

Year In Review

Canonsburg United
Presbyterian Church



2025





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A Note from Pastor Don

Looking back, it was a year of milestones, service and growth!

From a personal standpoint, I had the privilege of serving on the Pine Springs Camp Board and their Strategic Planning Team, several Administrative Commissions for our Washington Presbytery, the Canonsburg-Houston Ministerial Association, and alongside Cathy Stewart, as a Volunteer Weekly at Pine Springs Camp. These opportunities to extend our reach off the CUPC campus were a blessing and along with my annual seminary prayer group retreat and completing my two-year certificate program in Spiritual Direction, I experienced a lot of personal and spiritual growth this past year.

As did our church!

Through the stellar work of our Nominating Committee the year before, we began the year by orienting a host of new Deacons and Elders, even filling several un-expired terms. These leaders were instrumental in some of our major initiatives this year, including the recognition and celebration of 250 Years of Service to Christ and our Community in Canonsburg, that kicked off with a float in annual 4th of July Parade – the first CUPC float in decades!

50 of us went up to Pine Springs Camp in February for the Annual Winter Retreat and we had more snow than ever, allowing us to have an epic afternoon tubing down the hill behind the pool!

We spent the year conducting an updated Confirmation program. After a year of gathering, studying, playing and sharing – we were treated to hearing their Faith Journey projects during a potluck dinner and welcomed 8 confirmands into membership of the church, the most since 2018!

Our children and youth also attended camps for retreats and weeks during the summer, holding several fundraisers and our Kids4Camp team stepped in to lead the Washington County Fair Food Booth, ensuring the long term success of this ministry and extending the blessings throughout the community even further.



We tried something new with our Session & Deacons Board, by gathering in June to share highlights and plans for the year, reflecting on what God has done and what we're feeling called to do in the future. In order to accommodate... the Session even moved from its sacredly ascribed 4th Monday meeting date to gather with the Deacons! It worked so well that we will continue the practice in 2026.

There were lots of times of celebration throughout the year, whether recognizing Pam Walker's 20 years of service as Director of Pastoral Care or the Advent Dinner and games. We celebrated 7 baptisms and 17 Adult New Members joining. We celebrated the lives of 8 members who passed away (and I celebrated another 8 more from our community, along with officiating two weddings). And we celebrated with our Pony League World Series Team, High School graduates and over 200 Vacation Bible School participants!

We also continued to bless the community by hosting the Ministerial Association's monthly Food Pantry, Thanksgiving Dinner, Toy Chest, Santa for Old Fashioned Christmas and several other members and groups in our Fellowship Hall, and now five Recovery Groups that find support and encouragement on our campus each week!

To facilitate the use of our campus, we continued various renovations including the completion of our sanctuary window replacement, the refurbishment of the bridge walkway, updates to the Christian Education building's electrical and fire panels and the installation of a new Carillon. Not to mention the ongoing routine maintenance of cleaning and repairs. And we initiated several needed repairs and replacements to our infrastructure that will take place in 2026 as well.

I don't really need to tell you these things though - because you're feeling the growth that's happening in our church. You're feeling it inside you, which is why you, and so many others, keep showing up more and more to our regular worship services, to our special worship services and to all our special celebratory events and service to this community. We had a dozen Sundays with over 200 in worship. To put a fine point on this - in 2025, we experienced the third straight year of worship attendance growth. It was especially pronounced on Easter and Christmas Eve, when we had 402 and 412 - the highest on Easter since 2019 and on Christmas Eve since 2018!

God's growing us in numbers, but also in Christ, and that's why we keep showing up. To Grow! What a year 2025 was!

Welcoming You to continue Growing in Jesus, Pastor Don



Buildings and Grounds



Team Members: Dan Dodd (chair), Sharon Cox (vp), Dick Hultman (secretary)
Jim Reynolds, George Cox, Tom & Cheryl Smith and John Walker

Projects completed this year: DeZomba Garden installed, elevator windows replaced, underneath bridge redone, CE breakers updated, new carillon bells installed, dishwasher and garbage disposal replaced.

This past year, Buildings and Grounds did not endure as difficult of challenges like we had during Covid or while renovating the church, but each year brings its own set of challenges.

There's always a struggle to balance functionality and aesthetics when taking on a project at the same time trying to manage ongoing preventative maintenance of both buildings. For example, just as recently as December, we were tasked with finding a replacement dishwasher and garbage disposal unit that was compatible with the wiring of the building at the same time a major sewage blockage happened.

At that time, decisions need to be made as to where to directly prioritize our money as well as our resources. I feel that as a team of non-paid volunteers, we do a great job of balancing those priorities as well as our budgeted and non-budgeted needs.

I'd like to personally thank everyone, on the team or not, that has helped make this year as seamless as possible with their own personal free time that they were able to spare.





Mission & Stewardship



Team Members: Colleen Yarbrough (chair), Ruth Bershok, Tim Camus, Leanna Coyle, Kathy Emery, Betty Moore, Claudia Phillips

Donations were made to: City Mission, Good News Jail Ministry, Young Life, Habitat for Humanity, Youth for Christ, Heart to Honduras, Pine Springs, Second Chance Global, Canonsburg Fire Department, Meals on Wheels, Food Pantry, the Outreach Foundation, Free Wheelchair Mission, Youth for Christ and Washington Presbytery.

This year we continued to sponsor the community of Achiotal in Honduras, but had to postpone the planned team's visit due to an unexpected health issue to a key member. Our 8-person team (Doug & Jeannie Jones, Bart Larusso, Kendall & Taylor Riedel, Colleen Valosen, Colleen & Gary Yarbrough) is excited to travel down in March to support, encourage, introduce and renew relationships with our sisters and brothers in rural Honduras.

We continued to support the ongoing work of Second Chance Global in the Dominican Republic through the funding of community restrooms where none previously existed and the visit of Cathy and Carly Stewart on a Visioning Team.

Closer to home, we led our congregation's efforts to participate in Unite The City, the massive community initiative in Washington to clothe the needy with winter gear and empower them with additional tools including physical and spiritual nourishment before winter. For the coming year, we are exploring a summer food support initiative for under-fed school children throughout Canonsburg.

The Mission Team welcomes suggestions and is always ready to support other worthy causes - please bring them to our attention and if you'd like to join the efforts to plan or organize, just reach out!



Gather to Grow

Team Members: Barb Malone (chair), Bea Affleck, Linda Barker, Charlene Billy, Tim & Judy Camus, Bethane Miller, Luann Seifen, Lori Silcott & Markus Solobay

This year has been filled with activity! In addition to the coordination and support to all of those providing treats after the 8:30 & 11:00 AM services, we also held special Fellowship Hour events for Mother's Day and Father's Day.

The Soup & Sandwich Supper on Ash Wednesday and Easter Brunch were very enjoyable times to give thanks to the Lord and gather as a church family. We also thank the Deacons for bringing casseroles to ensure sufficient food for everyone. Our team also participated in the Spring and Fall New Members Pot-Luck Dinners to welcome our new members!

In August, we held our Annual Church picnic at North Strabane Park with over 150 individuals and families. We enjoyed delicious food and many activities after.

This year for our Advent Dinner we decided to try something new and offer Christmas Trivia Game Night after dinner. It was a great time for all ages!

We were saddened at the passing of our team member Luann Seifen.



Worship & Music

Team Members: Drew Caliguiri (chair), Kenton Klink, Cassandra Kozak, Megan Lonich, Michele Newton, Cheryl Smith, and Lori Fulton

The Music and Worship Team is dedicated to creating meaningful and spiritually enriching worship experiences for our congregation. We work closely with Pastor Don and music staff of Kenton Klink and Megan Lonich to ensure that worship is engaging, uplifting, and Christ-centered, overseeing music selection, coordination of lay leaders, communion servers, greeters, ushers, and the overall order of service. We seek ways to enhance our services, making them welcoming and relevant to all generations.

This past year, we maintained our commitment to offering a warm and inviting atmosphere for all who enter our church, reinforcing the importance of greeters and hospitality.

Encouraging participation from all age groups remains a priority. We welcome youth involvement in our services, whether through music, reading scripture, or assisting in other capacities. Recognizing and celebrating those who give their time, talents, and gifts to the church remains an important focus for our team. We work with Cathy Stewart, Director of Family Ministry to incorporate children and youth into the rotation of lay leaders twice monthly and our annual Student Sunday.

Our annual outdoor worship service and picnic at North Strabane Township Park in August was once again a beautiful time of fellowship and praise in God's creation and made for the second-highest worship attendance Sunday of the summer. It provides a wonderful opportunity for worship in a relaxed and natural setting.

Overall, in-person worship attendance continued to increase over 2024, with Easter and Christmas Eve both topping 400 worshippers for the first time since 2018!

Throughout the year, we have embraced new opportunities to enhance worship. The ongoing Wednesday reflections shared by Pastor Don, Kenton, and AI continue to be a source of joy and spiritual nourishment for those who engage with them. We are grateful for the many volunteers who make our worship services possible—whether they serve in music, A/V, ushering, lay leadership, greeting, or other roles. Your dedication makes a difference.

Looking ahead to 2026, we are excited to work on new ways to make worship engaging and accessible to all. We will be initiating a survey to continue to gain feedback from the congregation about how our gathered worship can help us grow in Jesus more and more.

And we would love to expand our Ministry Team to involve you too! Whether you would like to share your musical talents, or simply support those who have them (you don't need to sing or play music to be on the team!) this is the perfect group for you. We meet the third Monday of every month at 7PM in the Christian Education Building. Join us!



Family Ministry



Team Members: Cathy Stewart (co-chair), Laurie Rigby (co-chair), Sharon Cox, Jeannie Jones, Tiffany Slanker, Ashley Dodd, Cindy Garrison, Hollie Collins, Dick Hultman, Jenn Greene, Sarah Kraski, Alaina Zyra and Kendall Riedel

The youth of our church have been good and faithful servants. They have volunteered their time at CUPC by participating in Student Sunday worship services, serving as lay leaders and helping to lead music on Sunday mornings. Three big events that many of our youth are involved with are volunteering their time and talent at VBS where we had over 200 kids in attendance, working at our CUPC food booth at the Washington County Fair and volunteering their time at the Toy Chest. Not only do they serve at CUPC, but they are out in the community serving too! Many students participate in Mission Washington, a local workcamp where they serve the city of Washington in a variety of ways such as painting and mulching playgrounds, building and painting porches, landscaping lawns and other small construction jobs. This past summer we helped a few families clean out their basements after flooding. The students stay for a week in the W & J dorms, have meals catered to them at Church of the Covenant and worship each evening at Life Church. Several adult CUPC members have volunteered their time to serve meals and snacks and supervise job sites. We are always looking for adult volunteers to help out. Mission Washington 2026 will be June 21-26.

The Family Ministry team has also been reaching out to the UP With Kids families and community to invite them to some fun events. We had a Family Fun Night at the Wild Things Game with a buffet dinner in the EQT pavilion. We had 118 people and a fun time was had by all. A great time was had by all. We also had another successful Trunk or Treat event with our church, UP With Kids families and even community members. We had about a dozen decorated trunks and many trick or treaters. We are looking forward to growing this event next year. We also had two Parent's Night Out events this past year for both church families and UP With Kids families, one in the spring and one in the fall. We had dinner with the kids, played games and had fun with friends while parents were able to go to dinner, shopping or catch a 3 hour nap if they wanted. We are always looking for new opportunities to connect.



UP with Kids

2025 UP with Kids Childcare Board: Dick Hultman (President), Dan Miller (Treasurer), Pastor Don Coleman (Secretary), Carl Neishloss, Hollie Collins, and Rachel Mumford. We are looking to add at least 3 more board members.

We currently have 14 employees, not including Cathy Stewart and Alaina Zyra, and a roster of 71 children. We had great summer staff help, and hired two new teachers this year. We are welcoming back Miss Pat for part-time Infant Room help. We were able to increase staff wages again this year and we continue to try to reduce overtime. We are also planning an increase in tuition cost in the Fall of 2026.

We continue to offer before and after Kindergarten care for children in the Canon-McMillan School District. We are so glad to be able to continue to offer this to our families. The number of school-aged children has grown, which we are thankful for. We hosted our second Thanksgiving Dinner for daycare kids and their families, which was again a huge hit!

Our hopes for 2026 are to hire more staff and continue to grow our before and after Kindergarten classroom program. We are currently registering Summer Care for school aged children.

We thank and appreciate your ongoing prayers and support for this ministry of Canonsburg UP Church.



Deacons

Deacons: Linda Barker, Phyllis Bednar, Judy Camus, George Cox, Ashley Dodd, Gail Davis, Tracy Diesel, Faith Homrock, Karen Jingleski, Doug Jones, Doug Kearns, Josh Kozak, Jake Lawrence, Leann Miller, Claudia Phillips, Wendy Plank, Kendall Riedel, Jill Sabol, Luann Seifen, Tiffany Slanker, Cheryl Smith, Mark Solobay, Chris Wright and Ben Zyra.

There are currently 34 special friends to whom the Deacons minister. These special friends receive visits, calls and cards throughout the year as well as gift bags and plants at Easter and Christmas. The Deacons sent 23 Valentine boxes to our students in college.

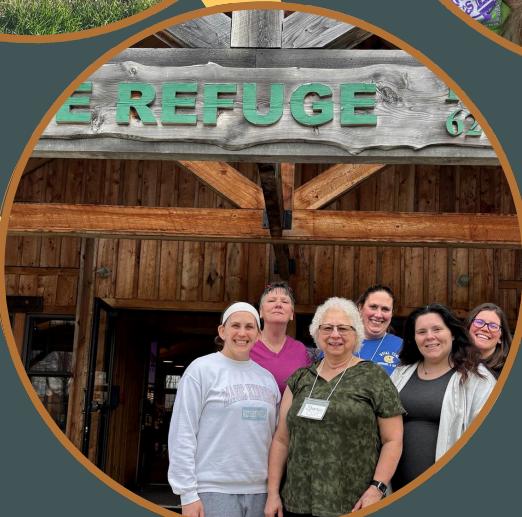
The Deacons hosted the Fall Luncheon in October for special friends and all church members ages 75 & up. There were 28 guests and 12 Deacons. There was a service with communion by Pastor Don and music provided by Kenton Klink. Gary Lucas prepared a delicious meal. Meals were also delivered to special friends who could not attend. 237 shoeboxes were collected for Operation Christmas Child. 85 permanent residents of Townview Nursing Home received Angel Tree gift bags for Christmas.



The deacons hosted the 19th Annual Christmas Laser Shows. George Doworth and his Lightwave International team put on 4 amazing shows over two evenings. Approximately 800 people attended and a record amount of \$11,153.84 was raised. A huge thank you to George and his crew for generously donating their time and talents.

These funds allow the deacons to provide financial respite to local individuals and give to local charitable organizations. Thank you to all of the Deacons, Lay Shepherds and church members who continue to minister and care for our church family and community.





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