

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF HIGHLAND



THE LARGER VIEW

February 2024

Volume 17 Issue 2

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*Happy
Valentine's
Day*

**"Local Pilgrim" Lent
Devotional**

Spirituality Center

Lenten Study & Practice

SOUPer Bowl Collection

One Great Hour

Ash Wednesday Service

Soup Sale

Per Capita

*First Presbyterian Church
of Highland
8727 Delaware Street
Highland, IN 46322*



Dear All,

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

I have just returned from my trip to Cuba, and what a learning experience it was! I look forward to sharing my experiences and learnings with you over the next several months. I will start with the primary lesson, which is the power of community. While in Cuba I encountered inspiring communities of people who have come together to seek liberation and transformation. All the while, I was reminded of what an inspiring community FPCH is! You came together in my absence to make sure our shared ministry would thrive. And I have blessed assurance that you will do so again in the next couple of weeks as I embark on the exciting journey of marriage, starting with Vima's and my wedding in Puerto Rico on February 11th. Thank you for being such a wonderfully loving community for me, for each other, and for Northwest Indiana!

This coming Sunday you will hear about a process of action, reflection, and new action. This is a process of piety that Jesus practiced and that I witnessed firsthand at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center in Havana. With Jesus as the model, it is also a foundational component of developing theology—of developing ways of better understanding God and God's will for Creation. Lent starts with Ash Wednesday on February 14th, and throughout this holy season we will have our annual Lenten Study and Practice on the following Wednesday evenings. This year we will be exploring liberation theologies.

*The Mission of First Presbyterian Church of Highland
is to be
the HEART, HANDS, and FEET of Jesus Christ*

As the suffering of our world continues to mount at such an alarming speed, it is vitally important that we learn how to study God's Word and put it into practice in ways that liberate and transform. Liberation theologies start with the premise that God pays special attention to those who are suffering most in the world and calls us to act in ways that physically and spiritually relieve that suffering. Each week we will engage in the action of reading God's word and learning from people who come from those communities that are suffering most. Each week we will engage in communal reflection by discussing together. Each week we will consider actions we can take in our own community based on our reflection. I hope that you will consider joining on whichever Wednesday evenings you might have available!

I also hope that you will participate in our other Lenten practices! Our Ash Wednesday service is one of the most meaningful of the year, as it lifts up our own need to repent and seek the liberation of God's grace. Throughout the season we will once again have a Spirituality Center, providing a special place for prayer and other spiritual practices. We of course will also have our weekly Sunday worship services and opportunities for education, fellowship, and mission. Lent is a great time to engage in these activities with deeper intention! As we journey towards the cross with Jesus, let us act, reflect, and act again!

I close with these words from *Psalms* 51:

*Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and put a new and right spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from your presence,
and do not take your holy spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and sustain in me a willing spirit.*

In Christ and with Love,

Rev. Tyler





Trustees

- Jeffery Savage, President of the Trustees, reported that many projects have just finished up. The main project this spring will be the installation of air-conditioning for the sanctuary.
- The AED certifications will expire in March. A training will need to be set up to certify individuals on the AED.
- Rev. Orem and the Session asked about getting a new dishwasher for the kitchen. The present one is not reliable. The Trustees will be investigating this project.

Deacons

- Pam Porter volunteered to be moderator of the Deacons this year.
- One sunshine bag was given out in December.
- The Deacons continue to check and stock the Blessing Box daily, removing perishable and outdated items. Thank you to those persons and to the individual deacons who have contributed donations for the box.
- It was suggested that it would help to have a sign in the ground by the Blessing Box asking that items should only be placed in the box and that they should be non-perishable items only.
- Gladys' Table meals were prepared by Munster High School students and delivered by the Deacons on 12/16/2023. The next meal is scheduled for 1/20/2024.

Sackurday: On 12/30/2023, 40 lunches were prepared and distributed. The next Sackurday will be on 1/27/24.

- The Board of Deacons requested that the congregation elect an additional deacon to help with the workload, and that was done at our annual meeting on January 14, 2024.

Session

- Jean Smith was re-appointed as clerk for 2024.
- Pam Porter was re-appointed as Treasurer for 2024.
- The yearly communion schedule was approved.
- The Clerk's 2023 Statistical report for Presbytery was approved.
- The capital campaign letter was approved and sent out. Our goal is to raise \$8500 to complete the funding of the sanctuary air-conditioning project.



- We discussed goals for 2024. Among those goals were:
 - completing the capital campaign
 - welcoming newcomers
 - getting more youth involved
 - expanding on what we are already doing to draw others to our church
 - having welcome banners and signs
 - advertising our events and projects
 - providing intergenerational activities such as game nights, book reviews, etc.
- In celebration of Pastor Tyler and Vima’s wedding, we decided to have a reception for them after church on April 14th. Volunteers are needed to help coordinate this happy celebration. If you are interested in helping, please contact Jean Smith.



Treasurer’s Report

For the Month of
December 31, 2023

	Month of December	Monthly Budget	Year to Date
Operating Revenue	\$8,266.58	\$10,038.59	\$120,850.62
Operating Expenses	16,641.19	14,862.86	172,130.73
Excess (Deficit)	(\$8,374.61)		(\$51,280.11)



This month we join the Session and Trustees in encouraging you to participate in the capital campaign for the completion of our air conditioning and heating project. After updating the heating in the fellowship hall, we are now ready to have dual air conditioning and heating units installed in the sanctuary! As was written in the letter that went out:

The installation of the units in the sanctuary, will allow us to worship comfortably in the hot summer months and will give us necessary backup heat if anything happens to our aging boiler system. This will improve our collective experience in the sanctuary and will make our space more inviting for those who visit seeking to encounter God and maybe even to find a new Church home!

There is a thermometer in the narthex showing our progress, and we look forward to seeing the mercury rise as we get closer to our goal of \$8,500! Please consider contributing in whatever way you can, putting into practice that spirit of generosity and generosity of spirit!

For capital campaign contributions, please indicate the purpose on checks or envelopes so that they go to the correct account. You can also donate online by selecting "Capital Campaign" on the dropdown menu for donations on our website.



These classes are open to all youth and adults of all ages. Friends are always encouraged to join in as well – you do not have to be a member of this congregation to participate.

- “The Bible in Today’s World” class meets in person on Sunday mornings from 9-10 am, in the upstairs meeting room. We are making our way through the book, “The Difficult Words of Jesus” by Amy-Jill Levine. In class we discuss the Scriptures and essential issues each chapter is based on, and watch a short video by the author to better understand some of Jesus’ most confusing teachings. Contact John Toren or Heather Casiano with any questions.
- The Wednesday evening “BYOB” (Bring Your Own Bible) discussion group meets on Wednesday evenings from 7-8 pm online on Zoom. We will only meet on February 7th for “regular” BYOB, before switching to the annual Lenten Study and Practice on February 21st during the BYOB timeslot. **There will be NO BYOB on Feb. 14, as that is Ash Wednesday.** The link to join the Zoom meetings is emailed out weekly. If you are not on that email list and would like to be, contact Kristen in the church office or Heather Casiano.

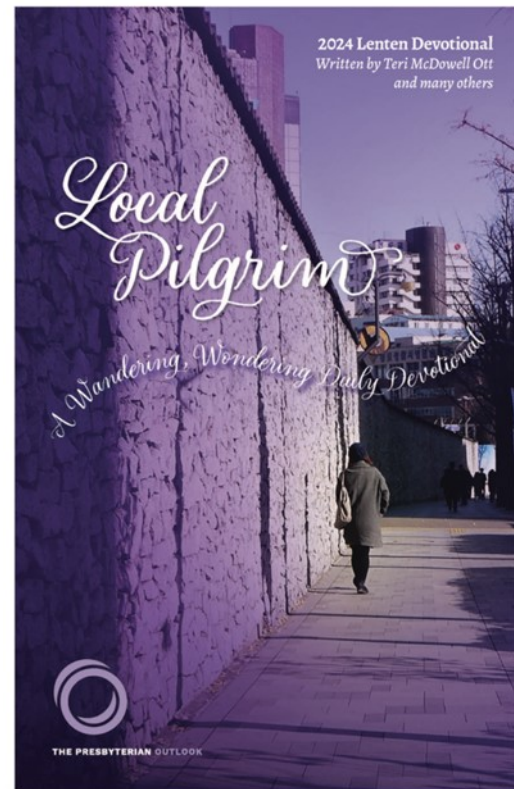


“LOCAL PILGRIM” LENT DEVOTIONAL

This year’s Lent devotional comes to us from The Presbyterian Outlook. The daily devotional, called “Local Pilgrim” invites you to explore and observe new and familiar places in your community. What will God reveal to you when you pause, ponder and reflect? In “*Local Pilgrim*,” a variety of writers explore what God might reveal to us if we intentionally explore our communities. Who do we see? What do we hear? God reveals God’s self when we look.

Lent is the perfect season for a pilgrimage such as this, leading to meaningful contemplation and sacred discoveries. As you make your way through this devotional, you might find yourself inspired to go somewhere new; or somewhere familiar with a notebook in hand; pause, ponder and pray. Each daily reflection, beginning with Ash Wednesday and culminating on Easter Sunday, will combine personal reflection, Scripture and prayer.

This Lent devotional will be emailed out before Ash Wednesday (Feb. 14), and mailed to those who don’t use email. A limited number of printed copies will also be available in the narthex after Ash Wednesday.



Once again, the ministry of Faith Development is putting together a Spirituality Center during Lent. It will be located in the library room across from the church office, available Feb. 18 – April 14. There will be a variety of prayer and reflection stations to go through at your leisure. The stations will be different than last year, so you are invited to check out the Spirituality Center as you’re able to help your journey and reflections through the Lent season. An at-home guide for some Lent spiritual practices will also be available for those not able to come to the church. To request an at-home guide, call the church office or email Heather Casiano at hcasiano@fpchighland.org.

Ministry
of



FAITH DEVELOPMENT

LENTEN



Study and Practice

Beginning Wednesday, Feb. 21, the usual BYOB time will become the annual Lenten Study and Practice with Pastor Tyler. Each Wednesday from Feb. 21 through Mar. 27, we will gather online on Zoom to discuss Lenten themes and learn a spiritual practice. The link for the Zoom meeting is emailed out weekly. Feel free to pass along the Zoom invite to friends and family who would like to join us this Lent! Contact Heather Casiano or Pastor Tyler with any questions.



The annual Souper Bowl of Caring will take place on Sunday, Feb. 11, the same day as the NFL's Super Bowl football game. Once again our Youth Connections participants are tackling hunger so no one needs to go without. Everyone is invited to participate in the SOUPER BOWL by :

- Donating cans of soup or other non-perishable food items
- Making a monetary donation
- Wearing your favorite team's colors to worship – in person and online

Youth Connections will collect donations before and after the worship service on Feb. 11 in the narthex. Donations can also be dropped off at the church office the week before, or you can contact Heather Casiano to arrange to pick up your donation from you. Let's make this a great Souper Bowl for the hungry in our local communities!



If you have an idea for a new small group, class, or other faith development activity, please let us know. We would love to help get a new group formed as there is interest. Groups can meet any day of the week, at the church, in your home, or elsewhere. Share your ideas and we'll help make them happen!



SPECIAL OFFERINGS

75
YEARS



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

SPECIAL OFFERINGS


HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

Around the world, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) — Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People — all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope.

Received during the season of Lent (February 14 – March 31), each gift to OGHS helps to improve the lives of people in these challenging situations. The Offering provides us a way to share God’s love with our neighbors in need. **In fact, OGHS is the single, largest way that Presbyterians come together every year to work for a better world.**



THREE WAYS YOUR MEMBERS CAN GIVE

 *Through your congregation*

 *Text OGHS to 91999 to give*

 *pcusa.org/give-oghs*



MATTHEW 25

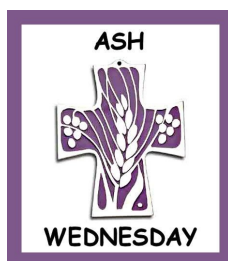


Salvation Army Update

A HUGE Thank You to all the loyal bell ringers that volunteered this year!

We collected \$1,936.74 during the time we rang.

We may be few, but we are mighty!!!



There will be an Ash Wednesday Service
at 7:00 PM



February Liturgists:

- 2/4: Carol Callaway
- 2/11: Jean Smith
- 2/14: Carol Callaway (Ash Wed)
- 2/18: Karen Lounsbury
- 2/25: Gale Churitch



February LiveStreaming

- 2/4: Jamie Ham
- 2/11: Tristan Casiano
- 2/14: Tracy Oprea (Ash Wed)
- 2/18:: Robbie Casiano
- 2/25: Jean Smith



SOUP SALE

There will be a soup sale on the third Sunday of the month after Worship. This month it will be on February 18th.



The Per Capita for 2024 is \$43.62 per member.



The 2024 Pledge Envelopes are available for pick up in the Narthex. Please help us keep costs down in the office by picking up and delivering envelopes for members that are unable to do so.

Thank You!



HELP STOCK OUR PANTRY!

Please pick up a beautifully decorated grocery bag in the narthex to help the church's food pantry. We'd love to have you take a bag home, place some non-perishable food items in the bag, and bring it back to the church to help keep our pantry stocked!



Please continue to place items in the Blessing Box and take items if you are a person in need! Items most commonly donated: canned goods with pull tabs, socks, toilet paper, non-perishable foods, small snacks, toiletries, baby wipes and diapers.

Please do not donate homemade or perishable items.



CHECK OUT THE GARDEN MEMORIAL PATH!

Our faithful trustees recently made sure that our beautiful garden memorial path would continue on in good shape, having the walkway leveled, the foundations improved, and the bricks re-laid. Take a peaceful walk along the path when you have a chance! Thank you, trustees!



The Prayer Shawl Ministry will be meeting on January 23rd.



FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

If you don't already follow First Presbyterian Church of Highland on Facebook and Instagram, please start doing so and sharing our posts with your friends!



- 8 Don Zuke
- 11 Brian Scott
- 16 Tracy Oprea
- 17 Kelsey Helmer
- 20 Philip Parker
- 29 Janet Terpstra



Prayers & CONCERNS



Pray For...

Anthony
 George Nelson
 Brady Vanes
 George Griner
 Guy Hendricks
 Bill and Anettia Holmes
 Daniel Litwicki
 David Markley
 Pat & David Kingen
 Diana and Ray Mendoza
 Janet Orem
 Jeanne Nestor
 Cindy Waltz and Sister
 Andrew Bobalik
 Gale Snyder
 Yvonne Suroviak
 Wendy
 Georgette Sknerski
 Jakob Holden
 Denise Matthys
 Steve & Melinda
 Gary Studer
 Jan Oprea
 Janet Vargo
 Ric Jaeggi
 Florance Cody
 Josephine Kim
 Carol Figley
 Kathy & Chuck Pumnea
 Robin C.
 Nick
 Laura Buono Domsic
 Annie & Mike Windstrup
 Kevin Windstrup
 Ruth Dekker
 Rick Parker

Barbara Morton
 Caroline Studer
 Cary and Jennifer Pearson
 Carol Finley
 Holly Letnich
 Jaden Mendez
 Frank Falzone
 Doug and Sue Matthews
 Robert Urich
 Richard Simmons
 Janet Terpstra
 Glen Nahler
 Tammy
 Tom
 Jana Tolley
 Larry & Bonnie Perryman
 Virginia Marshall
 Delta Rose
 Lena
 Mark
 Paulina Martinez
 Sharon LaFlech
 Winnie Owen
 Charity Lynn
 Chestine
 Shannon
 David Hamblin
 Judy
 Breeanne
 Charlotte Abernethy
 Joe Petersen
 Susan Agbor
 Mom Bechtler
 A Close friend
 Jason Lavalley
 Gloria
 John Shields

- We pray for victims and survivors of gun violence.
- We pray for peace and peacemakers!
- We pray for those undergoing treatment for cancer, the mentally ill and their families, those recuperating, those undergoing treatments and those waiting for transplants.
- We pray for first responders and front-line medical workers
- We pray for the health and safety of our service men and women as we pray for an end to the wars that put them at risk
- We pray for the unemployed, the under employed and the homeless.
- We pray for all children in the world.
- We pray for the work of the Holy Spirit within the life of FPCH and within each of us, that we may indeed be and make disciples each new day.
- We pray for our home-bound loved ones.

In order to keep the prayer list current, we need your input. If there are people you would like to have added or if there is someone who can be taken off the list, please call the Church Office (219-838-6850).