

A Future with Hope

FIRST UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF TARENTUM

October 2, 2022

Dear Beloved of First United Presbyterian Church,

Recently I had a conversation with someone who had visited the congregation this year. She said something along these lines, not verbatim, but close. "I am so grateful to you and your congregation for welcoming me when I came to visit and worship with you for a short while. I want you to know that I haven't been coming recently not because of anything you all did, but because my life circumstances changed. You all were present and helped me, unbeknownst to you, during a very difficult stretch in my life. I arrived on a Sunday, two days after my spouse served me with papers for a divorce after 30 years of marriage. You all were kind, your message from the pulpit gave me hope, and you all treated me with respect and care. I can't even begin to tell you how important you all were to me at that moment in my life. Thank you."

I doubt we will see her again in worship as she has moved out of the area. Yet your loving kindness to her when she came to worship made all the difference to her. Isn't that the point of the church? So often we are left not knowing the impact we have had on another person. The gift I received that day she called, the gift you all received as well was the gift of knowing and a thank you.

You all have an impact upon each other, the communities we live and work in, and the communities we serve. First United Presbyterian Church of Tarentum is important and has had a positive impact on this community. I want you to think for a moment of all the folks who have come through the doors of the church, the numerous folks feed from the garden and the pantry, the families helped in WV on mission trips, the kids who come for VBS or our community events, the children who are helped with our clothing collection, and I could go on and on.

Over the next several weeks we embark on our annual stewardship season. Enclosed you will find a narrative budget that shares where your financial giving goes and the impact it has within our congregation and outside our congregation. Your financial support matters. As you prayerfully consider your financial giving for 2023, take a moment and listen to the stories over the next weeks. Read what comes in the mail. Then prayerfully consider stepping up your giving or to even make a pledge for the very first time.

Take good care.

Peace,
Rev. Phil

*For surely I know the plans I have for you,
says the Lord, plans for your welfare
and not for harm, to give you a future
with hope.*

Jeremiah 29:11