

The Linway News

November 2025

Linway  United
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

Celebrating 128 Years
June 1, 1897 – June 1, 2025

A MESSAGE FROM JAKOB



Dear Beloved Linway Community,

As we move through this season together, I've found myself reflecting often on the image of planting and harvesting that runs throughout Scripture. It's one of the most enduring and comforting metaphors God gives us for understanding our shared life of faith. Whether it's the psalmist rejoicing that "those who sow with tears will reap with shouts of joy," or Jesus reminding His disciples that "one sows and another reaps," there's a holy rhythm to this imagery that grounds us in patience, purpose, and trust.

We are, as a congregation, in a season of transition... a word that can sound uncertain, but is also deeply biblical. Every season of God's people is a season of movement: Abraham setting out for a land he did not yet know; the Israelites wandering between Egypt and promise; the disciples following Jesus from village to village without knowing where they'd lay their heads. Transition is not a pause in God's work; it *is* God's work. It's the in-between space where faith is tested, strengthened, and renewed.

And in this season, I believe God is reminding us that we are called, first and foremost, to sow. It's natural for us to long for visible results. We host and go to events and hope that families will come back. We welcome new faces in worship and pray that they will join the church. We share the love of Christ and hope to see the fruit of transformed lives. When those outcomes don't appear right away (or maybe not at

all), it's easy to feel discouraged, to wonder whether the work we're doing actually matters.

But the truth of the Gospel is that the call to discipleship is not dependent on outcomes. We are not measured by how much we can grow the church, but by how faithfully we love and serve in Christ's name. As Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 3:6–7, "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth."

We are not the gardeners of our own success; we are caretakers of God's kingdom. Sometimes we get to see the harvest. We get to see the pews full, the ministry thriving, the joy overflowing. And sometimes, we simply plant seeds, water the soil, and walk away trusting that God will bring life in His time and in His way. That may sound like a small calling, but it's actually a sacred one. Because without sowers, there can be no harvest. Without those willing to dig into the soil, to get their hands dirty, to scatter the seed even when the ground looks dry; without that quiet, faithful labor, the future cannot take root.

Over the past few months that I've been here, we've had several events that have filled our church grounds with laughter, conversation, and energy. Many of the people who came were not members of our church. Some may never be. They may never fill out a membership form or sit in our pews on Sunday morning. **And yet, I believe something holy happened in those moments. When a child laughs on our lawn, when a family feels safe and welcomed here, when a stranger leaves**

knowing that someone cared enough to learn their name, *that's* ministry. *That's* sowing the seed of the kingdom. Every warm smile, every cup of coffee or chicken dinner shared, every invitation offered with sincerity is a small act of grace, and grace never returns empty.

Isaiah 55:10–11 reminds us of this promise:

“For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.”

Every act of kindness, every prayer spoken, every seed of hope planted in Jesus' name accomplishes something, even if we don't see it. God's word, spoken through our love, is always fruitful in ways beyond our sight.

If you've ever planted a garden, you know that sowing is an act of patience. You can't rush the seed. You can't control the rain or the sun. You prepare the soil, do your part, and then you wait. Sometimes it's weeks or months before you even see a sprout. And even after that time of waiting, it takes more time before fruit begins to appear.

Church life can feel much the same. We work hard to prepare the soil of ministry; we do things like planning programs, praying for renewal, and investing in relationships. But it can take time, sometimes *a long time*, before the fruit becomes visible. And yet, even in that waiting, God is at work. Below the surface, unseen by human eyes, the seed is germinating. Roots are taking hold.

New life is being prepared. We may not always recognize it, but the Spirit is always moving in ways we can't measure.

Faithful ministry requires that kind of patience...and that kind of trust, too. Trust that what we do in the name of Christ has value even if it doesn't produce immediate growth. Trust that God's timeline is not our own. Trust that sowing in faith today will lead, in God's good time, to a harvest we may never see but others will rejoice in.

Our congregation is living in a unique moment. We are continually discerning who we are, who we are becoming, and what God is calling us to do in this community. Transitions can feel uncertain, but they are also times of incredible opportunity; opportunity because God often does His best work in the soil of change. So I encourage you: this is the time to keep sowing. The time to keep showing up, keep praying, keep giving, keep serving. The seeds we plant now, in faith, will become the foundation for the next season of this church's ministry.

We might not be the ones to see the harvest, but someone will. Another generation of believers may one day worship in this sanctuary, their faith strengthened by the roots we planted today. The children who came to our events this year may one day remember this place as a place where they felt loved and safe. The family who visited only once may remember your kindness as the moment they first glimpsed the heart of Christ. That's what it means to live as a sowing people; we trust that our labor, offered in love, is never wasted.

Friends, the temptation in ministry (both for pastors and congregations) is to measure success in numbers, outcomes, and results. **But the kingdom of God is measured differently. It's measured in love, in faithfulness, in the willingness to do the small, steady work of sowing**

seeds and trusting that God will bring the growth.

So, again, I want to encourage you: keep sowing. Keep showing up to worship, even when you're tired. Keep reaching out to your neighbors, even if they don't come on Sunday. Keep praying for this church and for one another. Keep trusting that what you do in Christ's name is never in vain. **Paul reminds us in Galatians 6:9, "Let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up."** That's the promise that carries us through. We may not yet see the full picture of what God is doing, but we can trust that the Spirit is already at work, turning our faithfulness into fruit.

As I look out over our congregation each Sunday, I see people who have been faithful sowers for many years. I see those who have prayed, served, given, and loved through every season; I see those who know that ministry is not about quick results, but about lifelong faithfulness. You are the reason this church continues to shine as a light in this community.

So as we continue in this time of transition, let's remember who we are: *a people called to sow*. Called to plant seeds of love, hope, and grace in every heart we encounter. Called to trust that God is doing something new, even when we can't yet see it. Called to believe that the harvest will come, in God's time, and to God's glory. May we find joy in the sowing, hope in the waiting, and peace in the promise that God's word never returns empty.

Grace and Peace in Christ,
Jakob Harmon, Student Pastor

Transition to New Pastor

We are grateful to have Pastor Jakob leading us at Linway as he completes his studies at the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Meanwhile, the work of the

Pastoral Nominating Committee continues. We ask for your continued prayers as they seek the individual whom God has chosen to serve Linway as our permanent pastor.

Above everything, we place our trust in God's plan for Linway. He has blessed us with Pastor Jakob, and we hold firm to the belief that God will continue to guide us as we move forward in faith. Let us remain steadfast in prayer & seek the wisdom of the Holy Spirit through this onward journey.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to a member of the Session or PNC. May God's guidance and blessings be upon us all as we walk this path together.

Blessings,
Jamie Stewart



All Saints Memorial Service: Sunday, November 2

During a portion of our 10:30 Worship Service on Nov. 2, we will be remembering those who were beloved among us and this past year have passed from our sight, but we trust are in the care of our Lord. The following members went home to be with our Lord this past year: Marilyn Bertok, Ronald Dudash, Elizabeth "Betty" Brinker, Mary Lou Fawcett, Joan Pierro.

Holiday Services

The following worship times for the holidays have been approved by the Session:

Sunday, Dec. 21

9:15am Contemporary Service
10:30am Traditional Service

Wednesday, Dec. 24

6:30pm Christmas Eve Communion
and Candlelight Service

Sunday, Dec. 28

10:00am One Morning Service

Sunday, Jan 4

10:00am One Morning Service



The Session

Next Session Meeting: Nov. 18 at 7:00 pm

Missions Committee

Fall Harvest Table: Now through Nov. 9

We are collecting non-perishable grocery items for MA's Pantry. Please place items on or under the table in the front of the Sanctuary. Monetary donations may be mailed to the church or placed in the offering & mark that it is for "MA's Pantry". Checks may be payable to Linway, and then we will send them one check. MA's is able to use monetary donations to purchase food items at a large discount from the Pittsburgh Food Bank.

MA's Pantry Volunteers Needed

MA's is in need of a volunteer(s) available to receive grocery deliveries every Monday & every other Friday at 9:30 for about an hour or so, and then store items in the refrigerator. Lifting of 20-30 pounds is required.

MA's Pantry is operated entirely by volunteers. There are a variety of tasks, mostly on Thursday mornings before each distribution date & on food distribution Saturday mornings. For more info on volunteering, call 412-824-0277. MA's is at 1000 Broadway Street, East McKeesport.

Distribution Dates: Nov 1 & 15, Dec 6 & 20
9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Stewardship & Finance Committee

The Stewardship Pledge Campaign will soon be under way. When you receive your 2026 Pledge for Giving Card, please complete it with your estimated giving plans for 2026 and return it to the church in time for our pledge dedication service tentatively planned for Nov. 23. This greatly helps with budgeting for the coming year. Thank you!

Officer Nominating Committee

This committee will soon meet to discuss recommendations for Linway Elders and

Deacons for 3-year terms which begin in January 2026. Please prayerfully consider serving a term as an officer of your church.

Individuals on the Officer Nominating Committee are: Wendie & Frank Kordalski, Keith Eremic, Jaime Ruffing, Joe Pribanic, and Judy Augustin.

Any current Elder or Deacon whose term expires at the end of this year and who has served two consecutive three-year terms, must remain off that board for a period of one year before being considered for another term. However, a person can move from one board to another without any lapse of time.

Music & Worship Committee **Advent Readers/Candle Lighters**



Believe it or not, Advent is right around the corner! We are seeking individuals, families, or friends who are willing to read the Advent Reading and light the candles for one of the four Sunday morning services in Advent (Nov. 30, Dec. 7, 14, 21) or the evening Christmas Eve service. Contact Lila Sedlak (412-672-6820).

Member Care & Outreach Committee

Thank you to everyone who continues to host or provide snacks for **Coffee Connection** every Sunday! Please help keep this weekly time of fellowship going. There is a sign-up sheet on the coffee table if you'd be willing to help on a Sunday. Select your date & what you're willing to help with. If you have questions, please talk with Lila Sedlak (412-672-6820) or Amy Gida (412-607-8430).

Property Committee

If you are willing to help with **Lawn Care Donations**, please use one of the pew envelopes or mail your donation to the church and designate it for "Lawn Care". Thank you so much for helping us keep the church's lawn and grounds looking nice.



FUNdraising Committee



Our Fall Festival is here! Plans include:

- Assorted Crafters and Vendors
- Huge Basket Raffle
- Flea Market
- Bake Sale and Home-Baked Desserts
- Delicious Foods to Eat-In or Take-Out
- Kid's Santa Shop
- Free** Photos with Santa 11:30-1:00
- Crafts for Kids 10:00-1:00

Contact Keith Eremic (412-445-8385) if you are able to help.

Share Info About Our Fall Festival

Help get the word out by sharing this date with your family & friends and invite them to attend. Share the flyer when you see it on Facebook. Post the flyer at work or in your apartment building. Flyers are available at the church entrance or contact the office.

Basket Raffle Donations

One of the highlights of our Fall Festival is the Basket Raffle! To make this a success, we need raffle basket donations. Be creative & make a basket that is fun, practical, or unique! Please bring raffle baskets to the church on Fri Nov. 7 from 3:00-6:00 using the James Street (back door) entrance. To turn in your basket prior to Nov. 7, please call the church office.



Fall Festival Desserts/ Baked Goods



We need your scrumptious baked goods for our Bake Sale! Everyone luv's Linway's home-baked desserts! Bring your delicious goodies to the church the morning of Nov. 8 by 9:30a.m. so they

will be ready for the Bake Sale. If you bring them earlier than Saturday, please label them "Fall Festival Bake Sale". Contact Sandi Szmuc (412-719-2926) with any questions.



Fall Festival's Santa Shop

Reasonably priced items will be available for children to purchase as Christmas gifts for family, friends, teachers, & even pets! Our Santa Shop promotes the joy of giving, so children purchase items for others instead of themselves. Our elves assist the kids as they shop & will wrap their presents! The Christian Ed Committee thanks everyone who donated items for Santa Shop!

Free Digital Photos With Santa or you may purchase a printed photo for \$2.

Fall Festival Flea Market is returning, however, **no additional items for the flea market are being accepted.** Thank you in advance for respecting this request.

Other Fundraisers!

Sarris Candy is back! Available after Sunday services or by contacting the church office. \$2 for Candy Bars (Milk Chocolate, Almond, Peanut Butter, or Crisp Rice flavors) and \$3 for 2 Choco-covered Pretzel Rods.

Gift Card Fundraiser: Restaurant & retail gift cards are available to purchase using the order form included with this newsletter. The church receives a percent of the value of the purchased gift cards. Order forms are **due by Nov. 16.** Gift cards will be here by Sun, Nov. 23 in time for Black Friday shopping. They also make great gifts!

Pepperoni Roll's – Coming soon!

Order delicious, fresh Sunseri Pepperoni Rolls from the Strip District of Pittsburgh for \$10 each. Order forms will be available soon. Orders are **due by Dec. 1.** Pick-up will be at the church on Thurs, Dec. 11.

Deacons

Next Deacon Meeting: Tentatively scheduled for Sun., Nov. 2 at 11:45 a.m. in the Friendly Fellowship Room.

Thank you to everyone who contributed towards our treat boxes for our college students and military personnel.



Decorating for Christmas!

Tentatively set for **Nov. 23** after the 10:30 service. Extra hands will be welcome when its time to decorate. Please consider helping. Many hands make light work!

Music Ministry



Chancel Choir: The Linway Chancel Choir practices on Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. New choir members are always welcome to sing joyfully to the Lord. Please use the West Door (near the grand piano). If you have any questions, please talk with George Hawkins 412-414-3092.

Christian Education Committee

The Chosen Adult Bible Study **Every Wednesday Evening** **6:00pm Episode Viewing**

7:15pm Bible Study/Episode Discussion

Please use James St.(back door) entrance
You may watch each week's episode at the church Wed. evenings or stream it at home on The Chosen app, CW, or Prime Video. We've had a handful of folks coming to our watch party and 12-15 attending the Bible study/discussion. There is a Linway team who takes turns leading this study. For more information, please contact Kris Daugherty at 412-378-6032.

Sunday School Helpers Needed

Children's Sunday School will continue to be offered every Sunday during the 10:30 Service. Please contact Jaime Ruffing

(412-302-6241) if you would be able to help as a 2nd adult in the classroom. Not to teach, just to be there.

Kid's Club Upcoming Dates: **Wed, Nov. 12 & 19 6:00pm to 7:00pm**

We'll have a Bible lesson, craft, game, snack, and music for kids age 5 through 6th grade. Invite a friend! Please share info about this free program with other families. Parents do not need to be a member of Linway to participate.

Please contact the church office for registration forms. Children coming with someone who is not their parent or guardian must have these forms completed/signed in advance.



Children's Community Trick or Treat

Thank You to those who helped with or gave a donation to our Trick or Treat on Sun, Oct 19. We had **90 children** and their families participate! Due to the weather, activities were held in our Social Hall. Besides receiving treats, there were different activity stations for the kids to do: color a wooden pumpkin, make a book mark, guess the number of candies in a jar, get a temporary tattoo, play cornhole or ping pong toss, & watch the dinosaur train.

Presentation of Bibles to Our Youth

In keeping with our tradition, Bibles were presented to the following children Oct. 5: Lohla Dinkins, Tommy Edwards, Kimber Hillgartner, Louie Humberston, Tony Myers, Brady Pekarick, Jacquelyn Ruffing, and Ariella Thornton. We ask for the Lord's blessings upon these young people as they read their own copy of His Word and grow their faith.

Bless a Child with a Shoebox Gift!

Operation Christmas Child:

Return Your Box by Nov. 16

It's time again to fill shoeboxes for needy children all over the world. Each box is a tangible expression of God's love and brings the Good News of Jesus Christ. Children receiving a box are also given the opportunity to participate in a discipleship program where they learn about God's love through Bible stories. **There are many options in which you may help:**

1. FILL A BOX: Take an empty box from the sanctuary home with you, fill with your choice of appropriate items for the age group you select, and return the filled box. There are detailed instructions on how to fill your box. **All boxes need to be returned to Linway by Sun., Nov. 16.**

Please place the \$10.00 shipping fee in the church offering box instead of placing inside your shoebox. Use a pew envelope or mail to the church and indicate it is for "Shoeboxes".

2. MONETARY DONATION: Don't really want to shop, but still want to help? Your donation will be sent to Samaritans Purse and used to buy items for shoeboxes or to help with the shoebox shipping costs.

3. DONATE AN ITEM: Want to just donate an item or two rather than fill an entire shoebox? Take a post-it note from our "Wish Board" in the front of the Sanctuary, purchase the item listed on the post-it, & then place the item in the "Wish Board Box". We'll then take the donated items and fill more shoeboxes!

3. BUILD A SHOEBOX ONLINE: Samaritan's Purse will pack a box based on gift selections you make. Cost is \$30 per box. Use this link to get started:
www.samaritanspurse.org/occ

4. PRAYER: Pray that each one of our shoeboxes from Linway makes a difference



in a child's life and helps them to develop a relationship with our Lord.

Women's Breakfast

The first Monday of the month, the women of Linway get together for breakfast at 10:00 a.m. at North Versailles Eat 'N Park. Any woman from the church is welcome. The next breakfasts are on Nov 3 & Dec 1.

Men's Breakfast

The men are also getting together for breakfast at 9:00 a.m. at North Versailles Eat 'N Park. All men are invited. The next men's breakfast will be Nov 26.

Craft Ladies

The Craft Ladies meet the first and third Tuesday of the month downstairs in the Friendly Fellowship Room at 12:30 p.m. Contact Clara Welty (412-953-7227) or Nancy Waszkiewicz (412-378-9136) with questions.

Linway Preschool

This month our students will be learning about fall, turkeys, Pilgrims, Indians, & also about the importance of family. Students will contribute items for their classroom Thanksgiving Feast before having time off to enjoy the holiday with their families.



Meals on Wheels

The East Allegheny Meals on Wheels operates out of the Linway kitchen 5 days a week to provide meals for their clients. More information on Meals on Wheels is available by calling: 412-327-6908.

Need for Prayer

Please remember the following in our



prayers: Helen Alexander, David A, Erin A, Annie, Kathy B, Patty B, Jordan+Chelsea B, Jeannette Briggs, Dave Brown, Don+Donnie Baker, Chris, Connie, Cheryl D, Nathan E, Frank Fawcett, Betty Frommell, Bev+Barry Harcum, Clare+Sandy Hillgartner, Marlin H, Frank Kordalski Sr, Bill Knight, Amanda L, Cindie M, Rick Morgan, Cindy+Ken McCall, Peg M, Linda & Richard N, Carol Pascarella, Matt R, Renee R, Susan S, Shawn, Laura Shawley, Bill Szmuc, Amanda T, Jen T, Pat V, Scott W, Wanda, Linda Wetzler

Happy Nov. Anniversary!



Tim & Aimee Mitchell

Happy November Birthday!

Shannon Jeffries
T.J. Cornell
Camden Trout
Kaitlyn Gida
Sue Keller



Dorothy Spencer
Scott Gray
Mary Lou Bernhardt
Sandy Hillgartner

Our Sympathy

Our Sympathy is extended to the loved ones of Mrs. Elizabeth "Betty" Brinker, who went home to be with our Lord on Oct 5. Betty was a long-time member of Linway and also a member of Broadway Presbyterian Church. Her funeral service was conducted by Pastor Jakob at Forgie-Snyder Funeral Home on October 10.



*May God grant you
a joyous and
blessed Thanksgiving!*

Margaret Dennis Scholarship

Rev. Eric Dennis has announced that he has established a permanent scholarship for Music Majors in his beloved wife's name at Grove City College. The Margaret L. (Stinson) Dennis Scholarship is a fitting tribute to honor Margaret's legacy in Music Performance and Education. The scholarship will assist future music major students with the cost of preparing for a lifetime of sharing the joy and love of music with future generations.

Rise Against Hunger

Volunteers Needed!

St. John's Church is holding a Rise Against Hunger event on
Sat, Nov. 15th
9:30-12:30



Please consider joining the several folks from Linway who plan to help! Volunteers will be scooping & measuring beans, rice, & other dried foods, packaging them into bags, & boxing into meal kits.

To help, please complete this form & place in offering or mail to Linway by Nov 9.

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Please note if you would need a task that allows you to sit for most of the event so you are assigned a work station that best meets your physical needs:

_____ I need to sit for most of the event.
_____ I need to sit only occasionally.
_____ I can stand & walk for the event.

If you would like to help by making a monetary donation, please place it in the offering & mark it: "Rise Against Hunger". Linway will then combine the donations & give 1 check to St. John's to help this effort.



Linway Church's Community

Fall Festival

Sat., November 8, 2025
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

FAMILY FUN + FOOD + FELLOWSHIP

Come for Lunch: Eat-In or Take-Out!

Flea Market!

Crafts & Vendors!

Huge Basket Raffle!

Home-Baked Desserts!

Activities For Kids:

Santa Shop - kids can shop & have items gift-wrapped

Photos with Santa 11:30-1:00

Crafts for Kids 10:00-1:00

LINWAY UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

600 Lincoln Highway (Route 30), North Versailles, PA 15137 412-824-3555

Website: www.LinwayChurch.org Facebook: [LinwayChurch](https://www.facebook.com/LinwayChurch)

Dec 2025 Pepperoni Roll Fundraiser

If you would like to order, please complete this order form & return to the church office **by Monday, Dec. 1.**

Sunseri's Pepperoni Rolls \$10.00 each

Two-Pound Monster Pepperoni Roll: Pepperoni and Mozzarella Provolone 50/50 Blend

Atomic Pepperoni Roll: Pepperoni, Mozzarella Provolone 50/50 Blend, with Sunseri's Legendary Dipping Peppers (Sweet Cubanelle Peppers, Hot Banana Peppers, Jalapeno Peppers), Prosciutto tid-bits, Portabella Mushrooms, and Roma Tomatoes.

WILL BE FRESH AND READY TO SERVE! Stays fresh 4-5 days in refrigerator in plastic bag. They can be frozen & re-heated in oven. Thaw and then bake 400 degrees for 15 minutes.

Pick-up Thursday, Dec. 11 4:30-7:00 p.m. in the Linway Kitchen using the James Street entrance.

Name: _____

Phone: _____

_____ # Monster Rolls @ \$10 = _____

_____ # Atomic Rolls @ \$10 = _____

Total Amount Due = _____

*A fundraiser for Linway Church.
Thanks for ordering!*

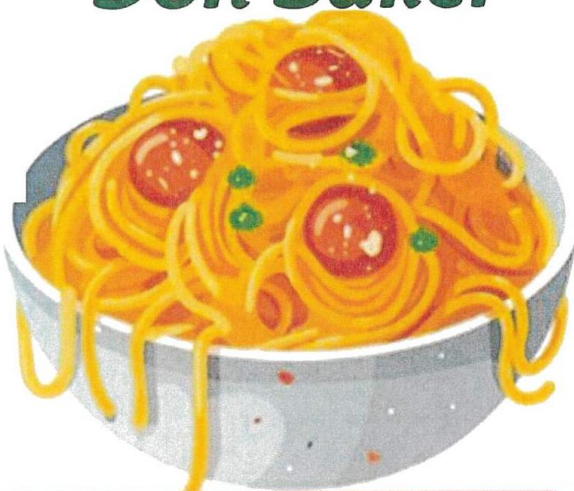
SPAGHETTI

Fundraiser

**All Proceeds Benefit
Don Baker**



**Fight Against
Lung Cancer!**



Adults

\$15

(\$20 at
door)

Kids

Under 12

\$10

**Saturday
November 15, 2025**

**Linway Church
600 Lincoln Highway, North Versailles
2:00 to 7:00**

Dinner Includes: spaghetti & meatballs, salad, bread, pop/water

Tickets

Available at:

Pasquale's Pizzeria
In Wilmerding
&
Linway Church:
-After Sun Services
-At Fall Festival
-In Church Office

Dine-In or Take-Out

Also Available:

Baked Goods
&
Raffle/Auction

**Organized by
Pasquale's Pizzeria
in Wilmerding**

**To Help or Donate,
Please Contact
Michelle at
412-465-4484**

The Linway News

Linway United Presbyterian Church
600 Lincoln Highway
North Versailles, Pa 15137
(412) 824-3555 www.LinwayChurch.org

Church Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday 9:00-3:00; Fri 9:00-Noon

Please use our East Entrance to
visit the office during the week.

Sunday Morning Worship:

9:15 a.m.-Contemporary Service
10:30 a.m. Traditional Service

Church Staff:

Pastor Jakob Harmon, Student Pastor
Email: Pastor.Harmon@Linwaychurch.org

Leanne Cornell, Church Office Manager
Email: contact@linwaychurch.org

Christine Stewart, Financial Secretary
Email: financial@linwaychurch.org

George Hawkins, Organist/Choir Director

Deadline for newsletter information is the
Sunday before the last Sunday of the month.

© License CCLI#:1761256