

PRINCETON PRESBYTERIANS

FALL NEWSLETTER 2021





LETTER FROM THE CHAPLAINS

Dear friends of Princeton Presbyterians of the Westminster Foundation,

Greetings in Christ! Fall term has come with transformative changes for Princeton Presbyterians of the Westminster Foundation. Thank you for your support as we pivot to a revived in-person program year of worship, study, service, and fellowship.

Last May, we gathered on Zoom for Reunions to bless and send the Great Class of 2021 out into the world. We celebrate new alums like Jon as he begins his first year at Yale Divinity School; Trina as she researches the impact of Covid-19 on a pediatric clinic in Eswatini

as a Fulbright Scholar; Temi starting her first year in medical school; Jonathan working in healthcare with vulnerable populations in San Francisco; Jordan serving as a Presbyterian Young Adult Volunteer in Scotland; as well as many other friends starting exciting new jobs and academic programs.

Princeton Presbys' Undergraduate Leadership Team—Thomas, Grace L., Isabella, Grace M., and Brooke—has been hard at work this fall. They have gathered a flourishing weekly Bible study on campus about Jesus' parables. The Oasis—pop-up spaces around campus with picnic blankets, coloring books, and outdoor games—welcomed busy students during midterms to rest between classes and study marathons in Firestone. We welcomed nearly forty students to our annual "Thanksgiving Feast" with holiday dishes before the crunch of final exams and papers.

Breaking Bread Worship returned to Nassau Presbyterian Church on Sunday nights with masks, air filtration, and physical distancing protocols. Recently we explored the biblical theme of welcoming refugees in a sermon series on the Book of Ruth. A few weeks ago, Len and a group of students helped prepare a home for a refugee family from Afghanistan in partnership with Nassau Presbyterian Church.

As we continue to abide by the University's covid protocols, we are making some ambitious plans for the near future: a reprise of Mr. Rogers Day celebration, a possible summer pilgrimage to the Taizé Community in France, and a deepening commitment to local service. Your generous support equips our students as they seek to "do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God" (Micah 6:8).

Please consider making a financial gift that further empowers these students to live out the Gospel as Christian servant-leaders in Princeton and beyond. We wish you every blessing in this Advent and Christmas season, and keep in touch!



*GRACE AND PEACE,
ANDREW AND LEN SCALES
CHAPLAINS AND
EXECUTIVE CO-DIRECTORS*





WHAT PRINCETON PRESBYS MEANS TO ME

JONATHAN WANG '21

When I entered Princeton, I thought the spaces that would be most comforting were those that were most familiar. But having grown up in an evangelical Chinese American church community, coming out as queer complicated that, and the spaces that first felt like home soon became alienating. My first week at a Princeton Presbyterians service happened to be the renaming celebration for Slats, and it was here that I first witnessed what I consider a radical hospitality that truly embraces people for who they are. I came with my partner at the time, and felt nothing but warmth from everyone around me, something I hadn't thought was possible within a religious space.

I knew that day that Princeton Presbys would become an essential part of my undergraduate experience. And I was right—it became a vital support system as I learned to navigate my relationships with friends and family who struggled to accept me. It also connected me with Andrew, Len, and other mentors and peers who offered valuable perspective on my own spiritual journey as I explored meaningful questions, incorporating more authenticity into my faith.

As a student going into the medical field, Princeton Presbyterians also became a space to critically evaluate my own thoughts about healthcare and the ways in which faith connects with service and justice. I spent most of the last few years working with people who use drugs in harm reduction settings, informing my understanding of stigma and rejection within healthcare systems. My relationships with these communities are constantly informed by my experiences within Princeton Presbyterians, and I often reflect on the warmth with which I was welcomed, a warmth that made me unafraid and unashamed to be myself. “Come as you are” is how I was approached by the Princeton Presbys community. It is with this attitude that I intend to practice medicine in the future, creating a space that unconditionally provides for people, embracing them the way they are.



WHY I GIVE

Board Member
Rev. James Klotz

In a recent board meeting, we reflected together on what is important and special about Princeton Presbyterians and the ministry we do on the University campus. Two things really stood out for me from our conversation. One was the importance of providing a campus ministry that is inclusive of students of a variety of theological and political perspectives. Creating a space which is welcoming of a progressive perspective makes Princeton Presbyterians particularly valuable for students who are seeking to incorporate their faith, activism, studies, and hopes to help shape the future.

The other thing that stood out to me was the intentionality of making Princeton Presbyterians a space that is noncompetitive. Particularly for undergraduate students in an Ivy League institution, the daily pressures to excel and to perform are understandably intense.

Students tell us that Princeton Presbyterians—from weekly Breaking Bread worship to activities throughout the year—provide an oasis from that competitive drive, a place to rest and a time to build one another up. Especially through the immense stresses of the past two years of pandemic, Princeton Presbyterians has provided a lifeline of mutual support and pastoral care to students that is absolutely essential.

That conversation has gotten me to thinking further about the remarkable things that Princeton Presbyterians does. I am an ordained minister in the PC(USA) and serve on the Commission on Preparation for Ministry of the Presbytery of the Coastlands. I have seen candidates for ministry, mostly students at Princeton Seminary, who have served as interns at Princeton Presbyterians grow, learn, and hone their talents for ministry under the

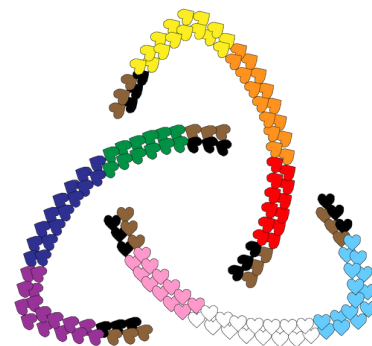




care of Len and Andrew. Their time working with this campus ministry is foundationally formative for these seminary students, and we in the presbytery see the amazing fruits of their learning as interns as they demonstrate to us their readiness to begin ordained ministry in a church that needs their talents. It was also a special joy to hear one of our University student board members announce to us, just before his graduation, that he had been accepted to and is now attending divinity school. Princeton Presbyterians is formational for a future generation of leaders in the PC(USA): ruling elders and deacons as well as Ministers of Word and Sacrament.



Another thing that has impressed me during my time on the board is how faithful the stewardship of the resources entrusted to us has been. Generations of generosity makes the ministry of Princeton Presbyterians possible, and everyone—from students to interns to campus ministers to the board members—is careful to use these resources wisely. Having a firm financial foundation frees Len and Andrew and our interns and students to live generously in their ministries, even through times of global economic hardship. We hope that you will prayerfully consider how you might support this remarkable ministry, that you too through your generosity can help carry out the mission of Christ's inclusivity, compassion, and love on the University campus—and beyond.





THANK YOU!

EACH GIFT,
NO MATTER THE AMOUNT,
IS MUCH APPRECIATED.

THERE ARE TWO WAYS TO
DONATE:

*make check payable to the
"Westminster Foundation"*

*Westminster Foundation
61 Nassau Street
Princeton, NJ 08542*

*or give online
princetonpresbys.org/donate*