



The Bell

December, 2023

Monthly Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

THOUGHTS FOR ADVENT

God's blessings and welcome to the new church calendar year. Advent changes the preaching focus. We will be going from the gospel of Matthew, and switching to the gospel of Mark with the gospel of John thrown in for some extra excitement.

Advent is a celebration of our anticipation of God entering into history through Jesus Christ. The first two weeks: hope and peace - remembering what God told us through the prophets, and how God broke into our history. The second two weeks: joy and love - the joy of Mary being told she was chosen by God, and the love God showed Mary, and Joseph, and shows us, daily.

As our new calendar year begins, we await the coming of Jesus Christ with hope and anticipation for what God will tell us this year. Please join us on our journey this year to Bethlehem and seeing the Christ child, along with the shepherds. During advent, church service is at our normal 10:15 A.M. time. On Christmas Eve morning, we will have an ecumenical church service at Trinity Methodist Church at 9:30 A.M. Please join us. Then we will have our normal Christmas Eve candle light service at 4:30 P.M. As a great addition to our Christmas events, Christmas will culminate with a Christmas Day brunch in Fellowship Hall, sponsored by Agnes' Table. All are invited from the community to come and eat. Anyone can volunteer to help or just come and enjoy fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Chippewa Falls and partake of a great meal.

God bless you and your family at this most joyous time of year. We hope to see you soon to celebrate God's breaking into human history. Hallelujah!!

Ed

DINNER CHURCH MOVES TO TRINITY

The regular first-Wednesday-of-the-month supper will be held at Trinity United Methodist Church where we will celebrate the holidays with dinner church. The potluck supper will begin at 5:00 on December 6 and all are welcome.

PLAN YOUR HOLIDAY DECORATING

It's not too late to order your poinsettias for Christmas. As we have done in the past, the plants will decorate the chancel on Christmas Eve and Christmas morning and then be available for the donors to take home to enjoy through the holidays. The poinsettia order form appears in this month's Bell.

SHOPPING FOR OTHERS

While you are shopping for your own holiday cooking and baking, consider adding the things on this year's Reverse Advent Calendar to your list. The revised list appears in this month's Bell and is also at the Welcome Desk in the Narthex.

HAM LOAF DINNER DEEMED A SUCCESS

Our fall ham loaf supper was a success with 117 dinners being served by the Presbyterian Women. Just over \$1300 was raised by this event. It was so popular, diners were asking for another supper in the spring.

This year's dinner included a table filled with homemade baked goods and candy, similar to that from bazaars in the past.

FPC SCHEDULES CHRISTMAS SERVICES

The traditional Christmas Eve service is scheduled to begin at 4:30 on Sunday December 24. Pastor Ed will be speaking that day. The service will include traditional scriptures, holiday music, communion, candles and blessing of the food for the Food Pantry.

Since Christmas Eve morning falls on Sunday this year, there will be a joint Methodist-Presbyterian service at Trinity United Methodist Church held by Rev. Eddie Crise and Ed Williams. This service will begin at 9:30 AM. The Methodists also plan their regular Christmas Eve services at 4:00 and 8:00.

On Christmas morning, Agnes' Table will host a brunch in Fellowship Hall. The community will be invited.

FPC TO ELECT NEW LEADERS

The regular congregational meeting will be held on December 10 immediately following service.

The purpose of the meeting will be to elect leaders for 2024. The slate of candidates includes Elders Bonnie Gullickson, Barb Shorrel and Rich Koepke, Deacons Margi Kohl and Corine Boos, Endowment Fund Trustee Chuck Norseng and Financial Review member Rich Koepke.

PRESBYTERY SCHEDULES WORK TRIP

The annual work trip planned by the Presbytery for February will head for Madisonville, Kentucky which was hit by several tornadoes.

If you are interested in assisting with the restoration of this town, please see the form in this month's Bell for more information.

FOOD PANTRY RECEIVES DONATIONS

It seems the holidays bring out the best in people and this year is no different.

The employees of our neighbor, Family Fare, donated three shopping carts filled to over-flowing to the Food Pantry. This was part of their holiday employee party.

In addition an anonymous donor gave Family Fare \$1000 to be used to provide Thanksgiving dinners to be given by our Food Pantry. The dinners fed 20 needy families and provided a turkey and all the fixings for a festive holiday supper.

FPC TO INSTALL ED WILLIAMS

Pastor Ed Williams has been with us for almost a year without officially being installed as our pastor but that is about to change.

As a Commissioned Ruling Elder, Ed doesn't really have to be "installed" since that was taken care of by the Presbytery last spring when he received his commission. However, the installation is something we want to do to show our appreciation of what he is doing for us.

The service will take place on Saturday, December 9 in the sanctuary at 11 AM and is in the process of being planned by the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery. The service, which will include a sermon by Rev. Ken Ribe, will be followed by a light lunch in Fellowship Hall.

Please plan to join members of the Presbytery in officially "welcoming" Ed to our church.

FROM THE MISSION TEAM...

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE PEACE AND GLOBAL WITNESS OFFERING: Thank you for your generous contributions totaling \$395 to the Peace and Global Witness Offering. We gave 25% of that offering (\$98.75) to the Family Support Center in Chippewa Falls. The balance was sent to the Presbytery of Northern Waters to be used for programs of the PC(USA).

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR BENEFITS OUR FOOD PANTRY: During Advent season we will again encourage you to participate in purchasing food for our food pantry. The idea is to purchase one food item per day from the list of items needed by our food pantry. Each household who uses our food pantry receives one grocery sack (two for larger families) with the items on our list. Once you have purchased all the items on the list (yes, you may complete this at any time during Advent), bring it to the church and place it on the steps on the pulpit side of the chancel leading to the communion table. Bags are available on a limited basis. The list is available at the reception desk and in this month's Bell.

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING TAKEN DURING ADVENT: Each year during Advent we collect the Christmas Joy offering. How is your gift to this offering used?

- 1) It provides financial assistance through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions to current and retired church workers and their families who are experiencing challenging circumstances.
- 2) It aids students attending Presbyterian-related schools and colleges: the Menaul School in Albuquerque, NM; the Presbyterian Pan American School in Kingsville, TX; and Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, AL.

Please give to this special offering that supports past, present and future church leaders.

NOISY SUNDAY—DECEMBER 31: Our Noisy Sunday contribution will be added to the Carelink contributions in January.

COMING IN JANUARY: We will keep the Christmas tree in the sanctuary during the month of January. This will be our centerpiece for collecting contributions to Carelink. Carelink provides emergency gas cards to persons who may need gas to get to doctor's appointments, job interviews, or other necessary travel. They have strict requirements and recipients can only apply every 6 months. More about this in the January Bell.



Reverse Advent Calendar

Each day add an item to a box or bag.

On Christmas Eve bring the bag or box to church to be blessed and given to the food pantry.

- December 1-box of cereal
- December 2-peanut butter
- December 3-cookies
- December 4-boxed potatoes
- December 5-macaroni and cheese
- December 6-cans of pears
- December 7-canned tomatoes (diced)
- December 8-canned tuna
- December 9-bag of chips
- December 10-can of Beef Ravioli
- December 11-canned fruit cocktail
- December 12-peaches
- December 13-canned chicken
- December 14-box of crackers
- December 15-package of rice
- December 16-can of green beans
- December 17-package of pasta
- December 18-spaghetti sauce
- December 19-can of chicken noodle soup
- December 20-can of tomato soup
- December 21-can of corn
- December 22-can of beef stew
- December 23-spaghetti noodles
- December 24-3 rolls of toilet paper

POINSETTIAS

We are now taking orders for poinsettias that will grace the chancel area this Christmas season. The cost is **\$9.00** per plant. Please fill out the order form. Return to the church office with your payment as soon as possible. Submit your order:

- 1) during office hours (9 to 2:00) Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays)
- 2) by mailing to the church
- 3) or, put order and payment in offering plate on Sunday

(Remember to write "poinsettia" in memo blank on your check.)

The plants may be picked up after the Christmas Eve service. Of the plants not picked up, some will be saved for the following Sunday and others distributed in the community.

I want to purchase (how many) _____ poinsettias for display in our church chancel during the Advent/Christmas weekend.

I would like designation(s) in the church bulletin to read:

In Memory of:

1) _____

2) _____

In Appreciation for:

1) _____

2) _____

In Celebration of:

1) _____

2) _____

(other title) _____:

1) _____

2) _____

From:

Return to:	First Presbyterian Church	Phone: 723-5717	Amount Paid \$ _____
	130 West Central Street		CK#
	Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin 54729-2345		Cash

Please Note the Change of Dates!

Presbytery of Northern Waters
Madisonville, Kentucky Disaster Assistance Work Trip
February 17 - 25, 2024



Why Volunteer to Assist the Madisonville Area? Last year Kentucky was hit by multiple large and devastating tornadoes. In the past, we've usually dealt primarily with water damage repair. Whole towns were destroyed by wind surrounding Madisonville and are in need of total rebuilding. We will be doing new builds this year.

Requirements: Must be at least 16 years old, be in good health, and have health insurance. Those under 18 years old must be accompanied by an adult.

Abilities: Experience is helpful but not necessary! Experience and/or a willingness to learn the following are needed: carpentry, construction, drywall, flooring, painting, siding, gutting, and roofing.

Accommodations and Transportation: We will be staying at First Christian Church of Madisonville. We will be provided with bunk beds or cots, a shower trailer, and a kitchen. RV hook ups are available at nearby campgrounds. Sleeping bags, linens, and towels will be needed. The church can accommodate a maximum of 15 volunteers, so please register soon! We will carpool down and back. The trip will take two days each way with an overnight stop at a hotel.

Cost: The total cost is approximately \$300 per person. A non-refundable deposit of \$125 per person should be included with your registration. We will ask the Presbytery of Northern Waters churches for contributions to further lower costs.

Registration and Deposit Directions: Please submit your registration form and a check payable to Presbytery of Northern Waters at 2501 Woodland Ave, Duluth, MN 55803. Please include on the memo line: Presbytery Mission Trip 2024. Registration is due by December 31, 2023.

Contacts: If you have any questions, please call Rev. Richard Blood at 218-343-4850, or Rev. Jim Deters at 720-530-1073. We will meet in mid-January for a pre-trip orientation session.



2024 PDA Work Trip Registration Form

Name _____ Deposit _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

E-mail _____