



THE MESSENGER

April 2025

Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church
Shepherdstownpresbyterian.org

PASTOR'S NOTE: "THE SPIRIT OF SACKCLOTH"

The theme of sackcloth and ashes first emerged last month in our SPC Support Group for those who have been personally affected by recent executive orders related to federal workers, DEI initiatives, immigration, transgender identity and care, and more. In discussing what kinds of public actions SPC might take, as Ash Wednesday approached, one of our members evoked the image of sackcloth and ashes to describe how they were feeling. The theme took off from there.

In the biblical tradition, praying with sackcloth is a visible sign of deep grief (lamentation). It is an invitation to realign our actions with our values (repentance). It is a public witness to injustice (proclamation). It is a call to action (hope).

Praying with sackcloth insists all is not well in our world, and we refuse to pretend otherwise. It signifies a commitment to shift that within ourselves that contributes to suffering. It demonstrates a public lament for all we have already lost. It leads to deeper commitment to work for a better world.

As I continue to robe myself in sackcloth through the Season of Lent, I find these things to be true for me - and more. As the roughness of the cloth rubs against my skin, my mind moves to those places in my life and in the life of the world that are as rough as sackcloth. And I pray for them. As I consider what I would rather be wearing, my mind moves to those who long for a better life than the one they have now. And I pray for them. As I swirl through the emotions of embarrassment and pride and fear that accompany the public nature of robing in sackcloth, my mind moves to all who suffer embarrassment and pride and fear. And I pray for them.

I have already been transformed by the Spirit of Sackcloth.

As the Season of Lent continues into April, the invitation to transformation continues as well. Our Support Group will reveal the results of a congregational survey to discern what public actions we might take to challenge the injustice of our moment. Our worship and spiritual life grounds us in spiritual practices that prepare us to join Jesus in challenging injustice, even at great personal cost. The Spirit of Sackcloth prepares us for prayerful, peaceful, prophetic action rooted in the Way of Jesus. And the promise of resurrection propels us onward, trusting good will prevail in the end.

In the Spirit of Sackcloth,

Pastor Gusti

Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church: An Inclusive Spiritual Community. We welcome all who long for meaning, hope, and belonging. Our faith & practice are rooted in the way of Jesus and enriched by wisdom from all sources. We are committed to being and becoming people of radical compassion, working for justice and wholeness in ourselves and in the world.

The "core commitments" that guide us, and the underlying beliefs that support them are:

Radical Hospitality: We Choose Welcome

- Everyone and everything, and every part of ourselves, is included in the circle of God's love.
- Imperfections and suffering are integral to the spiritual path.

Holistic Spirituality: Everything Belongs

- The Way of Jesus is a path of transformation.
- Doubt and questions are essential to faith.
- We are connected in Love with all, including those who have gone before us, and all those yet to come.
- We value all sources of Wisdom.

Engaged Compassion: God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God

- The Way of Jesus is a way of being in this world, loving, serving and making things whole.
- Loving God means loving all of creation.

Church Staff

Rev. Gusti Linnea Newquist (she/her), Pastor

Christa Mastrangelo Joyce (she/her), Director of Children and Youth Formation

Sheila Melendez (she/her), Choir Director

Sam Jannotta (he/him), Accompanist

Mark Nutwell (he/him), Tech Support (Contract)

Olivia Gill (she/her), Nursery Lead

Lynn Dampman (she/her), Administrative Assistant

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Shepherdstown, WV 25443

Shepherdstownpresbyterian.org

Church Office Hours: 8am – 2pm, Monday through Friday; 304-876-6466

office@shepherdstownpresbyterian.org

Contacting Pastor Gusti: Pastor Gusti makes every effort to respond to communications as soon as possible between the hours of 9am and 9pm Saturday through Thursday. Fridays are her Sabbath. If you are having a pastoral emergency, please call any time, day or night. 681-283-5314;

gusti@shepherdstownpresbyterian.org

PATHWAYS TO LASTING PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Storer Ballroom, Shepherd University

210 North King Street

Shepherdstown, WV 25443

April 2, 2025

7:00 p.m. -- 9:00 p.m.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Light refreshments served.



Join us to engage in constructive dialogue about

- the current situation in the Middle East
- how we can educate and advocate for peace

PANELISTS:



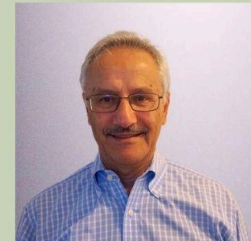
Nizar Farsakh
Political Analyst



Ruti Kadish
Founder of Tovanot



Rev. Gusti Linnea
Newquist, Shepherdstown
Presbyterian Church



Philip Farah
Palestinian Christian
Alliance for Peace

Sponsors

- EASTERN PANHANDLE T.E.A.M. (TOGETHER EDUCATING AND ADVOCATING FOR MIDDLE EAST PEACE)
- MARTINSBURG-BERKELEY COUNTY NAACP, BRANCH 3242
- ALFREDO'S MEDITERRANEAN GRILLE, CHARLESTOWN, WV
- ROTARY CLUB OF SHEPHERSTOWN, WV
- ROTARY CLUB OF MARTINSBURG, WV
- DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INC., EASTERN PANHANDLE ALUMNAE CHAPTER
- RICH & RITA MIER
- FAMILY OF FRANCOISE & SHUKRI ASFOUR
- RICHARD AND BARBARA ANSON
- SHEPHERDSTOWN FRIENDS
- SHEPHERDSTOWN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
- ROTARY ACTION GROUP FOR PEACE
- EASTERN PANHANDLE GREEN COALITION
- ST. AGNES CATHOLIC CHURCH, SHEPHERDSTOWN, WV
- THE MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION OF SHEPHERD UNIVERSITY
- SHEPHERD UNIVERSITY MULTICULTURAL LEADERSHIP TEAM
- EASTERN PANHANDLE GREEN COALITION
- OTHERS TO BE CONFIRMED

ALL must RSVP using QR Code. First 150 to do so will be welcomed in person. All others will be emailed a link to join on Zoom.





CHILDREN AND YOUTH UPDATE

Christa Mastrangelo Joyce

Director of Children and Youth Formation

Both youth and children alike have been engaged in Spiritual Disciplines for Lent. It has been fun to discover new ways of seeing and practicing the disciplines of fasting and prayer. One of the reasons we might choose to fast is to honor the path of justice and consider the ways that food disparity is perpetuated throughout the world, over many generations. This is a broader human rights issue that is challenging for even youth members to understand; however, we are engaged in opportunities to consider those very issues.

Many of our youth group members chose to learn more by participating in the March Oxfam Hunger Banquet. These teens committed their Sunday afternoon and evening to helping usher and serve participants, to engage in experiential learning with discussion and curiosity, then to help clean up the War Memorial space. Each one was touched in some way by what they learned, so much so that one youth member who is going through the confirmation process indicated she'd like to host an Oxfam event for her school as her service project.

This was a dream event for me, with multi-generations working together to make it happen and coming together to dine and learn. By the end of the event, the teens were thrilled to receive the gift of an extra pan of brownies, which was immediately devoured!





MARCH SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The Matthew 25 Project aims to focus SPC's work on the support of the Community Cup Ministry, local food insecurity, and local clean water initiatives. Community Cup events, some involving SPC, are posted on their Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/CommunityCupCoffeeNWC>). SPC hosted a workshop by WV Mountaineer Food Bank on February 20, focusing on advocacy training for 19 people. The SPC Oxfam Banquet is scheduled for March 23. Kay Schulz drafted "Becoming Water Stewards" with practical advice and information as a product from our 3-part Sunday Seminar series on clean water.

Pastor Gusti's sabbatical is scheduled from February 15 to June 14, 2026. The sabbatical is integral to SPC's ministry, providing our pastor a time for rest and renewal during a period of study and reflection. The Presbytery requires installed pastors to take sabbatical, which is written into Terms of Call. A planning team, led by Jennifer Jones, is arranging for a smooth transition and a replacement pastor. SPC applied for a \$50,127 grant from the Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal Program to cover the sabbatical costs, with award notifications in August 2025.

The Deacons organized a support group for those being affected by the dramatically shifting public policies. The group has grown to 24 members. Events have included a Prayer Vigil on February 27 and meetings with experts. The session approved the use of the Fellowship Hall for Pat Donohoe and David Borchard to offer coaching to those who lost jobs or fear losing their jobs.

Worship services have seen growing attendance including visitors nearly every week. Pastor Gusti is starting a new members class for up to six interested people. And discussions are ongoing on migrating hybrid worship from Facebook to another platform.

The Personnel Committee is undergoing transition. Keri Mahoney and Lois Spreen are reviewing responsibilities and recruiting new members to the personnel committee. Lois is preparing to hand off the committee chair to Keri. The session celebrates, honors and expresses our gratitude to Lois, who has overseen the increase in personnel and managed many aspects of this Committee with professionalism and devotion.

Social Justice highlighted an announcement from The Advocacy Committee for LGBTQIA+ Equality (ACQ+E) of the PCUSA who encourages both local churches and presbyteries to continue our ongoing denominational efforts of diversity, inclusion, and Christian unity by recognizing March 31 as Transgender Day of Visibility (TDOV). TDOV is a day that local churches can embrace and celebrate the diverse identities of transgender and non-binary individuals, affirming their intrinsic worth as creations of God. For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. (I Cor 12:12 & 26)

The Communications Team has received and are reviewing two very competitive proposals for revising SPC's website. Feedback received from the congregation on The Messenger will be shared with the session in April.

The Property Committee's faithful and skillful chair, Daryl Kuster, is working to expand the committee with those who love our old church building and want to help sustain it for future generations. Many hands (and minds) make light work.

The Session approved the transfer of SPC's share in the Still Point retreat house to Baltimore Yearly Meeting (BYM) Camps for Youth. BYM shares SPC's values, welcoming and inclusive, and fostering campers to develop the kind of self-knowledge and self-esteem that leads to personal, emotional, and spiritual growth.

The Session elected Suellen Myers as Clerk of the Session and Jeananne Stine as Commissioner to Presbytery. *The SPC Session meets the 2nd Thursday of the month from 7-9 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall and via Zoom to oversee the church's finances, policies, and records, ensuring the church faithfully lives into its core values in a way that represents the congregation and discerns the will of Christ. Meetings are open to any member of the congregation who wishes to attend. Contact Suellen Myers, Clerk of Session, to learn more.*

GIVING

The congregation has been asked to increase pledged giving for the next 5 years by 5%. There are many ways to satisfy your pledges, special offerings and individual contributions for a project or program dear to you:

- By check: Made out to SPC, PO Box 268, Shepherdstown, WV 25443
- Online: www.shepherdstownpresbyterian.org, use the GIVE icon on the home page. You may use PayPal or a credit card
- In Church: In the offering plate on Sundays

BUDGET AT A GLANCE THROUGH February 28, 2025

<u>2025 at a Glance</u>	<u>2025 Budget (12 Months)</u>	<u>Actuals (through February 28)</u>	<u>Actuals as % 12-Month Budget</u>
Operating Income	\$384,104	\$148,188	38%
Operating Expenses	\$388,852	\$ 73,974	19%

We are two months, or 17% of the way into the new year. We've already received 38% of our anticipated annual operating income, largely in part to one-time special gifts from the congregation. Expenses are tracking mostly as expected for this time of the year.

SUPPORT GROUP FOR THOSE AFFECTED BY EXECUTIVE ORDERS

If you or your loved ones have been personally affected by, or are anxious about, the recent executive orders related to federal workers, DEI initiatives, immigration, transgender identity and care, and more, or if you are grieving the overall state of the nation, **your church is here for you!**

We began a support group on February 11, and will continue to meet weekly on Tuesdays, at 5 pm on Zoom. You are welcome to drop in when you would like; there is no commitment to coming each week. **Come for spiritual grounding, support and sharing, and an opportunity to discuss possible actions that could be taken.**

We held a **Prayer Vigil for the Nation on February 27**, which was well attended by our congregation and the community. We came together for prayer, music, and individual words of grief, support, and hope in the sacred space of our sanctuary, and look forward to having another vigil soon. At our support group meeting on March 11, **we welcomed retired attorney Neal Barkus, who practiced employment law for many years.** He shared his perspective on government actions and resulting lawsuits, and offered information on communicating with our elected officials. He has a list of resources and is happy to share with anyone interested.

Others are coming forward to offer support to our church and the community, including a group of coaches, who are offering pro bono coaching sessions to those facing possible job loss or early retirement, and a local counselor, offering a therapeutic counseling support group.

If you would like **more information on any of the offerings mentioned above**, please contact the church office or Donna Dettling, donna.dettling@gmail.com. We will send you the Zoom link to the meeting or any other details you need.

In addition, you are always encouraged to contact your Deacon directly and/or make an appointment through the church office to meet with Pastor Gusti.

DEACON TEAM UPDATE

Donna Dettling, Deacon Moderator

All of the deacons participated in the February 21-22 All Hands on Deck SPC 2025 Leader Retreat at the church. Through the Book of Order, scripture, and thoughtful conversation, we learned about the structure of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), role clarification within the church, and expectation-setting. We participated in break-out groups for deeper discussion focused on particular challenges and opportunities identified by the Session. It was a meaningful retreat experience as the leaders of the church gathered in unity and growing excitement for the upcoming year and the future of SPC.

Pastor Gusti and I just completed a one-on-one, or two-on-one meeting with each of the deacons, which allowed me to learn more about my team. We discussed their experiences connecting with their flock members, and what they would like to learn about and do during our monthly meetings. What a phenomenal group of deacons we have to support our church! I feel truly blessed to lead this team. I encourage you to establish a relationship with your deacon, and make it a two-way experience!

We had a wonderful monthly meeting on Saturday, March 15, that included a laughter-filled exercise to get to know each other better, an overview of the foundational work we did in 2024, and a thoughtful **time of scripture and reflection on the Mark 6 scripture about Jesus sending the apostles out two-by-two to expand his ministry**. We then paired up two-by-two to provide support to each other during the year, as we learn and grow in our individual deacon ministries.

In response to the growing fear and grief over the impact of executive orders and the state of the nation, we have established a weekly support group, held a Prayer Vigil, prepared a survey to determine how people feel the church should respond, and accepted the generous offer of coaching and other assistance from community members who want to help. Please see additional information provided weekly in the E-News, the Sunday bulletins, and on the SPC Facebook page.

The deacons are busy with the work of compassion, witness, and service to the congregation, and we all feel very grateful to have been called.

PrayerNet

Please send your prayer requests to prayernet@shepherdstownpresbyterian.org. You may also call the church office at 304-876-6466 during office hours (Monday - Friday, 8am - 2pm). A couple of practical reminders as you make your requests:

- Please make sure the person for whom you are requesting prayer has given you permission. Due to privacy considerations, we are unable to share requests without that permission.
- Please indicate whether or not you would like this request to be shared in worship on Sunday morning.
- You may also indicate that you prefer to keep this request confidential among the PrayerNet Team (currently Pastor Gusti, Lynn Dampman, Jen Jones, and Mica Martin.)

If you are having a pastoral emergency (death of a spouse or child, life-threatening medical emergency, etc.), please contact Pastor Gusti directly at 681-283-5314. If you would like to participate in our larger PrayerNet community (as one of the 90+ who have agreed to pray), contact Lynn at the church office: lynn@shepherdstownpresbyterian.org

Deacon Shepherd for Animals

Carol Wood was commissioned to remind us of the holiness pets add to our lives. This includes care to those who have lost a dear companion, assistance during final days with a pet, and support when bringing a new pet into the home. Contact Carol at cwood453@aol.com.

MEET OUR SPC DEACONS

The ministry of deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of compassion, witness, and service. At SPC, Deacon Shepherds care for and nurture a small group (“flock”) of members/participants, by providing spiritual and emotional support and encouragement in times of need, and coordinating assistance such as food or transportation. Deacons at SPC are elected to a three-year term. A new group of deacons was recently elected and over the next several months, we will highlight several deacons each month in The Messenger so you will get to know all of them.



Donna Dettling - Deacon Moderator

Donna spent her early years in New York and Alabama. Her family moved to Montgomery County, MD where she stayed for over 50 years until she and Brian moved to Shepherdstown in late 2019. She began her career as an accountant and administrator in corporate and non-profit businesses. She worked for Marriott International for 18 years as a Senior Business Analyst and Project Manager. In between two stints at Marriott, she started her own business as a Professional Organizer and helped people create calm, order and efficiency in their lives.

She happily retired from Marriott in mid-2023. She began attending SPC in the fall of 2022 and joined in early 2023. She describes herself as compassionate and grounded with a calming presence. She is good with details, communication, relationship-building and project work. Donna hopes to bring her listening skills and create caring relationships with her flock to her deacon ministry. As Deacon Moderator, she will use her leadership skills to continue building a unified team supporting SPC. She loves animals and nature and will complete her WV Master Naturalist certification this summer. Donna enjoys gardening, reading, writing and creating art using a variety of mediums. She and Brian each have two children and share seven grandchildren.



Patti McCarthy

Patti has lived most of her life in Maryland until she moved to West Virginia in 2010, and has been at SPC since 2021. She has degrees in Music Education and Accounting and is now retired from an IT company. (Her background in music has led her to start the handbell ensemble at SPC, for which your Messenger editor is very thankful!) She considers herself to be somewhat of an introvert until she gets to know you. Patti hopes to bring compassion and understanding to her deacon ministry. She and her husband Pat have three children, five grandchildren, two horses, three dogs and a cat.



Chris Morehouse

Chris has lived in several mid-Atlantic states, DC, and even southern France before moving to West Virginia. His undergraduate degree was in French language, while public administration/economic and social development were his graduate school programs. He is still working as a federal program analyst, focusing on worker training and worker protection programs. He has been at SPC since 2008. He describes himself as open, curious, and caring and enjoys reading, traveling, cooking, theatre and a variety of genres of music. Chris loves this congregation and wants to continue supporting the members through his deacon ministry. He is married and the dad of a special-needs young adult.



Susan Lovell

Susan lived in Oklahoma from childhood through college. She called Illinois home while Randall was pursuing his PhD. Prior to moving to Martinsburg 35 years ago, she also lived in Ohio for several years. She studied Home Economics Education and Food and Nutrition in college, but most of her career involved Early Childhood Education. She landed her dream job leading the Nursery School at Shepherd University for nine years before retiring. A former United Methodist, she found her new church home at SPC in 2019. She describes herself as introverted, patient, caring, kind and giving, but also a procrastinator. In her role as deacon, she hopes to be nurturing, supportive and available to those in her “flock.” She faithfully prays for them even when she is not in regular contact with them. Susan enjoys sewing quilt tops and sews socially with others on Zoom or retreats. She and Randall have four children who often travel internationally. She is currently awaiting a first grandchild expected soon, but the child will be raised in China where her youngest son and his wife live.



Mica Martin

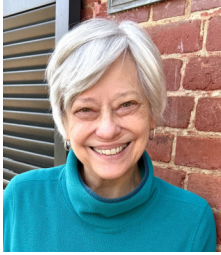
Mica grew up in Florida and went to college there earning a degree in Elementary Education and a Master’s in Special Education. She moved to Virginia with her husband’s job transfer in 1985. Following divorce, she has lived in Shepherdstown with her youngest son, Ryan, for the past 21 years. Her entire career was spent in education with more than 20 years as a Special Education teacher and Reading Specialist in Jefferson County. She is now enjoying retirement. She describes herself as intuitive, compassionate, kind, nurturing and a good listener. Her son adds that she is an excellent mom! Mica believes her gifts of intuition and sensitivity will help serve her flock with compassion and insight in her role as a deacon. She uses her intuitive healing abilities and psychic sessions to work with friends and clients in her home.



Eva Barnett

Eva was born and raised in Washington, DC. After completing college at Cornell University in New York, she moved to Philadelphia, PA. After the year in Philadelphia, she moved to Stuttgart, Germany for a year-long fellowship with the State Department. She returned to the DC area in 2005 and moved to Washington County, MD in 2017. She majored in Hotel Administration as an

undergraduate and studied architecture and EU relations at the University of Stuttgart. She has a Master's degree in public administration from the University of Baltimore. She currently works for the federal government. Eva first attended SPC in the season of Lent in 2023. She and her children were welcomed by Pastor Gusti and she has been here ever since. She describes herself as optimistic, but grounded in reality, and tries to find humor in every situation. She hopes to bring radical hospitality to her deacon ministry. She would like us to know that when she "grows up" she wants to be a crazy cat lady with an open front door where people can walk up, get a hug, and sit with her on her front porch and drink sweet tea.



Yvonne Fisher

Yvonne grew up in Roanoke, VA but moved to Milwaukee, WI for her husband's job and later to Chicago, living in the suburb of Deerfield, IL. His job brought them to Kearneysville, WV where they bought a 100 acre farm. She moved to Shepherdstown in 1982. She has a degree in Business Education and taught high school in Milwaukee, WI and Evanston, IL until moving to Kearneysville and teaching in Frederick, MD. After getting her Master's degree in School Counseling, she was a high school counselor for 12 years until retiring in 2012. She came to SPC in 1976 and was present when Randy Tremba preached his first Sunday as pastor. She loves nature, art, yoga, reading, animals, meditation and contemplative prayer. She loves spending time with friends and family. She has three adult children (who grew up at SPC) and two grandsons. In her deacon ministry she would like to develop a spiritual friendship and connection to SPC for others and to be a welcoming presence to all who come here. She has loved watching SPC grow and thrive in the 49 years she has been here.



Derek Smith

Derek was born in Washington, DC, grew up in Silver Spring, MD, and after college moved to Greencastle, PA. He moved to Martinsburg in 2020. He earned a B.S. degree in Agriculture and Life Sciences from the University of MD (College Park) and has worked in Human Services for 43 years. He is still working and plans to continue until he is 70. Derek began attending SPC just before the pandemic in February 2020. He describes himself as a kid at heart and finds wonder and awe in the natural world. He is compassionate and is drawn to help those who are suffering. In his deacon ministry he would like to install a sense of hope, healing, and belonging to everyone and to be a good ambassador for Christ and his church. Derek still considers himself a work in progress!



Elaine Hurd

Elaine grew up in Upstate New York. Upon graduating from college in 1969, to escape from the cold weather and vowing she would never live in a rural area again, she moved to the metro DC area. She came to her senses in 1985 and returned to the country, moving to Rohrsville, MD. She moved to her current home in Shepherdstown in 2012. Elaine has a BS in Nursing from the State University of New York (Plattsburgh) and a Master's degree from UMUC. After working for three years at Sibley Memorial Hospital, she began a career with the Montgomery County (MD) Health Department where she worked for 32 years. During this time Elaine held a variety of jobs

including working in clinics, doing home visits, being a school nurse and later an administrator for a county health center. Shortly after she retired, she returned to the health department to work on a plan for health and social services potential response to a pandemic. Who knew? In addition, she worked for two years at a methadone dispensing clinic for the Frederick County (MD) Health Department. She began attending SPC in 1986. Elaine describes herself as a quiet, caring person and hopes to bring that quiet compassion to her church family through her deacon ministry. She loves music and singing in the SPC choir and Shepherd University Masterworks Chorale. She is a supporter of the Women's Athletic program at Shepherd and loves dogs, reading and doing jigsaw puzzles.



Diana Eldridge

Diana was born in Washington, DC and lived in the vicinity for 20 years. She married a military man and lived in Hampton, VA and Northern California. Upon the accidental death of her husband, she moved back to Maryland in 1967 and lived there for 10 years before moving to Reston, VA. She and her second husband moved to the Shepherdstown area in 1994, where she still lives after more than 30 years. Diana has a BA in psychology and some graduate studies in public administration. She worked at NASA during the Apollo program and worked with a colleague who was testing the Lunar Excursion Module and another colleague who worked on the Mars Lander. She also worked at the Civil Service Commission for about 14 years as an intern and then participated in evaluation of Jimmy Carter's Civil Service Reform Act. Later she became a Branch Chief in NIH's Training Center. She was offered a chance for early retirement with a bonus and she took the offer and retired at 52! Diana has been at SPC for about seven years—Randy Tremba was still the minister and it was pre-COVID and a very transitional time. She considers herself to be inquisitive, sensitive, caring, social, and spiritually oriented. Her focus for her deacon ministry is on welcome, connection, and inclusiveness. She is a gardener and garden designer and does visual art as well.



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Donna Dettling, Co-Moderator

Sixteen women attended our March 6 Presbyterian Women meeting in person or online. Anne Teresa led an interesting discussion on Chapter 5 and 6 in our book ***Poverty, By America***, by Matthew Desmond, which addressed 'How We Rely on Welfare' and 'How We Buy Opportunity.' We talked about how government aid is often blamed for keeping people in poverty, when in reality, welfare avoidance is more prevalent than welfare dependence. We watched an informative video of **Matthew Desmond being interviewed by Jon Stewart on The Daily Show** on March 4. Desmond suggested that if everyone paid the taxes they currently owed, we could end poverty. He said that we need to value labor over capital and find new ways to empower the poor.

We snacked on delicious holiday-themed cake and cookies provided by Lynne Wiseman, signed cards for upcoming birthdays, and volunteered for the April and May meetings. **We decided to collect money at our April meeting to give to the prayer shawl and baby blanket ministry, so they can replenish their collection of yarn.** We are all grateful for this work which touches members and friends of SPC when they are facing difficult times.

We also made the decision to **collect non-perishable food for Shepherdstown Shares Food Pantry** at our meetings beginning in April, and then determine if we'd like to make this a broader initiative for the church.

Diana Eldridge talked about the **upcoming SPC Oxfam Hunger Banquet** which will be held on Sunday, March 23, at the Community Club in Shepherdstown. We hope to have 50 or more participants at this experiential event highlighting food insecurity globally, and encouraged the group to attend and volunteer.

We will look for a day in April to have a **meet-up for coffee or lunch at The Community Cup** in Martinsburg, to support them and enjoy fellowship outside the church.

It was a good meeting filled with sharing, discussion, food, prayer, business, and planning. We welcomed friends who hadn't attended for a while, and hope **you** will join us at **our April 3 meeting at 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall or on Zoom, to discuss Chapter 7 & 8, 'Invest in Ending Poverty' and 'Empower the Poor.'** We would love to welcome you!



SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR 2ND ANNUAL BASEBALL OUTING

Baseball is back! Join your SPC friends and neighbors for our 2nd Annual Baseball Outing at Meritus Park in Hagerstown. We have selected Friday, August 8, at 6:30 p.m. for a game against the Long Island Ducks. This is also

“Firework Friday.” Enjoy the fireworks that follow the game. We are planning to purchase group tickets at a cost of \$10 each. More information will be forthcoming in future newsletters and the Wednesday E-News.



SPOTLIGHT ON SPC MEMBER CHRIS MADEO

(Editor's Note: We started doing interviews in March 2024 and had several before we took a hiatus. The Readership Survey indicated that interviews were a highlight of The Messenger, so we have resumed this feature.)

Chris was born in Hot Springs, AR into a military family. They moved a lot, mostly on the East Coast, until her father was stationed in Tokyo, Japan. Chris and her mother joined him when Chris was two. Her brother was born while they were in Japan. After their tour of duty in Japan, the family moved to New Jersey and Georgia until her father was sent to Korea. After Korea, the family moved to Raleigh, NC where her father taught ROTC at NC State. Residing in Raleigh while a public school student, she became aware of racism, seeing civil rights marches there and elsewhere. That experience “opened my eyes to the world” and was an education in itself.

When her father retired, the family moved back to Mathews, VA where both her parents were from and both sets of grandparents lived. Her paternal grandfather was a waterman on the Chesapeake Bay and it was here she developed her love of the water, swimming, seafood, and boating.

She started college wanting to major in pharmacy, but after working at a drugstore during the summers between college, she decided pill counting was not her thing! Being adrift for a while, she finally found Sociology and she went on to earn a Master's degree in Social Work and worked in some aspect of Social Work for 46 years.

She met her husband Pete on a blind date in college, saying it was love at first sight. At the age of 25, they adopted three teenage siblings, remarking they “did not have a clue!” Now she has two grandchildren who live in Catonsville, MD.

When she and Pete moved to Boonsboro from Frederick, they started looking for a church. Pete had grown up Catholic and Chris grew up Baptist, but neither of those religions appealed to them. They tried various denominations until a Jewish friend told them that SPC was “the place to be.” Chris is so thankful they found SPC and all the wonderful people here.

Chris loves to garden, create landscapes and interior scapes. She also loves cooking and traveling. However, most of all, she loves the water, boating, swimming, snorkeling and crabbing. Her love of learning is ongoing and she keeps Google pretty busy!

A person she admires is Ukraine's President Zelensky and anyone who fights against oppression, racism, and discrimination.

Her favorite book is a classic—*The Good Earth* by Pearl Buck. And some of her favorite movies are the 1980 film “Resurrection” with Ellen Burstyn; “Fried Green Tomatoes”; and “The Green Mile.”

BECOMING WATER STEWARDS - AT HOME AND IN THE COMMUNITY

Kay Schultz

As SPC member Than Hitt remarked at one of our Sunday seminars on clean water, “*Our streams and rivers are to the Earth like our veins are to our bodies. . . Earth My Body, Water My Blood.*”

Town Run - Our Hometown Stream: Some of the Facts: The presence of Town Run is the reason historic Shepherdstown is located here. Roughly three miles long, it is an emergency water source when the Potomac River, the primary source, is compromised. It is spring fed by groundwater that bubbles to the surface in several spots, most notably in the Spring House at Morgan’s Grove Park. It may also soon become a seasonal source of drinking water for the town. Found to be polluted with high levels of bacteria in 2024, the Run is also choked in places by aquatic invasive plants and negatively affected by inadequate vegetated native plant buffers that filter stormwater.

How to Become a Water Steward: Become a Friend of Town Run. Go to its website at [Home - Town Run Watershed](#) and sign up as a “Friend.” You’ll be notified of sponsored educational and volunteer activities, such as becoming a volunteer, helping with invasive plant removal, adopting a storm drain near your home or business, learning about stream water quality monitoring, and attending educational workshops.

What Does It Look Like?

Inside your house:

- Avoid harsh chemicals for cleaning.
- Use natural products like white vinegar and baking soda or borax - biology not chemistry!
- Dispose of unused medications elsewhere (at the police station, etc.), not in the toilet.

On your landscape:

- Slow down the rain with rain barrels, rain gardens, berms and swales and planting beds.
- Reduce lawn areas, step by step.
- Compost food scraps
- Leave leaves on the ground
- Don’t cut back perennials until late spring (insects use them for the next generation)
- If you have a well, test the water.
 - If the water contains chemicals of concern - Consider what types of under sink or in-house filtration is needed.
- If you have a septic tank and drainage fields, avoid putting grease down the drain
 - Minimize the use of garbage disposals
 - Use care to limit what goes down the drain
 - Have your system inspected regularly and pumped when needed (\$150 cost share for pumping from WVCA [Home](#) at www.wvca.us).

Elsewhere:

Pay attention— learn more about springs and groundwater. Get involved and advocate for testing before applying sludge to farms. Finally, as Than reminds us, “***We’re all drinking from the same cup!***”

Consider Cyclopure PFAS Test Kit: [PFAS Test Kit | PFAS Water Testing | Cyclopure](#)

Consider well water testing by certified laboratory, e.g. [FTL Labs, Inc. – Fredericktowne Labs | Testing your Environment for Peace of Mind](#)

April 2025

March 2025							April 2025							May 2025																	
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S											
						1			1	2	3	4	5						1	2	3										
		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>30</p> <p>8:30 am Early Worship</p> <p>9:30 am Sunday Seminar - FH & Zoom</p> <p>11:00 am Worship - Hybrid</p> <p>11:00 am Sunday Studio - Classroom 2</p> <p>5:00 pm Community Meal in Charles Town</p>	<p>31</p> <p>HOLY WEEK 14</p>	<p>1</p> <p>6:15 pm Speak Story Series, Adam Booth - Sanctuary/FH</p>	<p>2</p> <p>3:00 pm Quaker Mid-Week Worship - Sanctuary/Hybrid</p> <p>7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal - Choir Koom</p>	<p>3</p> <p>10:00 am Presbyterian Women - FH/Zoom</p> <p>6:00 pm Bible at the Bar</p>	<p>4</p> <p><i>Good Friday</i></p>	<p>5</p> <p>10:00 am Deacon's Meeting - Fellowship Hall</p>
<p>6</p> <p>8:30 am Early Worship</p> <p>9:30 am Sunday Seminar - FH & Zoom</p> <p>11:00 am Worship - Hybrid</p> <p>11:00 am Sunday Studio - Classroom 2</p> <p>5:00 pm Community Meal in Charles Town</p>	<p>7</p> <p>HOLY WEEK 14</p>	<p>8</p> <p>3:00 pm Quaker Mid-Week Worship - Sanctuary/Hybrid</p> <p>7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal - Choir Koom</p>	<p>9</p> <p>3:00 pm Quaker Mid-Week Worship - Sanctuary/Hybrid</p> <p>7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal - Choir Koom</p>	<p>10</p> <p>7:00 pm Session Meeting Fellowship Hall & Zoom</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Services and Events within the Community to be announced. Watch the E-News and weekly bulletin</p> <p><i>Good Friday</i></p>	<p>12</p> <p>2:00 pm Shepherdstown Music & Dance Concert: Traditional Mexican Music</p>
<p>13</p> <p>8:30 am Early Worship</p> <p>9:30 am Sunday Seminar - FH & Zoom</p> <p>11:00 am Worship - Hybrid</p> <p>11:00 am Sunday Studio - Classroom 2</p> <p><i>Palm Sunday</i></p>	<p>14</p> <p>HOLY WEEK 14</p>	<p>15</p> <p>3:00 pm Quaker Mid-Week Worship - Sanctuary/Hybrid</p> <p>7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal - Choir Koom</p>	<p>16</p> <p>3:00 pm Quaker Mid-Week Worship - Sanctuary/Hybrid</p> <p>7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal - Choir Koom</p>	<p>17</p> <p>HOLY WEEK 17</p>	<p>18</p> <p>HOLY WEEK 18</p>	<p>19</p> <p>1:00 pm Yarns & Threads Group - FH</p>
<p>20</p> <p>6:30 am Sunrise Service at Runsey Park</p> <p>8:30 am Early Worship</p> <p>11:00 am Worship - Hybrid</p> <p>11:00 am Sunday Studio - Classroom 2</p> <p><i>Easter Sunday</i></p>	<p>21</p> <p>HOLY WEEK 14</p>	<p>22</p> <p>3:00 pm Quaker Mid-Week Worship - Sanctuary/Hybrid</p> <p>7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal - Choir Koom</p>	<p>23</p> <p>3:00 pm Quaker Mid-Week Worship - Sanctuary/Hybrid</p> <p>7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal - Choir Koom</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p>
<p>27</p> <p>8:30 am Early Worship</p> <p>9:30 am Sunday Seminar - FH & Zoom</p> <p>11:00 am Worship - Hybrid</p> <p>11:00 am Sunday Studio - Classroom 2</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>