth Group**—meeting on the third floor from 6:00–7:30 PM each Sunday; Youth in grades 6-12 will begin a series on Jesus' Parables.

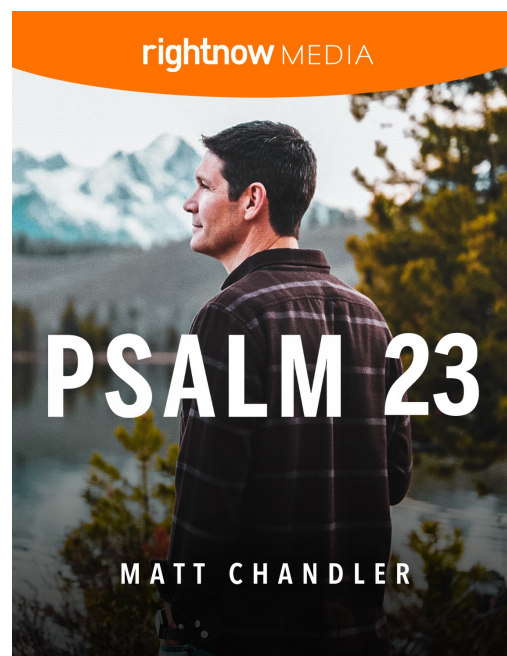
**Tuesday night small group**—adults join on Zoom from 6:30–8:00 PM for Bible study and discussion. *Psalms 23* is the current study from Right Now Media and author/Pastor Matt Chandler. Group members taking turns leading.

Tuesday night Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5766618472>

When prompted Enter Password: 4561

We invite you to join in! ***"Taste and see that the Lord is good" and that fellowship is sweet!***





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# THE EGG AND US

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Rev. Robert L. Zorn, Pastor Emeritus

Some years ago since we retired, we had daily visitors to our lot out here in Treaster Valley. They are our neighbors' three geese, or more correctly, two geese and a gander. They arrived shortly after dawn each day. Our driveway alarm announced their arrival. The alarm woke the dogs, who added to the commotion, which ended all hope of "sleeping in." The geese usually stay all day. They wander slowly about our lawn and talk to each other in some kind of language which is all their own. They grazed on the blades of grass, which were beginning to grow, and then returned frequently to the cellar drain outlet to drink and preen themselves. Neither our presence, nor that of our dogs seemed to bother them in the least. About dusk each day they paraded back down to their home.

One day while they were still our guests I found, just a few feet from our front porch, a nice white egg. Good! I thought they are rewarding us for their grazing privilege. But I took the egg back down to their owner. She said that it was the first egg of the season, and that we could keep it because each goose would probably lay an egg every other day. I declined her offer because we had not yet calculated the cholesterol content of a good egg. I suggested that she could put the egg under a "setting hen" and hatch some little goslings. I am still not sure that this was the best



idea that I ever had.

Consider, if you will, the egg. It can provide a good meal or it can provide new life. Could this not be a metaphor of our relationship to our church? The church, which provides us from time to time with spiritual nourishment: or it can be the opportunity for a larger life of service to God and to our neighbors.

There is a fable told of a chicken and a pig that were walking together down the road. They came to a diner, which was advertising a breakfast of ham and eggs. The chicken was elated and pointed out to the pig how important these two humble creatures were to humanity. However, the pig thought about it for a minute and then replied to the chicken, "Just remember, for you it's a donation, but for me it is a sacrifice."

Thus is life—sometimes it asks of us a donation, sometimes a sacrifice.

***As Jesus looked up, he saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. "Truly I tell you," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."***

***Luke 21:1-4***

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## BAPTISM

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### **Elsea Louise Diven Baptized March 21**

Elsea is the daughter of Caleb and Kate Diven and soon to be an older sister in April. Elsea's grandparents are Don and Pam Pecht, who both participated in the baptism.



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# PRESBYTERIAN PRESCHOOL

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Ginny Westover, Preschool Director

Our Preschool classes have been on the move this month! We've been keeping with March's theme, "Things That Move," learning about all things mobile; from our own remarkably created bodies to many modes of transportation. We've explored some mysterious movers, like wind, seeds and tiny creatures, all the while moving forward in our abilities to recognize letters, letter sounds and numbers.

Even our classroom moved around this month! The first Wednesday in March was a wacky one for sure! Tables were upside down, socks were on chair legs, a really big, hairy spider had fastened "webs" across the room, a palm tree had suddenly grown in the corner and there was even a shoe on the wall (and we all know that, "A shoe on the wall shouldn't be there at all!"). Wacky Wednesday yielded some pretty out-landish outfits, too! Dyed spikey hair, mismatched socks and crazy clothing combinations were seen – even on Secretary Deb and Custodian Kathy! We wondered if the cause was all the green eggs and ham we had eaten on Monday...

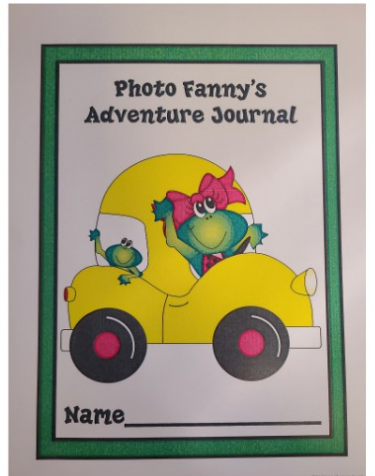
By week two, we had moved on to new adventures; or at least to planning a few. Before we could actually go anywhere there were passports to fill out and suitcases to label and decorate. The kiddos used puppets and their imaginations to act out some adventures for each other during Center Time. Later, Photo Fanny, a picture of our classroom puppet friend, went home with each preschooler. Each kiddo brought a journal of their adventures with Photo Fanny back to the classroom and shared their stories at Circle Time. At Chapel time we learned about some friends whose love for their paralyzed friend moved them to move their friend through a roof to the feet of Jesus. The crowd of onlookers was moved to praise God for restoring the man's ability to move his legs! After Chapel Time we moved upstairs to the third floor where we traveled to three different locations: Jamaica, a Brazilian rainforest and Yellowstone National Park. At each center we had some great learning fun: finding and counting shells at the beach, locating jungle animals by their beginning sound and finding sight words hidden in the forests of Yellowstone. Then it was back downstairs to get a snack, catch our "flight" and move on to Egypt. What better place

than pyramid walls (aka, "sidewalk") to draw hieroglyphs!

Just when we thought that March was moving on to a more lamb-like state (you know, "in like a lion, out like a lamb" ...) who should show up in our classroom but that mischievous little leprechaun?! We had anticipated his visit, and had gone to great lengths to try to catch him, constructing a leprechaun trap for each class. This bit of creativity entailed some more moving of furniture and material. Classmates worked together to construct what we were confident to be, fool-proof traps: gold coins, a golden crown, a trail of Fruit Loops and a pile of Skittles all positioned under boxes or in a bathroom or box-truck, and rigged with ropes. Everyone left for home that day certain we would find the little (un)lucky leprechaun under a box, stuck fast to the floor. Anticipation was so high the next morning that we hardly remembered to hang up our back packs before bursting into the classroom to meet the tiny green guy! You can imagine the looks on our faces when the door was opened to reveal that our classroom furniture had been moved around and turned upside down... again! Not only that, but the traps had been completely demolished; the gold, candy, and Fruit Loops nowhere to be found! As for that sneaky leprechaun? The only trace we could find were his tiny green footprints...EVERYWHERE!!! (and green water(?) in the toilets – EW!!). Oh, well...our disappointment soon moved on to creative energy for painting rainbows, counting gold coins and making patterns with shamrocks. The next day at Chapel time we learned about Saint Patrick and how his love for God and the people of Ireland made him willing to move from his home in Britain to the "emerald isle" to share the gospel of Jesus Christ. After Chapel time and snack we moved up to the third floor for some transportation fun moving letters, numbers and sight words via trucks, airplanes and even scooters!

Now that the seasons have moved from winter to spring, we've enjoyed being able to move outside! One recent warm(er), sunny Monday we explored "mysterious movers:" flying kites and blowing bubbles to observe the effects of wind, discovering various ways that water can move and move a variety of objects, and discovering how bees move pollen from flower to flower.







# FINANCIAL REPORT

Susan L. Ferguson, Church Treasurer

	Jan - Feb 2021	Budget	% of Budget
Income			
BUDGETED INCOME	26,028.03	198,990.00	13.08%
INVESTMENT INCOME	12,317.03	139,560.00	8.83%
Total Income	38,345.06	338,550.00	11.33%
Expense			
BENEVOLENCE	470.64	30,000.00	1.57%
MINISTRY OF THE WORD	12,145.51	82,979.00	14.64%
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	303.39	4,700.00	6.46%
MUSIC AND WORSHIP	1,966.07	2,000.00	98.3%
PROPERTY	7,752.73	50,365.00	15.39%
ADMINISTRATION	1,597.62	25,722.00	6.21%
PERSONNEL	20,952.50	139,984.00	14.97%
FELLOWSHIP	0.00	1,800.00	0.0%
PRESCHOOL	0.00	1,000.00	0.0%
Total Expense	45,188.46	338,550.00	13.35%
	-6,843.40		

Note February 28 marks 16.66% of the Year to Date



## PRESCHOOL *(continued from page 5)*

As teachers, our hearts are often moved by the growth we see in our students. These kiddos have moved from new learners to confident scholars! We are moving into the final, most enjoyable months of school now. Our kiddos know the routines and rhythms of the classroom and have moved from being mostly strangers to good friends. They are moving closer and closer to graduation and to becoming Kindergartners, and we are moved with gratitude to God, parents and church members for helping them learn!

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**Lewistown, PA 17044**

***Address Correction Requested***



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Find us on Facebook!

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