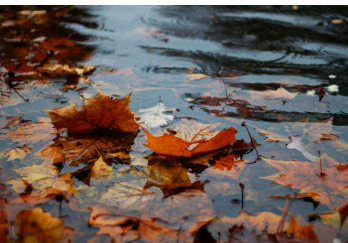




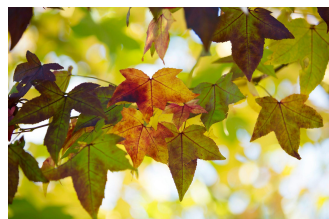
# • Windows •

*The newsletter of The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown  
September 2025*



## In this Issue

Minister's Message.....	1
Church Closure.....	2
September Birthdays....	2
Thank you!.....	3
A Note from the Heyer Family.....	4
High Holy Days.....	5
Make GACM Your +1.....	6
Homecoming 2025.....	6
ICE information.....	7



Items for the October  
edition of *Windows* are due  
by September 22, 2025.  
Send to  
office@fpcgermantown.org



Beloved,

I am excited to return to The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown as we say farewell to summer and look forward to the new and challenging things that this church year will bring. Planning for worship and the new ways of expressing our dedication to God's call to ministry are well underway. It is my hope and prayer that our church will continue to be a welcoming and thriving house of prayer. I am also looking forward to a thrilling development in this worshipping community: we are working with the NJ Synod of the ELCA and our Presbytery to create a collaborative internship for Cari States-Codding, which will be their final step to becoming an ordained minister. While we finalize dates and determine how Cari can serve both here and at a Lutheran congregation, they will be preaching on a monthly basis. Serving as their supervising mentor, I ask that you pray for and encourage Cari with feedback on their preaching and worship leadership. Thank you for helping to shape their future ministry in Christ's name.

Our beloved wee ones, youth and young adults are returning to their educational institutions. We hold in our hearts those whose lives were drastically changed after the mass shooting in Minnesota. Let us pray for the healing of the injured children and teachers, all who were affected by the shooting and especially for the legislators who must address the need for safety from gun violence. We give thanks that the recent alert that was issued at Villanova University was a hoax...let people not take this issue lightly, finding it funny to prank folk over such a serious matter.



May God send angels to protect all people as we return from our summer rest. We know that the Holy Spirit will fill us with ideas that will invigorate our time of praise, worship and mission.

With great anticipation and love,

*Pastor Cheni*



## JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

Sundays at 10 A.M.

Everyone is invited to worship, study, and enjoy friendships at The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown.

There are service, outreach, and fellowship opportunities in abundance.

To learn more, please email  
[office@fpcgermantown.org](mailto:office@fpcgermantown.org)  
 or call the church office at  
 215-843-8811.

*Windows* is a publication of The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown. For questions regarding the information published here or to submit content, please call or email the church office.

### Contributors:

Rev. Dr. Cheni Khonje  
 Cari States-Codding

## Church Closure

FPCG will be closed on September 1st, in honor of Labor Day.

## September Birthdays

Erika Littles	09/01	Kerisha Johnson	09/10
Dawayne Robinson	09/02	Howard Tyrrell	09/10
Sheila Heyer-Rivera	09/04	Frances Smith	09/12
Roger Miller	09/04	Ann Reisse	09/14
Marlene Simmons	09/06	Rosemary Williams	09/15
Ruth Cato	09/07	Martin Lagunsad	09/18
Robert Cato	09/08	Debra Gary	09/24
Don Carlin	09/09	Melissa Miller	09/25
Michelle Jones	09/09	Chip Martin	09/27



## Thank you!

Thank you to everyone for welcoming my parents to our community. I am very grateful (and unsurprised) for your kindness. They've visited Philadelphia before, but this was their first time at FPCG. They enjoyed meeting everyone and are looking forward to returning the next time they visit. Now, when my mom asks how things are going at FPCG, my report in includes both what I'm up to and what the congregation is up to. Both of my parents appreciate how supportive FPCG has been of me. Living in Idaho, they aren't able to visit as often as they would like and it brings them peace of mind to know that there is a community (and other parents) keeping an eye on me. Dwayne isn't here all that often but, when he is, he has always felt welcomed and part of the community, be it during passing of the peace or as an honorary member of the CDFC. Thank you also for welcoming me for the four services. I know you weren't expecting a month of my preaching, and this was my first time running a Presbyterian service on my own. I appreciate your grace as I navigated the service (even when I spilled a little Lutheran on the pulpit) and your flexibility in the schedule changes. I know my first preaching appearance last year was bit of a surprise, but your support of and feedback on my preaching from day one has been invaluable. As we begin planning what having me as an intern will look like (including shared custody of Dwayne; he is on church council, our version of session, at our home church so FPCG will have to share), Rev. Cheni has invited me to the pulpit a few more times this year. The church world moves slowly so, although we don't have an official start date, we are actively planning what this experience can include so we can hit the ground running once all the logistics have been arranged. We will be sure to share updates as they become available. When I first started as the admin here, I did not anticipate that I'd hold this position for four years, and I definitely did not anticipate FPCG becoming such an integral part of both my formation as a minister and as being a community I could call my own. It's always a pleasure and a privilege to worship with the community at FPCG, and I'm excited to see what the coming year holds.

-Cari



Dear 1st Presbyterian Church of Germantown, <sup>8-22</sup>

My wife and I would like to express our deepest appreciation for allowing Christian the freedom to come and help us in our time of great need and change. We could not have navigated everything necessary to get through this without Christian's help, support and personal attention.

You have provided us with a great blessing and a true demonstration of Christ's love with Christian's assistance and guidance within our situation. Christian provided us with physical, emotional and spiritual support that was critical to get us to a point of increased independence and health.

In a further expression of our gratitude, please provide others with special needs + circumstances utilizing this check to the Deacon's Fund.

In love + brotherhood,  
with blessings to each and everyone of you,  
Larry & Jane Meyer

## High Holy Days

September marks the start of one of Judaism's High Holidays/High Holy Days: Rosh Hashanah (the Jewish New Year). It begins before sundown on September 22nd, and ends after nightfall on September 24th. This marks the start of the *Aseret Yemei Teshuvah* (Ten Days of Repentance), which culminate in Yom Kippur. The week before Rosh Hashana is spent in special prayers called *selichot* (which means "forgiveness"), and often involves a special service. During the Ten Days of Repentance, people make amends/ask for forgiveness, repent of their sins, spend time in introspection, give to charity, perform good deeds, and some also chose to settle their debts. This is a way to prepare for Yom Kippur, to show God that you are repentant and that your desire for forgiveness is sincere. Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement) is the culmination of the High Holidays. On Yom Kippur, you become like an angel (not a literal angel) by transcending physical needs and earthly distractions. In recognition of that, you do not eat or drink for 25 hours (1 day; how days are measured during the High Holidays is slightly different), you wear white, and spend most of the service standing (as angels do). Yom Kippur is when Moses brought the second set of the Ten Commandment tablets down from Mt. Sinai and atonement was attained, and this is when it is believed that God seals the books of life and death, having passed judgement. There are many components in both of the holidays and the ten days in-between, including types of prayer, lifestyle changes, and special services.



Apples and honey are customarily eaten on Rosh Hashanah, to symbolize hope for a sweet and fruitful new year. The *shofar* is a trumpet made out of a horn (preferably a ram, but any kosher animal except for oxen is allowed), and it is sounded at Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. On Rosh Hashanah, it is sounded as a call to religious re-awakening. On Yom Kippur, it is sounded as a call to repentance and sacrifice, and out of love for the Torah.

### Make GACM Your +1

Make GACM your +1 is still going strong. Each month, "most needed" items are listed in the bulletin, and bags are provided to bring in contributions for the food pantry. As you shop, add an item to share! The last Sunday of *every month* is "collection Sunday." During the first hymn, we will come forward to donate our collected food items. Whether you're able to bring one needed item in your bag or you're able to fill the bag, every donated item is valuable and appreciated. We are excited about keeping our cupboard stocked to bless our neighbors in their season of need. Keep an eye on the bulletin for information about the specific food we're needing this month but, as always, all donations are welcomed. We are also collecting personal hygiene items (toothpaste, shampoo, sanitary napkins/tampons, soap, etc.).

The graphic is a vertical rectangle with a light blue background featuring a subtle, abstract pattern. At the top, the text "You're INVITED" is written in a large, elegant script font, with "INVITED" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. Below this, there are four horizontal bars of different colors: yellow, purple, green, and dark blue. Each bar contains white text. The yellow bar says "FPCG Homecoming 2025". The purple bar says "Sunday, September 14, 10AM". The green bar says "Join us for our annual homecoming service followed by a BBQ!". The dark blue bar contains the text "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord!' -Psalm 122:1". At the bottom, there is a light gray bar with the text "Questions? Email office@fpcgermantown.org or call 215-843-8811." in a small, black, sans-serif font.

**You're  
INVITED**

**FPCG Homecoming 2025**

**Sunday, September 14, 10AM**

Join us for our annual homecoming service followed by a BBQ!

*I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord!" -Psalm 122:1*

Questions? Email [office@fpcgermantown.org](mailto:office@fpcgermantown.org) or call 215-843-8811.

This year's Homecoming Sunday will be held on September 14, 2025. All family and friends of First Church are welcome and invited. As usual the CDFC will provide the drinks and meat for the grill. Others are invited to bring sides and desserts to add to the event. The Christian Ed Committee will again provide the games. Please see a member of the committee for any other needed details. God willing and the Germantown post office providing, you should have received a postcard invitation. There are extras on the literature table, should yours be taking the scenic route or if you'd like to invite a neighbor.



***He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and your neighbor as yourself." ~ Luke 10:27***

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has revoked the previous administration's guidance for immigration enforcement. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents can now enter schools, hospitals and churches. ICE can enter public areas without permission which include parking lots, lobbies and other waiting areas. They cannot, however stop, question and arrest anyone who is in a public area. What this means for us is that ICE may enter the church and our fellowship halls, Longstreth, Jennings and Finney. They are not permitted to go into our church offices unless they have a judicial warrant with a specific person's name on it or expressed permission from the pastor and senior staff. Churches may identify the sanctuary and fellowship rooms as private on the six other days of the week and thus deny access to these areas. Below, please find a graphic advising us on how we be document and be witnesses to interactions that are contrary to our Christian mandate of loving our neighbors and caring for those who seek refuge in our country.

***Leviticus 19:33-34: "When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong."***

***Zechariah 7:9-10: "Do not oppress the sojourner, or the poor, and let none of you devise evil against another in your heart."***

## HOW TO DOCUMENT AND REPORT ICE ARRESTS

*Let's not let fear divide us. An organized community is a secure community.*

<h3>HOW TO RECORD</h3> <p>Record or take photos: <u>You have the right under the First Amendment to document ICE and the police. Do so from a safe distance.</u></p>	<h3>HOW TO REPORT</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>It's important that we only share verified reports to avoid causing unnecessary anxiety, panic, or fear in our community.</i></li><li>• <u>Contact JUNTOS to report or verify any suspicious ICE activity.</u></li></ul>
<h3>WHAT TO DOCUMENT</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where the raid happened</li><li>• <i>Date and time</i></li><li>• Number of agents</li><li>• <i>Type of vehicle used</i></li><li>• Agents' attire</li><li>• <i>How they identified themselves</i></li></ul>	<h3>RESPONSE NETWORK</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Telephone: 215-218-9079</li><li>• Instagram: @vamos_juntos_</li><li>• Facebook: Juntos</li></ul> <p><b>JUNTOS</b> </p>

The mission of The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown is to reflect the loving presence of Christ as we serve others faithfully, worship God joyfully, and share life together in a diverse and generous community. While much could be added to this statement, we believe that this captures the most essential elements of our mission today as revealed through the words, thoughts and actions of the congregation. This mission statement is not only rooted in the life of the congregation; we believe that each promise this statement makes is rooted in Scripture as well:

- We will reflect the loving presence of Christ – Matthew 28:19-20
- We will serve others faithfully – Mark 10:43-45
- We will worship God joyfully – Colossians 3:16
- We will share life together – Acts 2:42-47
- We will be a diverse community – 1 Corinthians 12:15-19
- We will be a generous community – 1 Timothy 6:18-19



## The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown

35 W. Chelten Ave.  
Philadelphia, PA 19144  
215-843-8811  
[office@fpcgermantown.org](mailto:office@fpcgermantown.org)  
[www.fpcgermantown.org](http://www.fpcgermantown.org)