

NOVEMBER 2026

SUNSET HILLS MESSENGER

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Photograph by Ryan Gracey

A Message From Pastor Laura



"Clergy renewal leaves are not vacations; rather they allow for times of intentional exploration, reflection, and regaining enthusiasm and creativity for ministry."
—Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal Programs

The Clergy Renewal Team and I have some extraordinary news to share with you: Sunset Hills United Presbyterian Church has received a grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. through its Clergy Renewal Program! The grant will fund coverage and programming for a three-month clergy renewal season for me next summer, from June through August 2027, as well as opportunities for enrichment here at Sunset Hills while I am away.

In this month's messenger

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This has been a long time in the making. In mid-2025, a team from Sunset Hills and I began writing an extensive proposal to Lilly Endowment. This team is made up of Elders Bev Knasko, Chip McCoy, and Ryan Gracey. The application was built around a simple idea: after years of pouring ourselves into ministry together, what would rest look like? In the words of the Lilly Endowment, what makes the pastor's heart sing?

The Clergy Renewal Program grant creates space for pastors to step away from the daily responsibilities of ministry and reconnect with the people, places, experiences, and practices that make them feel most alive. Rather than funding professional development or another continuing-education program, it's an intentional sabbath practice. At the same time, the congregation experiences a season of its own—hearing new voices, exercising new leadership, and considering what renewal might mean in its common life.

Our proposal grew from something you already know about me: art history is one of the ways I encounter the sacred. Before seminary, in addition to English Literature, I studied Art History. My Clergy Renewal Leave will give me time to return to that part of myself—not primarily as a pastor looking for the next sermon illustration, but simply as a Jesus follower paying attention.

The summer will include periods of travel, retreat, family time, and rest. I will begin with a family trip to Japan. In addition to family respite, we'll explore the sacred in the ordinary through various Japanese practices—preparing matcha, for example. I will continue my Clergy Renewal Leave with time for spiritual retreat before traveling with my family through Italy, including opportunities to encounter the sacred art and architecture. Other portions of the summer will be devoted to quieter stretches at home for reading and ordinary family life.



That mixture is intentional. Renewal isn't accomplished by racing through a three-month itinerary! Part of the gift of this grant is having time when I am not preparing Sunday's sermon, heading to the hospital, planning the next program, preparing to give pastoral care, or wondering whether my phone will ring at midnight with an emergency. For three months, I will step away from the responsibilities of being your pastor so that I can return ready to be your pastor again.

Meanwhile, Sunset Hills will not simply be waiting for me to come back.

Our congregation will have its own season of exploration. A wonderful group of pastors and elders will lead worship throughout the summer. Because sacred art is at the heart of my renewal experience, I have invited each guest preacher to choose a work of art that matters to them and allow it to shape the preaching they share with you. My hope is that by summer's end, we will both have spent several months encountering faith through other people's eyes.

Plans will also be firmly in place for pastoral care, administration, emergencies, and the everyday work of the church. Session will make sure everyone knows whom to contact and how things will work well before my Clergy Renewal Leave begins.

Then, at the start of September, I come home.

That part matters enormously to me. The purpose of this grant is not to escape ministry. It is to return to it renewed.

I began serving Sunset Hills in September 2019. None of us knew then what the following years would ask of this congregation—or of its pastor. We have lived through a pandemic, enormous transitions, heartbreaking deaths, unexpected crises, and seasons when ministry demanded more from all of us than we imagined it would. We have also done extraordinary things together. We have welcomed children, fed people, traveled to serve others, tried new ministries, laughed ourselves silly, worshiped faithfully, and continued becoming the church God is calling us to be.

After seven years together, this Clergy Renewal Leave gives us something that the ministry rarely offers on its own: a long exhale.

I am deeply grateful to Lilly Endowment for making that possible. I am grateful to the team from Sunset Hills who spent months helping plan, budget, write, and imagine this proposal. And I am especially grateful to this congregation for believing that caring for the life of a pastor and caring for the life of a congregation are not competing priorities.

Over the coming months, I'll share much more about the itinerary, our summer worship plans, pastoral coverage, and the ways the grant will touch congregational life. There is plenty of planning still ahead.

But today, we get to celebrate! **We got the grant**! And I cannot wait to discover what God does with the space we're making.

In Christ's Joy,

Pastor Laura



MUSIC NOTES

SHELBY GRACEY, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Many thanks to our Chancel Choir, Campanile Bell Choir, and our bagpiper, Mychael Morohovich, for providing all our wonderful music for our Reformation Sunday celebration on October 25!

Now that November is upon us, our choirs are busy preparing music for Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving, and the rapidly approaching Advent and Christmas season! The choir will sing each Sunday morning, and the Campanile Bells will ring twice during the Advent/Christmas season on November 29 and December 20.

Between the "over the top" Halloween decorations, and all the Christmas glitter that started arriving on store shelves by mid-September, Thanksgiving tends to get lost and forgotten, at least by today's marketing standards. However, as a church, gratitude is a theme that should never be forgotten – all year round!

One of our best-known Thanksgiving hymns, Now Thank We All Our God, was written by Martin Rinkart (1586-1649). He was a Lutheran pastor in the little village of Eilenberg, Saxony. He grew up as the son of a poor coppersmith, felt called to the ministry, and after his theological training began his pastoral work just as the Thirty Years' War was raging through Germany.

Floods of refugees streamed into the walled city of Eilenberg. It was the most desperate of times. The Swedish army encompassed the city gates, and inside the walls there was nothing but plague, famine, and fear. Eight hundred homes were destroyed, and people began dying in increasing numbers. There was a tremendous strain on the pastors, who expended all their strength in preaching the gospel, caring for the sick and dying, and burying the dead. One after another, the pastors themselves took ill and perished, until at last only Martin Rinkart was left. Some days he conducted as many as fifty funerals.

Finally, the Swedes demanded a huge ransom. It was Martin Rinkart who left the safety of the city walls to negotiate with the enemy, and he did it with such courage and faith that there was soon a conclusion of hostilities, and the period of suffering ended.

Rinkart, knowing there is no healing without thanksgiving, composed this hymn for the survivors of Eilenberg. It was been sung around the world ever since.



Now thank we all our God, with heart and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things has done, in Whom this world rejoices.
Who from our mothers' arms, hath blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.
O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
With ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us;
And keep us in His grace, and guide us when perplexed,
And free us from all ills in this world and the next.
All praise and thanks to God the Father now be given,
The Son, and Him who reigns with them in highest heaven,
The one eternal God, whom earth and heav'n adore;
For thus it was, is now, and shall be evermore.

(Then Sings My Soul, Robert J. Morgan, Thomas Nelson, Inc., Nashville, TN, 2003, p. 17)



MONTHLY RECIPE

NOVEMBER

Creamy Pumpkin Soup



Ingredients
2 tablespoons butter
1 small onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced (or ½ teaspoon garlic powder)
1 can (15 oz) pumpkin purée, not pumpkin pie filling
3 cups chicken or vegetable broth
½ teaspoon salt, or to taste
¼ teaspoon black pepper
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon (optional)
½ cup heavy cream or half-and-half

1. Sauté the onion and garlic
Melt the butter in a large pot over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and cook for 4–5 minutes until soft. Add the garlic and cook for another 30 seconds.

2. Add the pumpkin and broth
Stir in the pumpkin purée, broth, salt, pepper, and cinnamon if using. Mix well.

3. Simmer
Bring the soup to a gentle boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 10–15 minutes, stirring occasionally.

4. Make it creamy
Stir in the cream and warm the soup for another 2–3 minutes. Avoid boiling it after adding the cream. Taste and add more salt or pepper if needed.

5. Serve and enjoy!
Ladle into bowls and add a little extra cream, black pepper, or pumpkin seeds on top. Serve with crusty bread or grilled cheese.

Easy tips
- Make it extra creamy: Add another ¼ cup of cream.
- Want more flavor? Add a pinch of nutmeg or a little extra garlic.
- Prefer a thicker soup? Use 2½ cups of broth instead of 3.

ACROSS BORDERS , AROUND TABLES , ALONG THE JOURNEY

byRev. Sheri Fry, Journey withMigrants, ThePresbytery ofDenver

Rev. Fry is the pastor of Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church in Northglenn, Colorado, just north of Denver

One of the gifts of being part of the Presbytery of Denver is the reminder that we do not do ministry alone. Our congregations are connected to one another, to our communities, and to partners whose ministries help us see more clearly what it means to follow Jesus in our time and place.

Two important expressions of that connection are our relationship with ***Frontera de Cristo*** and the Denver Presbytery's ***Journey with Migrants Mission Partnership.***

Frontera de Cristo is a Presbyterian border ministry serving in the sister communities of Douglas, Arizona, and Agua Prieta, Sonora, Mexico. Our relationship with Frontera de Cristo reminds us that migration is not simply a political issue, a headline, or a debate. Migration is about people—people with names, families, stories, hopes, fears, gifts, and an inherent God-given dignity.

In 2019, the Presbytery of Denver deepened this relationship when a delegation of 15 participants traveled to Frontera de Cristo for a four-day border immersion experience. The purpose was to gain a deeper understanding of the spiritual, political, and economic connections that reach across borders. It was a wonderful opportunity to spend time together, share meals, listen to stories, and experience life in the borderlands firsthand. Those days reminded us that understanding often begins not with statistics or headlines, but by sitting at a table together, listening to one another, and experiencing a place and its people.

That same conviction is at the heart of Journey with Migrants.

Chartered by the Presbytery of Denver in 2015, first as the Immigration Task Force and now as the ***Journey with Migrants Mission Partnership***, this ministry seeks to live out a Matthew 25 response alongside migrants and immigrants throughout our Presbytery.

Its mission is wonderfully concrete: feeding, welcoming, clothing, sheltering, and visiting, while also advocating for immigration justice locally, nationally, and globally. Today, eight congregations participate in this shared ministry.

There is something powerful about congregations choosing to do this work together. Each church brings different gifts, relationships, resources, and experiences to the table. Together, we are able to respond in ways that would be far more difficult for any one congregation alone.

And perhaps the name of this ministry says it best: ***Journey with Migrants.*** We are not called simply to provide something ***for*** people. We are invited to walk alongside one another—to listen, learn, build relationships, share our lives, and discover where God is already at work among us.

I was reminded of this at our recent Journey with Migrants fundraiser dinner in August 2026. It was wonderful to look around the room and see people from different congregations and communities gathered around this shared commitment. The evening was certainly about raising

financial support, but it was about much more than money. It was about strengthening relationships and reminding ourselves why this ministry matters. ***Our keynote speaker, Rev. Mark Adams of Frontera de Cristo***, helped us connect what we are experiencing here in Denver with the larger realities of migration at the U.S.-Mexico border and beyond. That connection matters.

The border is connected to Denver. Agua Prieta is connected to our congregations. The people who arrive in our communities carry stories that began long before they reached Colorado. And through relationships such as Frontera de Cristo and Journey with Migrants, we begin to understand that we are part of those stories as well.

In a time when immigration conversations can quickly become polarized, these ministries invite the church to begin somewhere different: with relationship.

Matthew 25 does not ask us first to determine whether someone is deserving. Jesus simply says, ***I was hungry and you gave me food. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I needed clothes and you clothed me. I was sick and you visited me.***

Frontera de Cristo and Journey with Migrants give the Presbytery of Denver tangible ways to live those words. We may not be able to resolve all the complexities surrounding migration and immigration. But we can decide how we will walk through them. We can feed. We can welcome. We can clothe. We can shelter. We can visit. We can advocate. And most importantly, we can journey together.



Celebrating the raising of $42,000 to support and accompany new immigrants in the greater Denver area



PITTSBURGH FAITH GROUPS CONTINUE WEEKLY VIGILS OUTSIDE SOUTH SIDE ICE OFFICE

For more than a year, there's been a small but growing group standing on Sidney Street in Pittsburgh's South Side every Friday morning.

On one recent Friday, with roughly 100 people in attendance, the group lined both sides of Sidney Street, along a sidewalk and a grassy area across the street. Some carried homemade signs, many with religious-themed messages of welcoming the stranger, such as "Love the Foreigner as Yourself," and "Who Would Jesus Deport?" Cars passed by, many honking in support.

The weekly prayer vigils are coordinated by Catholic peace group Pax Christi Pittsburgh, the Sisters of St. Joseph, and Latino community organization Casa San Jose.

As is typical at their gatherings, the group sang, heard religious readings, and prayed facing the local field office of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency, or ICE.



"We just have within our hearts, we can't be complicit in the injustice," said Sister Barbara Finch, a member of the Sisters of St. Joseph and one of the vigil's organizers. "So, this is one way of speaking up and to try to encourage people … not only to pray, but use this prayer to go forth and to advocate for justice."

The tone of the gatherings is meant to be calm and prayerful, she said, rather than a raucous protest.

The group marked the one-year anniversary of the weekly vigils last month.

Kevin Hayes, of Catholics for Change in Our Church, said the weekly gatherings were not prompted by any specific incident, but were driven generally by wanting to stand in solidarity with the immigrant communities of Pittsburgh in light of the Trump administration's anti-immigrant policies.

"When we saw what the current administration was doing in terms of their policies of treating immigrants as if they were not human beings, we just felt the need to stand up and say, 'No, this isn't right,'" Hayes said.

Hayes said he expects the weekly vigils will continue for the foreseeable future.

"We're going to do them as long as they're needed," he said, "and right now that looks to be a long runway."

https://www.wesanews.org/politics-government/2026-09-15/pittsburgh-faith-groups-weekly-vigils-ice-office

THANK YOU

Thank You for Supporting Kids' Mission!
A heartfelt thank-you to everyone who donated to Kids' Mission and helped make it possible to purchase a wheelchair for a child in need. Your generosity and kindness will make a meaningful, life-changing difference. We are so grateful for your support!

Thank You for Joining Us!
Thank you to everyone who attended the presentation from Her Safe Haven! We were grateful to welcome 30 people for this meaningful and informative gathering. A special thank-you to our Mission Commission for hosting this event and helping bring our community together to learn more about this important mission. We appreciate everyone who came out and helped make the presentation a success!



We are so blessed and grateful for the wonderful team here at Sunset Hills United Presbyterian Church. Each person brings their time, talents, and dedication to help make our church community a welcoming and meaningful place. We truly appreciate all that our team does and give thanks to God for the many ways they serve and support our church family.



BAPTISM

Celebrating Two Special Baptisms

Congratulations to Daisy and Natalie on their baptisms! We are so happy to celebrate this special milestone with both families and welcome these precious little ones into the church community. A special congratulations to their parents, Anthony and Pam, and Sarajane and Luke. Rev. Dr. Gracey also had the honor of baptizing his granddaughter, Natalie. May both girls grow in faith and always be surrounded by God's love!

Thank you to everyone who joined us for such a beautiful and special baptism celebration! We are so grateful to our wonderful congregation for coming together with our families to make the day so meaningful. Your presence, love, and support made the celebration truly memorable. A special thank-you to everyone who helped make everything so perfect, and for those who asked, the delicious salsa was from Brochachos Salsa!

- Carol Enterline



Many thanks to Pastor Laura for graciously allowing me the privilege of baptizing our granddaughter, Natalie Marie Obarsky on Sunday, October 4. It's a nice memory that both Natalie and her sister, Lorelei, can say that their "Pop" got to perform their baptisms!

- Rev. Dr. Bill Gracey, Pastor Emeritus





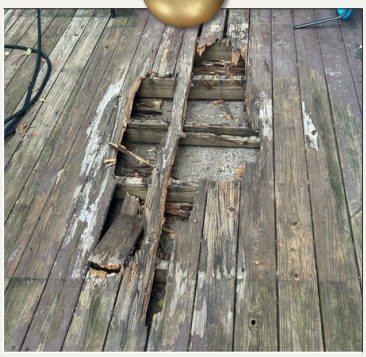




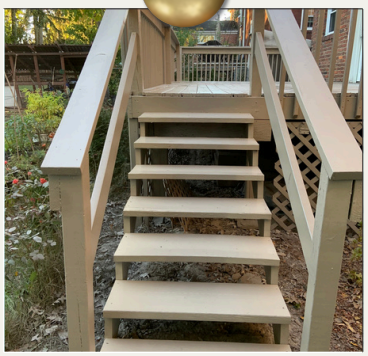












THANK YOU

A heartfelt thank you to, **Matt Hricko, Jeff Allison, Richard Fleming, Tanner Sullivan, the Mission Comission and T and M Remodeling LLC** for generously giving their time, hard work, and skills to rebuild a deck for someone in our community in need. Your kindness and willingness to lend a helping hand are a wonderful example of love in action. We are so grateful for your generosity and for the difference you make in our community!

SUNSET HILLS CHURCH LIBRARY

THANK YOU

Thanks to our volunteers and generous donors, our library has been upgraded significantly in the past two and a half years. The environment is more comfortable and the books and magazines have been refreshed. Just a reminder that we operate on a "good faith system." Nearly all the materials can be taken home to peruse and then returned in a few weeks.

SUGGESTIONS?

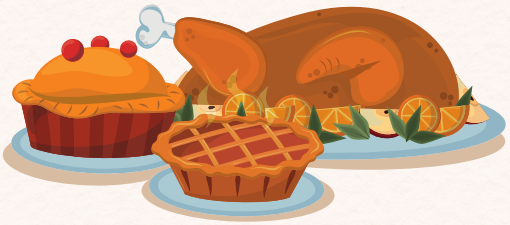
If there is topic you would like us to explore, please call or text me.
Jeff Allison 412-780-3787



WHAT'S NEW?

-Novels and non-fiction selections from our SHUP monthly book club.
-Eighty-five sets of "Great Courses" lessons in book form and DVD's.
-Seven current magazine subscriptions including Consumer Reports, Smithsonian, Biblical Archaeology, Handyman, Birds and Blooms, PA Boat and Angler and the large print version of Reader's Digest. The only item in this group that we ask should stay in the library for everyone's use is the "Cars of the Year" issue of Consumer Reports.
-The Kid's Section has new books, movies and puzzles.
-Some of Pastor Laura's favorite books to reference from the pulpit, including works by A.J.Levine, Anne Lamott, Rachel Held Evans, Kate Bowler, and C.S. Lewis.
-DVD's of Christian musical productions by Sight and Sound Theaters in Lancaster, including Noah, Moses, Joseph, and "I Heard the Bells."
-Over two hundred music CDs, fifteen musical concert DVD's.
-The New Interpreter's Bible reference in twelve volumes. Please utilize this outstanding asset only in the library.
-Over forty cook books by some of your favorite TV chefs.

SUNSET HILLS U.P. CHURCH



Thanksgiving DINNER

AT 5:00PM

SUNDAY **15** NOVEMBER

If your name begins with A-L bring a side dish. If your name begins with M-Z bring a dessert to share. Turkey, stuffing and rolls are provided.

Get Cozy at SHUP this Christmas

NOVEMBER 29

FESTIVE SWEATER SUNDAY

DECEMBER 6

CHRISTMAS SOCK SUNDAY

DECEMBER 13

HOLIDAY HAT SUNDAY

DECEMBER 20

SCARF SUNDAY



CALL FOR BAKERS

CALLING ALL BAKERS

The deacons' annual Christmas cookie sale is right around the corner on December 5, 2026. The cookie sale is the deacons' annual fundraiser to support our ministries to the congregation and to the Sunset Hills community.

Won't you support our ministries by baking for the cookie sale? You can sign up on the signup sheet outside Findley Hall. It doesn't have to be cookies. Our customers love all sorts of home-made holiday treats: cookies, candy, quick breads, scones.

Some details:

♥ Contributions can be dropped off at the church on Friday, December 4, from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm or on Saturday morning, December 5, from 8:30 am to 9:30 am

♥ Please label your cookies with your name and a phone number where we can reach you

♥ Label cookies that contain nuts (we have separate tables for these)

♥ Please bag your cookies in small serving bags, such as small Ziplocs or self-sealing adhesive bags. Two or three cookies per bag is best.

♥ Home-made treats only, please

Any questions? Please call Debbie Edwards, co-chair of the sale, at 412-860-1541, or email her at deborahlynnedwards@outlook.com. And thank you!





Christmas Cookie Sale

PROCEEDS SUPPORT THE DEACONS' MINISTRIES

DECEMBER 5

10:00 A.M.

SUNSET HILLS U.P. CHURCH

900 Country Club Drive, 15228

Christmas Eve

CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP



DEC **24** 7 PM

SUNSET HILLS UP CHURCH

900 Country Club Drive
Children and Families Welcome

JOIN US FOR

PARENTS' NIGHT OUT

DECEMBER 12
4:30 – 7:00 P.M.

Sunset Hills United Presbyterian Church

Kids ages 3 -10 are invited to join us for an evening of Christmas-themed games, stories, crafts and more! There will be breakfast for dinner and kiddos are invited to attend in their pajamas. Donations welcome.

TO REGISTER EMAIL:
revlaurastrauss@gmail.com



Most Needed Food Items

- Dried Beans
- Pasta
- Lentils
- Pasta Sauce Jars
- Cereal & Oatmeal
- Soup
- Condiments
- Spices
- Dog & Cat Food
- Personal Care Items



SHIM Clothing Closet

Accepting donations of in-season clothes, shoes, and linens. Please no large household items. Located at Church of the Nazarene, 5601 Library Road.

Drop-Off Hours:
Monday 10:00am - 1:00pm

If you are unable to deliver your donations, you can leave them in the closet outside of Findley Hall and a Mission Commission member will deliver them for you.



Collection For Christmas

For the past three years, during the season of Advent, we collected travel-sized toiletry items that were donated to Familylinks – a local nonprofit organization in the South Hills that services youth, adults, and seniors. Their mission is to positively impact lives through integrated community, behavioral, and social programs. This year, following the theme of "A Cozy Christmas" that Pastor Laura will be focusing on during Advent, we're making a change to our collection. What can be cozier than a warm, comfortable pair of new **socks**! When Familylinks was contacted to see if they could use socks in their mission, they enthusiastically accepted our idea for this new collection this year, as they can always use socks in their shelters. They requested that they be new with tags on, or in unopened packages. They can accept a variety of sizes from school-aged children up to adults.

During each of the four Sundays of Advent (starting November 29), stockings will be hung on the ends of the pews down the center aisle of the sanctuary. If you have a single pair of socks to donate, please place them into one of the Christmas stockings. If you prefer to buy a larger package of socks, there will be a decorated box in the narthex where you can leave your donation. We will continue this collection until the end of the year, at which time all the donated socks will be distributed to Familylinks in early January.

Thank you so much for participating in this important mission and ministry!

FAITH AND THE WORLD: COOKIE CHATS

SHUP TALKS

8 NOV

CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM

Can love of country and loyalty to Christ ever come into tension? Let's explore the question together. What happens when religious identity and national identity become difficult to distinguish?

7:00 - 8:30 PM, Church Library — **Led by Pastor Laura**

10 JAN

LONELINESS AND BELONGING

We're living through what some researchers call an epidemic of loneliness. What is loneliness doing to us, and what does the church have that social media, streaming services, and busy schedules cannot provide?

7:00 - 8:30 PM, Church Library — **Led by Pastor Laura**

14 FEB

WAR AND JESUS

Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers” and “Love your enemies.” So can Christians ever support going to war? We will wrestle with whether violence can ever be morally justified—and, if so, where the lines should be drawn.

7:00 - 8:30 PM, Church Library — **Led by Pastor Laura**

14 MARCH

ESTRANGEMENT

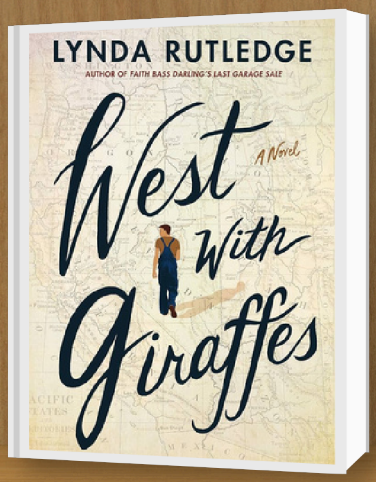
Family estrangement is increasingly common, leaving parents, children, and friends navigating broken relationships. What can Christian faith teach us about reconciliation, and when letting go may be necessary?

7:00 - 8:30 PM, Church Library — **Led by Pastor Laura**

Join Us! Cookies will be provided. Bring your own coffee/tea/cocoa.

Book Club Picks

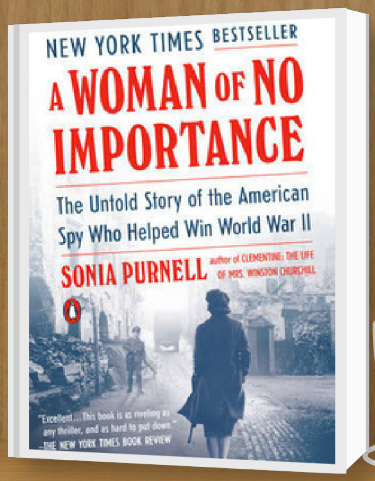
JOIN US FOR DISCUSSION WITH PASTOR LAURA ON THE LAST WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 7:30PM IN THE CHURCH LIBRARY



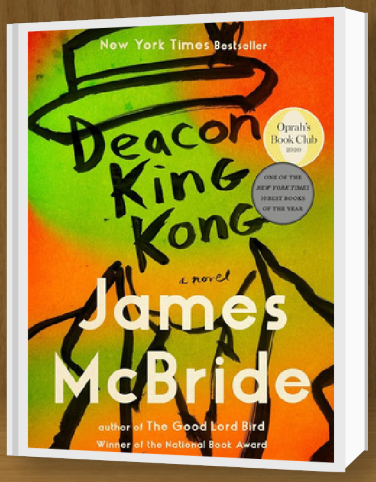
December 2



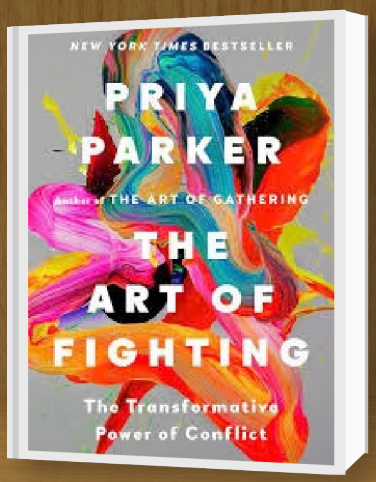
January 6



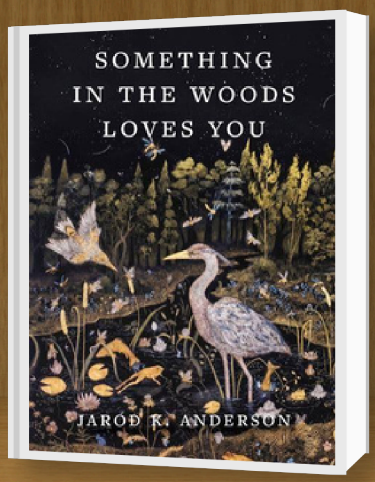
January 27



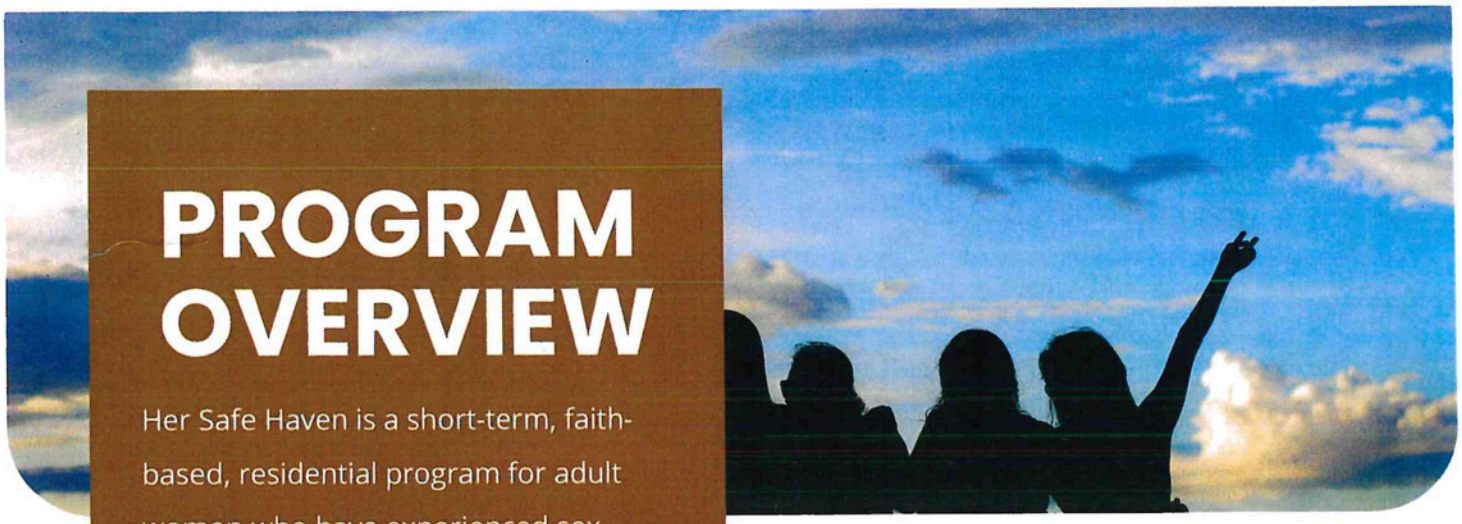
February 24



March 31



April 28



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Her Safe Haven is a short-term, faith-based, residential program for adult women who have experienced sex trafficking and exploitation. The program is unique in that it is also licensed by the state as a Residential Treatment Program for substance addiction. Our clinical staff combine evidence-based treatments for addiction, mental, physical, and spiritual health to create a holistic healing environment.

Her Safe Haven

Pittsburgh, PA

SERVICES

01 Individual & Group Therapy

02 On-Site Medical Care

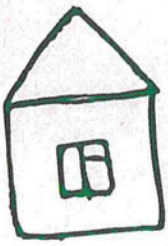
03 Targeted Case Management

04 24-hour Structured Support & Intervention

05 Addiction Medicine Referrals

06 Home Environment & All Basic Needs Met at No Cost

Apply online at
hersafehaven.org/help
or
Contact our 24/7
Referral Line
412-567-1727





For General Information

Office: 412-567-1408
Email: info@hersafehaven.org

Her Safe Haven

A Home For Hope & Restoration

Vision

That every woman who is sexually exploited will have hope, support, and tools needed to pursue her dreams and live a life of freedom.

Mission

To empower women overcoming the trauma of sexual exploitation and addiction to live a life of freedom through a faith-based, residential healing program.

Program Overview

Her Safe Haven is a short-term residential program for adult women who have experienced sex trafficking and exploitation. We are unique in that we are licensed by Pennsylvania as a Level 3.5 Residential Treatment Program for substance addiction. The women who enter our doors are not only dealing with the high level of trauma caused by the sex trafficking and exploitation they experienced but are also addressing substance use/addiction as well. To best serve these women, Her Safe Haven has licensed and certified clinicians to help support them through this journey.

Her Safe Haven opened its doors in September 2023. From September 2023 through March 2025, Her Safe Haven has welcomed 38 residents into the home. There have been 11 graduates of the program, meaning they achieved all their goals and were ready to transition to the next step in their healing journey. The program is provided at no cost to the women we serve.

Services Offered

- Individual Therapy – Addressing trauma and addiction
- 2-3 Group Sessions per day – Therapeutic and life skills-based groups
- Targeted Case Management services
- 24-hour supportive structured milieu to provide support and interventions as needed
- Onsite Medical care/support and Pharmacy Services through MOUs
- Addiction medicine referrals, including Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT), are facilitated on site as needed
- Women live in a home environment with all basic physical needs such as food, clothing, hygiene products, bedding, etc. provided at no cost to them.

Her Safe Haven Leadership Team

- Office & 24/7 Referrals: 412-567-1727
- Linda Kricher, Ph.D. – Executive Director: lkricher@hersafehaven.org
- Sarah Medina, MSW, LSW – Director of Operations: smedina@hersafehaven.org
- Rachel Cornelius, MA, LPC – Director of Programs: rcornelius@hersafehaven.org



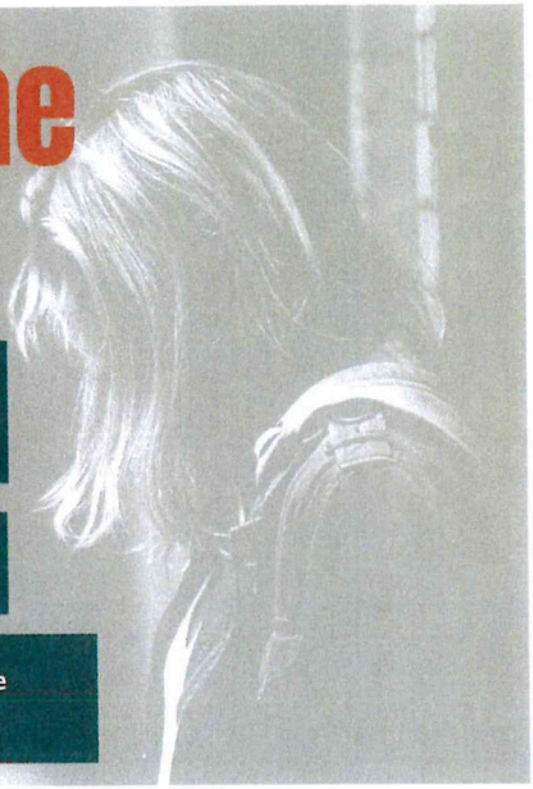
Her Safe Haven

A Home For Hope & Restoration

A woman who worked 40 hours a week in an office, and was was sold for sex on the weekends by her parents.

A person who arrived at the bus station and was picked up and taken to a local hotel where she was sold for sex.

Sex Trafficking in the Pittsburgh Region



A young woman who was forced to pretend to be a college student, walk around a local college campus and make friends with other students who were then targeted by a sex trafficker.

Dozens of women who were lured to a Polish Hill house with the promise of shelter, food, and drugs who were then raped and sold for sex.

More than 200 tweens and teenagers, from across the U.S., who were lured online into participating in "The 7 Day Sex Challenge" by a local 22 year old man.

They wake up every day with no way out, forced into the horror of sex trafficking or exploitation by violence, threats, substance abuse, manipulation, and homelessness.

Sex trafficking and exploitation is a high profit, low risk business, where human beings are sold again and again by individuals or groups who view them as objects of profit. A $9.6 billion U.S. underground industry, sex trafficking is filled with shame, judgment and "invisible chains" for its victims.

Since 2007, the National Human Trafficking Hotline has received over 275,000 contacts nationwide, with over 63,000 cases reported. In Pennsylvania, there were 1,705 cases and 3,646 victims represented in 6,588 contacts received by the Hotline from 2007 to 2020.

Sex trafficking happens in Pittsburgh due to its location as a major transportation corridor, the presence of vulnerable populations, and the demand for commercial sex.

Sex trafficking affects individuals from all genders, ages, socioeconomic backgrounds, and geographic locations.

Thousands of people are suffering in silence - lost and forgotten by our society.

24/7 REFERRAL LINE: 412-567-1727 INFO@HERSAFEHAVEN.ORG

Upcoming Events

Sundays
9:00 am Adult Sunday School – Findley Hall
9:00 am Children's Sunday School - Library
10:15 am Worship – Sanctuary
10:45 am Children's Church
2:00 pm Girl Scouts
4:00 pm Girl Scouts

Mondays
9:00 am Monday Marvels
1:00 pm Women's Bible Study

Tuesdays
12:30 pm Tuesday Bible Study - Cort Room
6:30 Handbell Choir - Choir Room
7:00 pm Square Dance Class – Crystal Hall
7:00 pm Counseling Group
7:30 pm Choir - Choir Room

Wednesdays
10:00 am Days for Girls – Wilson Hall
2:00 pm Parkinson's Group - Findley Hall
4:00 pm Quilters - Findley Hall

Thursdays
6:15 pm Fall Yoga

FRIDAYS
5:00 pm - AA

Interested in taking part in an upcoming event?

Parkinson's Group
Contact Jeanine Hartman
412-215-2391

Peanut Squares Dancing Club
Everyone is welcome, no partner or previous experience is necessary. The cost is $5/class.

Unable to join us in person for worship?

A video of the service is posted to "Sunset Hills Church" Youtube channel the Monday after the service. A copy of the bulletin is available on the homepage of www.shupchurch.org.

Special Events

- **All Saints Sunday** - Saints who have gone home to the Church Triumphant will be remembered and celebrated in worship on **Sunday, November 1**. The deceased will be named with the ringing of a bell during the service.
- **Church Office Closed** - The church office will be closed **Wednesday - Friday, November 25 - 27** for the Thanksgiving holiday.
- **Hanging of the Greens** - Join us following worship on **Sunday, November 22** as we decorate the sanctuary for the Advent and Christmas seasons. All hands on deck as we deck the halls!



November Birthdays

3 Don Tang
4 Kai Sullivan
8 Jessica Brumfield
10 Diane Van Houtte
11 Marlaena Cochran
13 Leslie Ney
18 Ethan Strauss
18 Robert Wingold
23 Darlene Farabaugh
26 Ty Sembrat
27 Kellie Bruschi

Prayer Circle

November 1 Mark Tallarico, Christa Jo Tang, Christopher Tang
November 8 Don Tang, Lucy Tang, Robert Tang
November 15 Lisa Ursitz, Diane Van Houtte, Lindsey Wingold
November 22 Robert Wingold, Alexandra Vernacchio, Emily Walentosky
November 29 Kay Walker, Ainsley Weidensall, Bill Weidensall

Prayer List

Lucy Josephine Escobar
The Family of Mary Cutting
Jan Paulsen
The Van Haitsma family
Lisa Fako
Captain Sam Wright
Myra Mann
Rev. Brenda Barnes
The Rabbani Family
The Brady Family
Evelyn Lape
Dorene Hirshika
Ron Sumner
Nancy Brumfield
Rev. Mark Adams and Miriam Maldonado Escobar and their children

shim
SOUTH HILLS INTERFAITH MOVEMENT

Most Needed Food Items

- Dried Beans
- Pasta
- Lentils
- Pasta Sauce Jars
- Cereal & Oatmeal
- Soup
- Condiments
- Spices
- Dog & Cat Food
- Personal Care Items

SHIM Clothing Closet

Accepting donations of in-season clothes, shoes, and linens. Please no large household items. Located at Church of the Nazarene, 5601 Library Road.

Drop-Off Hours:
Monday 10:00am - 1:00pm

If you are unable to deliver your donations, you can leave them in the closet outside of Findley Hall and a Mission Commission member will deliver them for you.