

The Marketplace

MARCH 2025

Ph: (717) 257-1270 | www.marketsquarechurch.org



Dr. Bruce Humphrey
Bridge Pastor

This month we head into the Lenten season, starting with Ash Wednesday. For the forty days of Lent, we will "Mark Up Our Bibles" through the final sections of the Hebrew scriptures. At this point in our Bible reading, we struggle to fit the pieces together chronologically, since the Bible books are not chronological. From a chronology viewpoint, we will engage the stories of Judah's captivity in Babylon, the Book of Daniel, as well as the return to the homeland and rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, Ezra. Yet in our Bibles Ezra, as a history book, is before Daniel, which records activities that happened before Ezra's time. See how confusing the Bible can be? The middle of the Bible is known as the "Wisdom Literature" of the Hebrew scriptures. This entire section is poetry. We will focus on the two lengthiest books of wisdom poetry: Job and Psalms.

So, this Lent let's grow our Bible knowledge as well as deepen our spiritual lives by finding God in fresh ways through our devotional readings.

Bridge Pastor, Bruce

Intertwined Faith Community

Last year, the Intertwined faith community (intertwinedfc.org) began Sojourning through Scripture, our biweekly Bible study. At the first event, each participant showed up with a different Bible, and each Bible varied in translation and supplementary material. Some members were new to Bible study, so just getting everyone on the same page (literally) was a challenge. After that experience, we changed course and began using handouts with the week's passage printed on them. That has worked well for us, and our group has grown since its inception.

More recently, while attending worship at Market Square, I learned of the "Mark Up Your Bible" initiative. It got me thinking about the advantage of having everyone at our Bible study using the same edition. Market Square generously donated four SBL Study Bibles to the cause, and we have since purchased additional copies for other attendees. It has been a great help to be able to use the same translation and supplementary material for our studies (I especially appreciated being able to point participants to pages 35-37 for a better explanation of the Documentary Hypothesis than I could provide).

This is just the latest example of Market Square's support to Intertwined, which has also come in the form of financial donations and service opportunities. We are grateful for our partnership, which allows us to extend our ministry in and around Harrisburg.

Pastor Kevin Long



Kevin Long
Pastor

Daylight Saving Time Starts
March 9, 2025

Remember to set your clocks **ahead** one hour Saturday night or Sunday morning the weekend of March 9.

Urgent Help Needed

Please consider helping with Communion preparations. ❄️

Detailed instructions are available for setting up the pitcher, juice, bread, chalices, and plates.
It's easy and we can walk you through it.

Contact Cindy Bendroth to offer to help with this integral part of our worship service.

❄️ **Cindy Bendroth**
bendy202@gmail.com

Stewardship

Pledge YTD Actual	\$41,930
Pledge YTD Budget	\$40,000
Surplus	\$ 1,930

Please remember to pay your 2025 per capita. It is \$34.04 per adult member in your household. The total amount due to the Presbytery for all MSPC members is \$15,148. MSPC must pay the Presbytery the full amount even if individual members do not pay MSPC. To date only \$2,885.54 has been received from members.
Michelle Sheaffer, *Financial Administrator*

Next Marketplace Deadline: Sunday, March 9, 2025. Please email articles and photos to both Nancy Sheets and Kari Hultman. sheets@marketsquarechurch.org and khultman@comcast.net

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." -Matthew 19:14

Greetings!

The Christian Education Committee is always exploring new ways to help the children of Market Square grow in faith. Children's Sunday School provides a wonderful opportunity for them to learn, wonder, and pray in a way that make sense for children. Unfortunately, it also means that the children are out of the sanctuary when the congregation celebrates Communion together!

We'd like to change that and invite the children to return to the worship service on the **first Sunday of the month** in order to participate in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper with their church family.

On **March 2nd** the children will have an abbreviated Sunday School lesson and will return to the sanctuary during the offering to be seated with their families for Communion. They are encouraged to come forward and commune just like the rest of the congregation. The Lord's Table is open and welcoming to all regardless of age or understanding.

We encourage you to talk with your children about Communion after church. You might ask them what they thought about it, share what it means to you, or gather questions that you and your child(ren) are interested in exploring together.

At our April prayer breakfast we'll be learning all about The Lord's Supper, so the children can grow in understanding as they experience the sacrament along with the congregation. We hope you'll join us on **April 9th at 9:30** for that very special prayer breakfast!



Pastor
Allison Smith



On **March 2nd** we'll continue diving deeper into the readings for the Mark Up Your Bibles sermon series. We'll enjoy lunch together in the Youth Room and talk about your experience reading these texts and unpack our questions, wonderings, and frustrations with these rich and complex stories. Hope to see you there!

The first Sunday of each month we meet directly after the 11:00 a.m. worship service to share a meal and dig deeper into Scripture. Lunch and Learn is all about open discussion, good food, and supportive fellowship. — **Pastor Allison**

Interfaith Community Read: Countering Hatred & Division

Diverse communities of faith in the Harrisburg area are partnering to address the dangers of Christian Nationalism through a monthly book study and conversation. We will be reading *"The Psychology of Christian Nationalism: Why People Are Drawn In and How to Talk Across the Divide"* by Pamela Cooper-White.

This book study aims to explore the impact of Christian Nationalism in our community and our country, to help us resist the marginalization of other faiths, and the undermining of democratic principles. As Christian Nationalism is linked with racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, xenophobia, misogyny, and homophobia, we are seeking to build a community to counter hatred and division.

All people, regardless of faith tradition (including atheists, agnostics, or no religion) are invited to participate. We will gather for four monthly sessions. Discussion will be led by Jewish, Muslim, and Christian leaders from our community.

Books will be available to purchase at the first session on February 27. We aim for the Interfaith Community Read to be accessible for everyone; a limited number of books will be available, free of charge, for individuals who are experiencing

financial hardship.

Where

Locations will vary each month; please register so that our planning team can communicate with you via email for more detailed information about each session. Our sessions will take place on both the East and West Shores.

Our first session will be held at Temple Ohev Sholom, 2345 N Front St, Harrisburg, PA 17110.

When

Each session will take place from 6:00-7:30 p.m.

- Session 1: Thursday, February 27, 2025
- Session 2: Thursday, March 27, 2025
- Session 3: Thursday, April 24, 2025
- Session 4: Thursday, May 22, 2025

Go to <https://shorturl.at/UMKvf> to register.

We are excited for you to be part of this important conversation!

Rev. Allison Smith (she/her)

Worship and Preaching Schedule

March 2025

Our English language worship services are livestreamed from our sanctuary every Sunday morning at 11:00 a.m. The Livestream button is at the top of the homepage of our website and links to our YouTube Livestream channel. Click on the date you wish to watch. Previous services are also available there. www.marketsquarechurch.org

Korean language sermons are posted on the Korean Ministries YouTube channel: <https://shorturl.at/NcYFw>

March 2: Transfiguration of the Lord

9:30 am Korean Language Worship in Davis Chapel
The Reverend Ki Nam Lee preaching

11:00 am English Language Worship in the Sanctuary
"The Sound of Weeping and the Joyful Shout"
Ezra 3: 8-13 and Mark 9:2-13
The Reverend Allison R. Smith preaching

Theme: Rebuilding and growth are cause for celebration, but they also cause grief as we let go of what was and what is no longer. How can we allow space for grief in the midst of joy? How do we grieve well?

March 5: Ash Wednesday

7:00 pm Worship in the Sanctuary
Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
Imposition of Ashes

March 9: First Sunday in Lent

9:30 am Korean Language Worship in Davis Chapel
The Reverend Ki Nam Lee preaching

11:00 am English Language Worship in the Sanctuary
"Job's Learned Optimism"
Hebrews 12:1, 2 and Job 1:13-22
The Reverend Dr. Bruce Humphrey preaching

Theme: Job felt helpless and as a result made his situation worse than it needed to be. We can remain victims with a sense of pessimism about hardship. Or we can develop optimism and learn from our difficulties rather than staying down, we learn to move forward.

March 16: Second Sunday in Lent

9:30 am Korean Language Worship in Davis Chapel
The Reverend Ki Nam Lee preaching

11:00 am English Language Worship in the Sanctuary
"Psalms: The Power of Music"

Mark 14:22-26 and Psalm 98:1-6

The Reverend Dr. Bruce Humphrey preaching

Theme: Some people consider church music an extra, unnecessary, even as C S Lewis called it, "Dead wood" in worship. The Bible teaches us that music is powerful and speaks to the heart deeper than mere thinking and words can speak to our minds. We develop our beliefs more through music than through sermons.

March 23: Third Sunday in Lent

9:30 am Korean Language Worship in Davis Chapel
The Reverend Ki Nam Lee preaching

11:00 am English Language Worship in the Sanctuary
"Here I am, Send Me"
Hebrews 1: 13-14 and Isaiah 6: 5-8
The Reverend Dr. Bruce Humphrey preaching

Theme: Angels are messengers. Humans are ministers. Isaiah finds himself at an angel staff meeting. God wants to deliver a message. Isaiah steps up and offers to carry the message with compassion and heart, not merely empty words.

March 30: Fourth Sunday in Lent

9:30 am Korean Language Worship in Davis Chapel
The Reverend Ki Nam Lee preaching

11:00 am English Language Worship in the Sanctuary
"Daniel in Lion's Den"
Psalm 46:1-3 and Daniel 6:16-23
The Reverend Dr. Bruce Humphrey preaching

Theme: Times of significant fast changes create social anxiety. Daniel lived through high anxiety times of big changes. Living in Babylon, he finds his security in God. Leaders often join the anxiety rather than calm the anxiety. The King is anxious, while Daniel's prayers keep him calm.



**United Way of
the Capital Region**

United Way Free Tax Program

The United Way continues its free tax program for low- and moderate- income individuals and families every Tuesday and Thursday. Until April 15, volunteers are here at the church all day in the atrium, parlor, Davis Chapel, and Fellowship Hall serving members of our community. MSPC is known as a "super site" and every year puts money back into the hands of those who need it most. We are grateful for our partnership with this critical ministry.



For more information, visit <https://shorturl.at/jk36S>

Our Church Family

Susan Bowers' sister, Cathy Thomas, died on February 2.

Caring Cards Ministry

We finished the fourth year of the Caring Cards Ministry as of yesterday, and so far we have sent positive, encouraging, hopeful, and loving cards to **258 people**.

I am grateful to the Spirit who nudged me and has supported this mission, and I thank you for helping me over four years.

With gratitude and HUMILITY,
Alice Hamilton

Music Notes



Tyler Canonico-Dilley
Minister of Music

Dear friends, we are about to enter the season of Lent. I hope as we journey through Lent together, you will find it most meaningful. My goal this year is to take time each day to pause and reflect – reflect on Christ’s journey to the cross and reflect on the many blessings God has bestowed me in my life. I invite you, too, to take time out of your day to pause and reflect. Even though the world is a crazy place today, we still have lots of reasons to give thanks!

together at 11 a.m. I hope you’ll join us – we always have a grand time!

I hope you have a meaningful journey through Lent. Peace and love,

Tyler



Sanctuary Choir Repertoire for March:

March 2 (Transfiguration Sunday) – “Prayer for Transfiguration Day” by John Weaver and “Behold, the Tabernacle of God” by William Harris

March 5 (Ash Wednesday) – “Create in Me A Clean Heart, O God” by Carl Muller and “Lamb of God” arranged by F. Christiansen

March 9 (Lent I/ “Job’s Learned Optimism”) – “The Road to the Lamb” by T. Frederick Candlyn and “O Saviour of the World” by John Goss

March 16 (Lent II/ “Psalms: the Power of Music) – “Sing to the Lord a New Song” by Johann Pachelbel and “Glorious Everlasting” by M. Thomas Cousins

March 23 (Lent III/ “Here I Am, Send Me”) – “In the Year That King Uzziah Died” by David Mck. Williams and “Forty Days and Forty Nights” by Oxley

March 30 (Lent IV/ “Daniel in the Lion’s Den”) – “God Is Our Hope and Strength” by Ronald Arnatt and “Daniel, Daniel, Servant of the Lord” arranged by Moore



On the second Sunday of the month the children and families of the church meet in the Youth Room at 9:30 a.m. for pancakes, a short Sunday School lesson and a craft. It’s a joyful time of fellowship and fun for kids of all ages!



Please join us!
Kids’ Pancake Breakfast!
Sunday, March 9
9:30 - 10:30 a.m.
Fourth Floor

We just finished hosting APOLLO5! (Photo below.) They gave an absolutely stunning concert. Sitting in our Sanctuary and listening to them sing in our gorgeous acoustic, the world stopped for two hours. I learned that many felt the same way – that we could just pause and be transported elsewhere for a little bit.

The Market Square Ringers will return to worship on Sunday, March 23. Bruce is preaching his sermon, “Here I Am, Send Me,” focusing on Hebrews 1:13-14 and Isaiah 6:5-8. The Ringers will ring Michael Helman’s beautiful setting on “Here I Am, Lord.”

Open Loft Choir returns on **Sunday, March 30!** Love choral singing, but can’t commit to singing in the choir regularly? This is the choir for you! On the 30th, join the choir and me in the loft at 10:00 a.m. to learn the music for worship and then we’ll lead worship



Multi-Lingual Students Carry On Mary Lou Dallam's Legacy

Our beloved MSPC member, Mary Lou Dallam, had volunteered monthly at the Downey Elementary School in Harrisburg during the years that Lauren Popeck taught there. Bill Dallam was ever the driver, and having committed his adult life to public school education, he always enjoyed sitting in on the classes and came to know Lauren well. It was in 2020 that Mary Lou introduced the Birds of Imagining project to Lauren and the Downey students. Each student was inspired to imagine his/her own bird, draw it with oil pastels, and write a short story about that bird.

Lauren Popeck is carrying on that project now as a teacher of elementary students from all over the world at South Side Elementary in the Central Dauphin School District. It was there on February 7th that Bill and I were invited by Lauren and her co-teacher, Lisa Rodrigo, to sit in with the 2nd and 5th grade students at South Side who had just completed their Birds of Imagining project. This is no ordinary school and this was no ordinary project for students to write a short story in English, as English is not the language with which any of these children grew up. "There are over 30 countries represented in our student population", explains Lauren, and "South Side Elementary is an inspiring and vibrant school that serves nearly 700 incredible learners



Bill and Lauren Popeck with the book, the Bird of Imagining, containing a page with each student's bird drawing and story.

pleasure as a book including all of the children's pictures and stories was given to each child that day to take home.

NOTE: It was as members of the Peacemaking Committee, to which both Mary Lou and Bill were active members, that several of us accompanied Mary Lou to Downey School that first day about 10



Teacher Lauren Popeck and Bill Dallam in the cheerful entrance to South Side Elementary School

in Grades 1-5." The students with whom we met are among the 160 multi-lingual students who qualify to have support in learning English in the English Language Development (ELD) program in which Lauren and Lisa teach. Those students have come from Central America, South America, Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia; the most common languages among students there, other than English, are Nepali, Spanish and Arabic.

While we were unable to take photos of the students (without parental permission), Bill and I were inspired and delighted by the grace and pride with which each student introduced her or himself to us and then shared their picture and read the story to us, in English. Especially aware of the challenges faced by refugee and immigrant families who settle in this country, it was gratifying to witness the warmth and understanding with which these children have been welcomed into the South Side School. We watched with



Co-teachers of the ELD program: Lisa Rodrigo and Lauren Popeck

years ago. The committee has continued to support the Downey School and has agreed to support this ELD program at South Side Elementary School. If you would like to make a donation to either school, please send a check payable to MSPC, noting in the memo the Peacemaking Committee and the school or program you would like to support.

Margee Kooistra, on behalf of the Peacemaking Committee

“Power should not be concentrated in the hands of so few, and powerlessness in the hands of so many.”

—Maggie Kuhn, activist, founder of the Gray Panthers, 1905-1995

Since 2009, the Choose Clean Water Coalition (www.choosecleanwater.org) has built an inclusive and powerful network of advocates campaigning together for just and effective water policies, in the belief that access to clean water is a fundamental right. Over the years, CCWC has harnessed the collective power of more than 300 organizations to advocate for clean rivers and streams in all communities in the Chesapeake Bay region (all states that include any part of the Chesapeake Bay watershed). By coordinating policy, messaging, action, and accountability, the Coalition speaks louder with one voice toward its collective goal—clean water. Currently 38 diverse organizations across Pennsylvania are members of CCWC, including communities of faith.

CCWC has worked tirelessly to build relationships in Washington, and to equip advocates with the tools they need to be effective in their approaches to their elected officials and policymakers. (Author’s note: I was a “charter member” of CCWC through the Pennsylvania Council of Churches and can attest to the value and effectiveness of the coalition.)

Pennsylvania is home to the Susquehanna River, the largest feeder to the Chesapeake Bay, so we hold a unique responsibility to care for our own water resources that feed into the Susquehanna. This



is important, of course, for the Chesapeake Bay, but our actions in Pennsylvania help to ensure that there is clean water for Pennsylvanians and their communities, and for wildlife throughout the watershed. It should also be noted that clean water is essential to protecting outdoor recreation, a major economic driver in Pennsylvania, adding around \$19 billion to the state’s economy in 2024.

MSPC’s Ecology Action Committee has recognized the responsibility we hold in protecting our water resources to ensure the health of ourselves and

our neighbors in our own region and downstream. The EAC has begun to learn more about CCWC and how the resources it provides can help our congregation to become better advocates and protectors on behalf of clean water. PennFuture is Pennsylvania’s lead organization in this coalition, and Michael Mehrazar, their Field Manager (a name that may be familiar to many of you), has spoken with the EAC about the coalition in his role working with CCWC. The EAC has agreed that CCWC could be a valuable resource for our advocacy and help to amplify our voice as part of a large and diverse coalition.

As I wrote at the beginning of this article, access to clean water is a fundamental right, not only for the human family, but for all of God’s creation. And EAC believes we all have an obligation to work toward that goal. Stay tuned for more updates and information as our committee 'gets to know' CCWC better.

Rev. Sandra Strauss

Earth Wisdom

THE CHESAPEAKE BAY WATERSHED – A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT

The Great Susquehanna river that is. Our river flows through all of Pennsylvania for 284 miles to the Chesapeake Bay. The Chesapeake Bay is the largest estuary in the U.S. and 3rd largest in the world. Other contributors to the bay consist of 150 rivers and streams, 100,000 smaller creeks, and brooks. About half of Pennsylvania drains to the Chesapeake Bay and supplies ½ of all the freshwater to the Bay. 15,000 miles of streams are impaired, contributing 43% of excess nitrogen in the Bay. Algae feed off excess nutrients, starving streams of oxygen, resulting in large dead zones where aquatic life cannot be sustained.

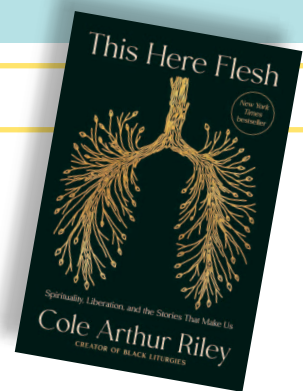
The Susquehanna River is a major contributor to the Chesapeake Bay. Let US keep it CLEAN! See Choose Clean Water Coalition at www.Pennfuture.org.

Chuck Smith

Lenten Book Study

This Here Flesh by Cole Arthur Riley will be our focus for this year’s Lenten book study. As the title suggests, this is a book about embodied spirituality. In the words of the book jacket “...Arthur Riley boldly explores some of the most urgent questions of life and faith: How can spirituality not silence the body but instead allow it to come alive? How do we honor, lament, and heal from the stories we inherit? How can we find peace in a world overtaken by dislocation, noise, and unrest? Pastors Allison and Anne, and Donna Harper and Elizabeth Terry will lead seven sessions exploring the wisdom of the theological insights Cole Arthur Riley explores in the stories of her lived experience and her family. In doing this we will also respond to Arthur Riley’s invitation to explore our own stories and name the way God’s love and presence is woven into the fabric of our lives and bodies. Our seven sessions will be held in the Adult Education Room at 9:30 on Sunday morning and will be as follows:

- March 2: Dignity**
- March 9: Body**
- March 16: Belonging**
- March 23: Lament**
- March 30: Repair**
- April 6: Rest**
- April 13: Liberation and Joy**



Books will be available for those who participate in the study. Please let Nancy Sheets in the church office know if you would like a copy.

Cole Arthur Riley is the creator of Black Liturgies, a space for Black spiritual words of liberation, lament, rage, and rest, and a project of the Center for Dignity and Contemplation, where she serves as Executive Curator. Born and for the most part raised in Pittsburgh, Arthur Riley studied writing at the University of Pittsburgh.

Church Archives Holds Interesting Specimen of the American Colony



Among the more unusual treasures of the church's archives is this "RELIEF MAP OF JERUSALEM, Originated and made by Fr. Vester & Co., The American Colony Store." The map shows the old city within its walls, several structures outside the city, and the hills and valley beyond.

When archives committee members discovered the map, they wondered where it came from and how it reached Market Square Church. Half of the mystery has been solved.

What is the American Colony?

In 1871, Horatio Spafford, a prosperous lawyer and devout Presbyterian church elder, and his wife Anna lived with their four young daughters in Chicago. That year a great fire broke out and devastated the entire city. Two years later the family decided to vacation with friends in Europe. At the last moment Horatio was detained by business, and Anna and the girls went on ahead, sailing on the steam vessel *S.S. Ville du Havre*.

On November 21, the vessel collided with a British vessel and sank within minutes. Anna was picked up unconscious on a floating piece of wood, but the four children had drowned. (Incidentally, this tragedy caused Horatio Spafford to write the text for the well-known hymn "It Is Well with My Soul.")

In 1881 the Spaffords led a small group of Americans to Jerusalem to form a Christian utopian society known as the "American Colony." Colony members performed philanthropic work among the people of Jerusalem—regardless of their religious affiliation and without trying to convert them—thereby gaining the trust of the local Muslim, Jewish, and Christian communities.

During and immediately after World War I, the American Colony played a critical role in supporting these communities through the great suffering and deprivations of wartime by running soup kitchens, hospitals, orphanages, and other charitable ventures. In addition, members of the Colony were permitted to photograph behind Turkish lines to create a unique record of life under the constraints of war.



The Colony, now numbering 150 with the arrival of a group of Swedish Christians, moved to the large house of a wealthy Arab landowner outside the city walls. The extensive land attached to the house was quickly put to use for the Colony's support. Part of the building was used as a hostel for frequent visitors from Europe and America. A small farm developed with cows and pigs, a butcher shop, a dairy, a bakery, a carpenter's shop, and a smithy.

The store supports the work of the Colony

The American Colony Store provided additional support through the sale of images, souvenirs, artifacts, and archaeological objects worldwide. Colony members also collected specimens of the flowers mentioned in the Bible that they pressed and pasted on cards and in albums and books to sell to tourists and pilgrims. Many of these objects are held by American and British museums and the Library of Congress.



Frederic Vester was a member of the American Colony in Jerusalem and was married to the Spafford's daughter, Bertha. Vester helped form the photo department in the Colony and later opened the American Colony Store in the old curio shop owned by his father. Perhaps it was here that a Market Square Church member, traveling in the Holy Land, stopped to purchase this relief map. Of that we cannot be certain, as many items were undoubtedly sold through the mail.

Although the American Colony ceased to exist as a religious community in the late 1940s, individual members continued to be active in the daily life of Jerusalem. Towards the end of the 1950s, the Colony's property opened to the public as the American Colony Hotel. The luxury hotel is an integral part of the Jerusalem landscape, and members of all communities in Jerusalem still meet there. In 1992 representatives from the Palestinian Liberation Organization and Israel met in the hotel, where they began talks that led to the historic 1993 Oslo Peace Accord.

John K. Robinson, based on edited internet resources, including *British Museum, Library of Congress, and Penn Museum, Philadelphia*.

Photos, top to bottom, left to right:

Relief map of Jerusalem; Frederic Vester and Bertha Spafford on their wedding day; and The American Colony Store in Jerusalem, c. 1905.

An email to Margee Kooistra from Jamal Meqbil

From: jamalforpeace@yahoo.com

Date: February 12, 2025 at 12:41:17 PM EST

Hello dear all,

I would like to start the letter with some encouraging news for you all. Two days ago, Yara discussed her graduation project at the university! Only a few months left to become an official doctor. Sadiyya, Amr, Ameer and I tried our best to reach the university to share her day. We sang to her and took a lot of pictures. Sadiyya and I are trying our best to make her happy. The way back home from her university, Al-Quds University, was very difficult and full of dangers. That day, they closed the only road connecting the north and south of the West Bank, forcing us to use the valley to pass, which was very dangerous and the car was badly damaged by it. After we were able to cross the valley, we encountered many checkpoints and I was very worried about Amr, because he looked tall and older than his age, so I was afraid that he would be arrested for no reason (which is what they are actually doing lately). I was worried that he would be arrested and that he would miss his last year of school, which is the most important year of his life. I won't lie to you, I felt very sorry for taking him that day. But thank God my fear did not come true. On one of the roads we were taking on the way back, the soldiers fired sound bombs and tear gas at the cars, so I ran out of fear that they would shoot us. After all these difficulties, I can say that we got beautiful pictures in which we were smiling.

As for the situation in general, it is very, very bad and scary, I am not used to this fear in my life. Yes, I was always worried about the children, but the fear that I have recently is something different. The roads have become much more difficult than at the beginning of the war, it takes long hours and the transportation is expensive. Yara goes to training in hospitals in Hebron, which is supposed to take only twenty minutes, but it takes more than two and a half hours now. She does not find time to study, and when she returns home she is very exhausted.

Recently, many facilities have been demolished in the town here, and I am very afraid of this. The location of our house is very sensitive. There are many arrests, attacks, and vandalism of houses, and people here are just waiting their turn! We are all exposed to any attack at any moment. The situation is very bad in the West Bank and the media is not covering it well.

As for the living conditions, prices are very, very high, transportation, wood for heating, fuel, clothes, water, and food, all prices have increased. I am sure that Palestine at this time has some of the most expensive things in the world. The problem is that there is no work! Most people are unemployed. But (I don't know if I should say unfortunately or excellent) life goes on, schools go on, training goes on, and all of this requires expenses. My parents' health condition and their treatment expenses in itself is a huge burden on me, and the expenses of the children and meeting their needs are another burden. I will not lie to you, I am very frustrated, very upset, and afraid, and everyone here is afraid of the near future, the situation is not safe at all and a major development in events could happen at any moment. I don't know whether to think about our safety, our food and drink, the children's expenses, or my and Sadiyya's and my parents' medications. I know that life is sometimes difficult, but it is very, very difficult at this time. But we try to continue in all the ways we can, instead of using transportation, we try to

walk, instead of buying firewood, we try to collect it from the land, and much, much more. But with all of that, I try to keep smiling for the sake of the children. We love you all and please keep us in your prayers.

Here are pictures from the discussion of Yara's graduation project. Sending you all my love.



Opening reception for “Camera Perspectives: Photography by Susan Hoover and Ron Poorman”

About 60 Market Square members and friends attended the Arts on the Square Gallery opening for the Susan Hoover/Ron Poorman joint photography exhibit on Sunday, January 26, Geneva Hall. Ashley and Joe Robinson hosted the event which featured music by Lucy Schlenker on piano. John Robinson sponsors the Art in the Square Gallery in memory of Rachel Robinson Bair.



Reception photos by Beth Hager unless noted otherwise.



Susan Hoover with her photo “Howth Isle Boats, Howth Isle, Ireland.”



Ron Poorman with his photo “Lingering Gardens... Suzhou, China.”



Lucy Schlenker at the piano.

Upcoming Exhibit

Join us on Sunday, March 16, at 12:00 noon in Geneva Hall for the opening of our next Arts on the Square Gallery exhibit, "Our Core Values in Art: Faith, Community, Compassion, Justice, and Service," a special group exhibit featuring Market Square artists and friends presenting artwork in a variety of media. The show will run through June 1, 2025.



Reception attendees enjoy Ron Poorman's photo, “Alone in the Woods.”



Ron Poorman delivers remarks to reception attendees.



Susan Hoover addresses the reception. Photo by Zach Hoover.

Session Activities: February 2025 Update

By Jonelle Darr, Clerk of Session

Market Square's Session is responsible for the church's mission, governance, and programs. Pastor Bruce Humphrey moderates the Session. Current Ruling Elders may serve up to two consecutive, three-year terms. Active 2025 Elders are:

Terms Expiring in 2025	Terms Expiring in 2026	Terms Expiring in 2027
George Blashford (1 st term)	Cindy Bendroth (2 nd term)	Sandy Bell (2nd term)
Beth Cate-Freeman (1 st term)	Kristin Cassell (1 st term)	Betsy Cobb (1st term)
Jonelle Darr (2 nd term)	Dale Laninga (2 nd term)	Andrew Hunter (2nd term)
Theresa Elliott (1 st term)	Dave Lehman (2 nd term)	Steve McMullen (1st term)
Beth Hager (1 st term)	David Volkman (1 st term)	Lana Walmer (1st term)
Nancy Snyder (2 nd term)		

Ordination and Installation

- 1) Ordaining Betsy Cobb as a Ruling Elder.

Membership

- 2) Determining how to be in touch with 86 church members who have not worshipped at Market Square since before Covid. Contacts will be made with each in the next few months with the threefold goals of: 1) Confirming whether or not the individual is active; 2) If not active, learning why; 3) Inviting them to renew their commitment to Market Square.

Ecology Action

- 3) Approving membership in the Choose Clean Water Coalition, an advocacy and educational organization focused on the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Background: With more than 300 members, the coalition's goals are local clean water and a healthy Chesapeake Bay. Local organizations that are members include PA Council of Churches, PennFuture, and PA IPL. There is no membership fee. This will support Market Square's Earth Care Congregation work through networking, advocacy and education.
- 4) Collecting a special offering on Sunday, April 27, 2025, to support the church's membership in PA Interfaith Power and Light organization. Background: PA IPL (<https://paipl.us>), a community of congregations, faith-based organizations, and individuals of faith, addresses climate change issues. Market Square's Ecology Action Subcommittee has partnered with PA IPL in the past, largely through advocacy.

Mission

- 5) Collecting a special offering on Sunday, March 23 to support Christian Churches United's Photo ID and Birth Certificate

program. Background: Until about mid-2023, Market Square reimbursed Christian Churches United (CCU) for photo IDs and Birth certificates it provided through Help Ministries. In 2024, MSPC didn't receive any invoices, but the Deacons funded photo IDs and birth certificates through direct requests made at MSPC. Recently, CCU asked if they could invoice Market Square for the amount it spent on photo IDs and birth certificates in 2024. CCU's request was declined because the Deacon's budget for this was exceeded in 2024, and a decision had already been made to support Gather in the Spirit's photo ID and birth certificate program. This decision will save MSPC staff time processing these requests and accounting for uncashed checks. When CCU learned of MSPC's decision, we discovered that MSPC was the only church supporting CCU's work in this area. Thus, the Deacons recommend that a special offering on Sunday March 23 be collected to support CCU's work. This will also educate MSPC's congregation about the importance of the program. Pastor Allison plans to contact other downtown church clergy to ask for their support of CCU's program.

Finance

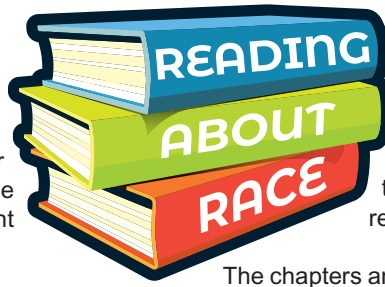
- 6) Approving the receipt of a bequest in the amount of \$56,472.61 from the estate of Deacon Carl Ryan Petersheim for the benefit of the music program. How the funds will be specifically used to benefit the music program is yet to be determined.

Organization

- 7) Reviewing plans to re-organize the Session's committees.

As of February 18, 2025, there were 367 members on the church membership rolls. If you have any questions about Session activities, you may talk with me, a Session member, or one of our Pastors.

Reading While Black: African American Biblical Interpretation as an Exercise in Hope By Esau McCaulley



“When I walked into my first Bible class, I unknowingly entered the hundred years’ war between white evangelicals and white mainline Protestants,” writes Wheaton College Assistant Professor of New Testament Esau McCaulley.

On the evangelical side, there was a “certain reading of American history that downplayed injustice and a gentleman’s agreement to remain largely silent on current issues of racism and systemic injustice.” At the same time, McCaulley wasn’t comfortable with the kind of liberal theology that failed to appreciate Black self-determination and deep tradition of reading the Bible as “the basis for their dignity and hope in a culture that often denied them both.”

But there is a way out of the back-and-forth between evangelicalism and progressivism, he writes. It is not a moderate, middle way,

however. McCaulley encourages readers to enter into a dialogue, but one that is canonical and deeply theological. His thesis is ambitious, in that we can learn a great deal by reading the Bible through the lens of the Black American historical and social context while also being “willing to listen to the ways in which the Scriptures themselves respond to and redirect Black issues and concerns.”

The chapters are brief but dense, covering a wide variety of issues, from the theology of policing to Black identity, from the church’s political witness to the historical legacy of slavery. His use of what he calls “Black ecclesial interpretation” may be a bit academic, but his approach is memoiristic and inclusive.

Reading While Black definitely is not a conventional Bible Study. As the book jacket says, it “calls the church to a dynamic theological engagement with Scripture.” What more can one ask for?

Michelle Simmons



Join us on Friday, March 7th, 6:45 p.m. in Geneva Hall

Join us for an underground railroad documentary: *A History of the Underground Railroad and Abolitionists Throughout South Central Pennsylvania.*

A panel discussion will follow the film.

Sponsored by the Antiracism, Peacemaking, and the Education committees.

MYTH OR HISTORY?

Here’s a quick question—if I say that a particular story is a myth... does that mean it is true? Or not true?

With the recent “reading through the Bible” journey that Bruce has had us doing, there are many Bible stories that pose a dilemma. Is this story meant to be read as “history”...“actual fact”? Or is this story not necessarily “factual” but most certainly instructive.

One of the things that happens when we try to untangle historical occurrence from mythic significance is that too often we don’t get it right.

So here are a few of the Biblical stories that I find challenging. First, Genesis—the beginning. The “Big Bang” as it were. If you think about it, the author or authors of Genesis could not have been “there.” So the “facts” in the account shouldn’t be reduced to “history.” Depending on your understanding of scripture—what difference does it make if “man” was created first, and then “woman”? Some interpreters of the creation account get so tangled up they think the main point is that 1) there are only MALE and FEMALE. And 2) that MALE came first! And in the current political environment, that comment seems to be the ONLY important meaning to be derived from the creation story. So immediately, I am predisposed to think that this is NOT a history lesson.

When my father was alive, I used to enjoy conversing...maybe even arguing...with him. I would say—does the account in Genesis mean there really was just ONE man who got made first, and then a

woman (made from the man’s rib) came SECOND. And no one else was around? Of course, that was my father’s interpretation. So, then I’d ask—when “Adam” and “Eve” had children, and when those children want to get married, who did they marry? Their brothers and sisters?

So for me, the creation account is a MYTH that helps us contemplate how life came to be. But it is NOT history in the sense that all the relevant details are included in the account. The purpose is NOT to give a step by step “you are there” account. And the purpose certainly is not for using to subjugate some people.

One of the best characterization of the purpose of Biblical stories comes from the theologian author John Dominic Crossan. In a sermon a few years ago, our pastor quoted Crossan.

“It’s not that those ancient people told literal stories and we now are smart enough to take them symbolically, but that they told them symbolically and we now are stupid enough to take them literally.”

I grant you that it’s a challenge. One of the things that I have done is to think about the import, the significance, the reason a particular story is in the Bible. Perhaps the most earth shattering account of all the stories is that of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

More on that theme next month.

Donna Wenger

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Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 5. This year, we're using Sanctified Art materials again and letting the Gospel of Luke guide us through Lent. Beginning with Jesus setting his face toward Jerusalem (Luke 9:51), this series flows through several familiar stories—the Good Samaritan, Mary and Martha, the fruitless fig tree, the Lost Sheep, Zacchaeus, and more.

In order to save resources and money, we are printing the booklets only for those who request them. Please contact Nancy in the church office to claim your copy.
sheets@marketsquarechurch.org.

Sunday Services

Korean Language Service—9:30 a.m.
in Davis Chapel.
Sermons on YouTube
(*link on the church website's
Worship page*).

English Language Service—11:00 a.m.
in the sanctuary.
The service is livestreamed on our YouTube
channel <https://shorturl.at/xeBHI>

The button for the livestream is at the
top of the homepage of our website.
www.marketsquarechurch.org



OUR MISSION

TO PROCLAIM AND LIVE THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST BY WELCOMING FRIEND AND STRANGER ALIKE INTO OUR DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE FAMILY OF FAITH REGARDLESS OF RACE, CLASS, NATIONAL ORIGIN, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY AND EXPRESSION, OR WORLDLY CONDITION OF ANY KIND AS WE CELEBRATE OUR GIFTS, WORK FOR JUSTICE, PEACE, AND A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT, REACH OUT IN MISSION, AND WITNESS TO GOD'S TRANSFORMING LOVE.