

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF HIGHLAND



THE LARGER VIEW



Volume 17 Issue 1

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Dear All,

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

Happy New Year! I have a good feeling about 2024, for we are in the good hands of our good, good God! At the beginning of each year I find it especially meaningful to reflect on *2 Corinthians 5:17*, which reads: "So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; look, new things have come into being!" We are certainly in Christ, loved ones, and so we are new creations every blessed day. With all that has come before, we still have the opportunity for a fresh start in our quest to be ever more faithful and ever more Christlike.



Throughout this month we will be celebrating the Epiphany, when God revealed God's self in the incarnation to the gentile wise ones. Following their own astrological traditions, they looked to the sky and saw a powerful sign that something world-changing had happened. They were led by the bright star to Bethlehem, where they found the newborn messiah. There, they offered gifts fit for a king, a god, and a martyr. Even though they were from a far different context, they had wisdom and understanding regarding this child's identity and future. What a remarkable story it is! As we move through the season of Epiphany, we will keep the bright star, front and center as we also seek God's revelation in our lives. The season starts with the star and ends with Jesus shining brightly on the Mount of Transfiguration. With these two illuminated bookends, we will be embodying the theme: **Shining with the Light of Jesus**. In this new year we will seek to be new creations by radiating the light of the love of Christ! In particular, we will seek to do so by offering our own spiritual gifts just as the wise ones offered their gifts.

Board Shorts

Poinsettias

Worship Leaders

Taking Down the Greens

Offering Envelopes

Annual Congregational Meeting

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



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

We will have several opportunities to shine bright together this month! In addition to our usual weekly studies and monthly missions, we will be having our installation of officers and annual meeting on Sunday, January 14th. We will be reminded of our baptisms as we celebrate Jesus' baptism, and we will be reminded of Jesus' ministry of feasting as we share together at our annual meeting luncheon. As we seek to shine together, I ask that you prayerfully consider how you can best use your gifts in service to the Kingdom by joining one of our ministries, volunteering to help out in our worship services, or offering your creative gifts to the worshipful work that we do together. Please let me know if you have questions or ideas about how you can best discern and offer your spiritual gifts!

This month will be a fruitful one for me personally. Each year as part of the terms of call that form the covenant we share together, I am permitted time for study leave. I will be taking that leave from January 19-29. I will be going with the Chicago Religious Leadership Network to Cuba, where I will be learning about human rights work at the Martin Luther King Center. I very much look forward to being able to share what I learn with all of you!

I leave you with these words from *Matthew*:

When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

In Christ and with Love,

Rev. Tyler

≡ let
your
light shine ≡




TRUSTEES

- Furnace installation is complete in Fellowship Hall. K & M will work, as weather and their schedule permits, on the removal of old AC units that aren't operational, and will install new units for the sanctuary in the spring.
- The irrigation system was winterized.
- All necessary permits and licenses have been obtained.
- Boilers have been checked.
- The shed was removed from the south lot.
- Bob Abernathy was thanked for his work as a Trustee this year as he is going off the board.

DEACONS

- Sunshine Bags: One was created and given in November and two are planned for December.
- Prayer Shawl Ministry: Two shawls were blessed on November 26 th.
- Blessing Box: Deacons continue to check and stock the box daily. Funds and donations remain low; however, many items have been generously placed directly into the box. Thank you to those persons and to the individual deacons who have contributed without reimbursement.
- Gladys' Table: Gladys' meals of lasagna, bean salad, garlic bread and cookie bars were prepared and delivered on November 18th. The meal was prepared by Munster High School students and Krissy LaFlech and delivered by deacons. The next meal was December 16th.
- Sackurday: November 25th Sackurday of 44 lunches was prepared and distributed by Lois Fozkos, Pam Porter and Jean Smith.
- Pastor Tyler thanked the Deacons for their perseverance during a difficult year with many changes. The Deacons thanked him for being the moderator these last months.

SESSION

- Fundraisers: The craft sale was a big success and made \$1158.78. We thanked Lee Ann Cheesebrough for all her organizational work as well as her crafts and all those who contributed to the crafts.
- Soup sales are back: We will be having soup sales on 3rd Sundays beginning January 21st.
- The budget for 2024 was approved. The congregation will receive the budget at the annual congregational meeting on January 14th.
- The elders set the installation of officers for January 14th during worship.



- Session will be hosting a meal at the congregational meeting on January 14th. There will be a sign-up sheet in the narthex the next few weeks, and the congregation members will be asked to bring either a salad, side or dessert.
- Session approved Heather Casiano’s contract as Faith Development Coordinator for 2024. The elders and Pastor expressed gratitude for all Heather has done and contributed to our faith development program.
- We worked on a fellowship host schedule for January and February where the members of the ministries of our church would rotate the host/hostess duties.
- Session will be changing our meeting date in 2024 to the 3rd Tuesday of each month, with in-person meetings, and also hybrid. Our first meeting for the year will be on Tuesday, January 16th at 6:30 pm.
- Pastor Tyler thanked all the elders for their service this year. He thanked Elder Bonnie Perryman as she is leaving the Session after serving 6 years. Her service and contributions were acknowledged by all the elders.
- The elders then thanked Pastor Tyler for his ministry, encouragement and faith leadership.



Treasurer’s Report

For the Month of
November 30, 2023

	Month of November	Monthly Budget	Year to Date
Operating Revenue	\$6,869.45	\$10,038.59	\$112,584.90
Operating Expenses	17,094.09	14,862.86	155,489.54
Excess (Deficit)	(\$10,224.64)		(\$42,904.64)



Gifts were given to the Endowment Fund in Memory of:

Don & Phyllis Auld, Don Johnston, Greg Porter and Laura Wisner

These gifts were given by:

Nancy Johnston and Linda Skaggs



ADULT CONNECTIONS

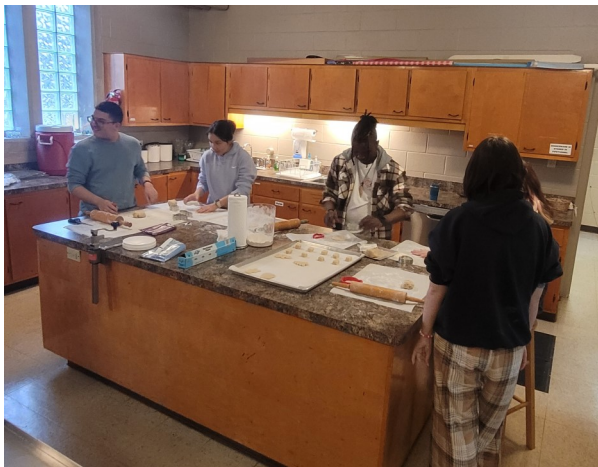
These classes are open to all youth and adults of all ages. Friends are always encouraged to join in as well – you do not have to be a member of this congregation to participate.

- “The Bible in Today’s World” class meets in person on Sunday mornings from 9-10 am, in the upstairs meeting room. They are making their way through the book, “The Difficult Words of Jesus” by Amy-Jill Levine. In class they 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. **This class resumes on January 7th**. 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 read and discuss various Scripture passages and their meaning for each of us. Each week is independent of the other weeks, so you can join in whenever you’re available without missing a lesson. **BYOB will resume on January 10th. There will be NO BYOB on January 24.** 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.



ANNUAL COOKIES AND CAROLING EVENT A REAL TREAT

The Youth Connections group gathered in early December for their annual Cookies and Caroling event. Six youth and young adults baked and decorated several dozen Christmas cookies and arranged them on plates for some of our elderly church friends and members. Then, joined by Gale and Peter Churitch, the group headed out for Christmas caroling and cookie delivery to 6 homes. It was a great time of sharing in sweet treats and sweet fellowship with those who aren't able to gather at the church with the rest of us. Thank you to Peggy Fozkos for being our baking expert in the kitchen, and to Gale and Peter for joining us in singing!





INTERGENERATIONAL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

As part of our morning worship on Dec. 24, we had an “instant” intergenerational Christmas pageant. As narrator Tristan Casiano read the story of Jesus’ birth, a variety of folks from the congregation came forward to play the roles of Mary and Joseph, the animals present for the birth of Jesus, angels, shepherds, and wise persons. It was a lovely, interactive way to share the story of that first Christmas with each other and all those who watched online. Thank you to everyone who participated!



Ministry
of
FAITH DEVELOPMENT

During the four Sundays of Advent in December, we had the opportunity to hold a strip of cloth or yarn while praying, infusing our prayers for peace into the fabric. Week by week, those fabric strips that hold our prayers were woven together on a large circular loom, joining our individual prayers into a larger representation of our communal prayers for peace in our own lives, in the lives of those around us, in our world, and for peace with God. We are so thankful for your prayers and participation. The final woven piece will be on display at the church in various locations for a few weeks, so feel free to come and see it up close. You can gently touch the fibers and trace the circles of prayers to guide you in further prayer and meditation on much-needed peace for all.





Our pantry was emptied in November, and 27 containers of non-perishable food were delivered to the Salvation Army for their food give-away.

Mission rotates every 3 months to deserving and needy larger pantries for their food give-away. We will begin to rebuild our supplies after the holidays, so we can start our rotation in the New Year. If you have an extra can or two, think about bringing it to church on Sunday.



Salvation Army Bell Ringers

A very special thank you to all who volunteered to ring the bell for the Salvation Army!

The first day we raised over \$360.00, and recently we had a check deposited for \$250.00.

Even with our diminished size in the congregation, we have very dedicated folks who always show up to help those less fortunate.

Thank you again, and we will let you know how we did when the totals are in.



THANKSGIVING MEALS

This year, there was such a need for holiday meals! Mission, with the help of the congregation, adopted 8 single family members for the Thanksgiving holiday.

We supplied and delivered the entire meal as they requested. They were vetted through Love, INC., who we work closely with throughout the year. The congregation was very generous, helping to supply the fixins' and Mission supplied the turkeys and hams.



January Liturgists:

- 1/7: Heather Casiano
- 1/14: Tristan Casiano
- 1/21: Robbie Casiano
- 1/28: Renee Williams



January LiveStreaming

- 1/7: Jamie Ham
- 1/14: Robbie Casiano
- 1/21: Jean Smith
- 1/28: Tristan Casiano

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Thank you for the beauty of poinsettias given to decorate the sanctuary this Advent and Christmas season. The poinsettias were given to the glory of God by:

Robert & Charlotte Abernethy, in memory of Ernie Abernethy
Fred & Carol Callaway, in memory of Loved Ones
Peter & Gale Churitch, in honor of their 41st Wedding Anniversary
& in memory of
Peter, Helen, Michael & Wendy Churitch, Janes Adams &
Bob Edeus
Lois Fozkos, in memory of Conrad, Cameron, and Parents
Rodney & Peggy Fozkos, in memory of Loved Ones
Carolyn Ham, in memory of Jim Ham
Rev. Tyler Orem, in memory of Aunt Teresa, Pappy Jamie, Pappy Bill,
Betty McDonald, Thierno
Marjean Reed, in memory of Dr. Ronald R. Reed & Families
Jean Smith, in memory of Bob & Arlene Diekman and Jay Smith
Cheryl Steen, in memory of Dr. Lowell H. Steen



We will be taking down the greens
after Worship on Sunday, January 7th.



A Message from Lois Fozkos

Most of us are probably recovering from the rush of the holidays, when we have been with family, friends, and even people we meet at the store. When I think about family and friends, I think about FPCH—and we certainly spent time together during that holiday rush! I have found that when you belong to FPCH, you enter as a friend and then become part of our family—a caring, loving family, that knows who you are and why you are here.

Recently I asked for some help with coffee hour. Yes, it was on a whim that I asked for a dozen cookies from 10 people. I didn't have a sign up sheet, so I didn't know what to expect. I baked a batch of cookies and had a couple of other things lined up if no one remembered.

Our members not only have wonderful memories, but they are fantastic bakers! We had enough to share our cookies with the youth to take while caroling. They added them to the cookies they had baked, and our coffee hour was shared by more of our members and guests that Sunday.

So don't think that our generosity of spirit and spirit of generosity stop at the sanctuary door; they go on in more ways than you may realize! Fellowship is also a time to share our spirit by sharing stories (not gossip!), hopes, and dreams for peace on this planet. And don't forget the cookies!

May your New Year begin with Peace!

News
from
the
Pews



**The Annual Congregational Meeting
and Luncheon will be on Sunday,
January 14th, after Worship**



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!



thank you!

The FPCH Crafters worked very hard again this year for the 2nd Annual Craft Show Fundraiser. Not only did they participate in the St. James Craft and Vendor Show, but they also sold items after worship on four Sundays.

A huge thank you to our crafters: Charlotte Abernethy, Lee Ann Cheesebrough, Lois Fozkos, Peggy Fozkos, Donna Nelson, Pam Porter and Jean Smith.

They all generously donated their materials, time and talent.

Our sales made \$1158.78 for the church's general fund.

Thank you to everyone who purchased items!



Food Pantry

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!



Blessing Box

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!



- 3 Josh Nelson
- 9 Gale Churitch
- Eric Johnston
- 10 Norma Bauer
- 12 David Hamblin
- 15 Anettia Holmes
- 16 Sandy Buono
- Sharon LaFlech
- 22 Wanda Weston
- 24 Bailey Parker
- 27 Dan Miller
- 31 Peggy Fozkos



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

- 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).