

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF HIGHLAND



Volume 17 Issue 5

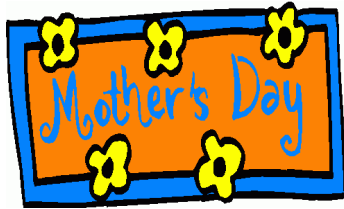
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Dear All,

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

In his letter to the Philippians, Paul writes, *"I thank my God for every remembrance of you, always in every one of my prayers for all of you, praying with joy for your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Jesus Christ."* I have found myself lifting up these words in reference to you all at First Presbyterian Church of Highland many times over the years that I have been blessed to serve alongside you. Never have they been more relevant and heartfelt than now, though! Vima and I are still basking in the love and joy poured into us at the wedding reception hosted by the church. It was simply beautiful! We are aware that it was an immense labor of love enacted by so many of you. You contributed from your strengths and gifts and came together in community in such a profound way! I have witnessed that remarkable dynamic at work many times at FPCH, but this time was extra special. It was breathtaking!



Celebration of Rev. Tyler & Vima's Marriage

Spring Read-A-Long and Book Discussion

Celebrating the Class of 2024

Flower Vouchers

Bins of Hugs

Calling All Crafters

Got Sneakers

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



In the month of May we will have our annual celebration of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit filled the many disciples who were gathered in Jerusalem from all over. One might think a similar event has occurred in Highland, for it is clear that First Presbyterian Church is a Holy Spirit filled community! It is clear in the ways that we work together, with all contributing our God-given gifts. It is clear in the ways that we show love and care for each other. It is clear in the ways that make others feel fully welcome. It is clear in the ways that we pray and worship and serve. This was on display in an exceptional way at the reception, but it is also regularly on display in the daily and weekly rhythms of our life together—in the meals we prepare and serve, in the meetings we have, in the music we sing, in the shawls we create, in the classes and discussions we have, and in the physical and emotional labor we do.

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

And it was on full display in the remarkable success of our capital campaign for air conditioning and heating! Again, I say, "Thank you!" Oh yes, the ways that we embody community are certainly evidence of the Holy Spirit's living, breathing presence with us! We are a Pentecost community indeed! By the way, don't forget to wear red on May 19th!

The month of May will also see our celebration of Jesus' ascension to heaven. The Ascension is the culmination of the Resurrection and thus the final celebration of Eastertide. It provides us with the blessed assurance that Jesus is not only alive but is at the right hand of God interceding for us and looking out for us. Jesus Christ is risen! All the way to heaven! Hallelujah! As we continue experiencing new life in God's garden this Eastertide, let us remember that our ultimate growth is growth into heaven, where we will join our resurrected gardener and all of our resurrected loved ones in glory. Before that beautiful day, though, we have work to do! As the branches of the true vine, we have fruit to bear in this world! So, let us keep branching out to share God's love near and far! Let us remember that we can change the world with new life and love!

I close with the words of *Song of Solomon* that we have come to know so well in our calls to worship this season:

*The flowers appear on the earth;
the time of singing has come,
and the voice of the turtledove
is heard in our land.
The fig tree puts forth its figs,
and the vines are in blossom;
they give forth fragrance.*

In Christ and with Love,

Rev. Tyler





SESSION

- Joys, concerns, and prayers were lifted up for those in our congregation, community, and the world.
- Reports from the various ministries of our church were received.
- Session expressed much thanks to all those who helped in the planning and work for the wedding reception for Pastor Tyler and Vima. Pastor Tyler expressed his gratitude for the love shown to them by our congregation.
- Session approved the following schedule for fellowship time after worship.

May 5	Mission	June 2	Deacons
May 12	Shine the Light/Endowment	June 9	Choir
May 19	Faith Development	June 16	Hospitality (outdoor service)
May 26	Worship and Music	June 23	Trustees
		June 30	Stewardship and Finance
- The following dates were approved for outdoor services, weather permitting. They are all on the 3rd Sundays of each month: June 16th, July 21st, August 18th and September 15th. It was decided that we would begin salad sales after worship on the 3rd Sundays following worship beginning on May 19th. The money raised goes toward the General Fund.
- The capital campaign for new sanctuary air-conditioning has gone very well. We have raised approximately \$10,727 of the \$13,500 additional money needed. Thanks to all who supported this to help us be more comfortable in the hot summer months!

TRUSTEES

- The trustees continue to work on many routine projects.
- Work on the air conditioning for the sanctuary will begin in late April.
- The voting machines will be delivered on May 6 for the voting that will take place on May 7. Our church is a polling location.
- The Trustees will be working on outdoor projects including repair/repainting of the Blessing Box, seeding the lot where the shed was located, adding more dirt in the garden and repair/replacement of the sign for our church.

DEACONS

- The Deacons continue to respond to the needs of their clusters.
- The Deacons check and stock the Blessing Box daily, removing perishable and outdated items.
- Gladys' Table meals were prepared and delivered on 3/16/24. Meals were prepared by Krissy LaFlech and team and delivered to the homebound by the Deacons.
- Sackurday lunches were prepared on 3/30/24 by Kelly LaFlech and team. Forty lunches were prepared and distributed to the community.
- The clusters have been redistributed. The Deacons will be contacting members of their clusters.
- Several prayer shawls are available, ready for distribution.

WEDDING RECEPTION AND CELEBRATION FOR PASTOR TYLER AND VIMA

Rev. Tyler Orem and Min. Vima Couvertier Cruz were united in marriage in Puerto Rico on February 11, 2024. On Sunday April 14th, we held a reception for them. It was a great celebration of their love and commitment and a joyous occasion for our whole church family. We wish them many blessings as they begin their life together.

Special thanks to Charlotte & Bob Abernethy, Piper Booth, Carol Callaway, Gale Churitch, Jesse, Heather, Robbie & Tristan Casiano, Lois Fozkos, Peggy Fozkos, Suzanne Gruoner, Janet Terpstra & the choir, Carolyn Ham, Karen Lounsbury, Rena & Jerry Martinez, Melissa Melendez, Tracy Oprea, Bonnie Perryman, Tom & Pam Porter, Abdul Savage, Jeff Savage, Jean Smith, Cheryl Steen, John & Judy Toren and Kristen Wilson, (and of course, Pastor Tyler and Vima)!

A prayer shawl was lovingly made by the members of the prayer shawl ministry and blessed during worship with prayer by Heather Casiano.









Treasurer's Report

For the Month of
March 31, 2024

	Month of March	Monthly Budget	Year to Date
Operating Revenue	\$6,255.03	\$10,673.57	\$58,693.09
Operating Expenses	15,080.87	15,505.61	43,737.92
Excess (Deficit)	(\$8,825.84)		\$14,955.17



Gifts were given in the month of April to the Endowment Fund:

In Memory of Andrew Bobalik, by Linda Skaggs

In Honor of Tyler and Vima's Marriage, by Fred & Carol Callaway

**Gifts were given in the month of April to Gladys' Table
in Memory of Sharon LaFlech by:**

Clyde & Patricia Carnett, Nancy Johnston, Lea Ann Kerber, Marjean Reed, and
Linda Skaggs

**A Gift was given in the month of April to the Blessing Box
in Memory of Sharon LaFlech by:**

Linda Skaggs

**Gifts were given in the month of April to Feed the Hungry
in Honor of Bill Holmes' 80th Birthday by:**

Vince & Debbie Catania, Leroy Fassett, Bill & Anettia Holmes, Linda Skaggs,
Jean Smith, Marie Smith, and Cheryl Steen

**A Gift was given in the month of April for Sanctuary Technology in Honor of
Tyler & Vima's Marriage by:**

Marie Smith



Stewardship is...

Submitted by Lee Ann Cheesbrough, adapted from www.archstl.org

The Archdiocese of St. Louis has a comprehensive list of ways to describe stewardship. We thought that sharing some of those descriptions would help to fill out our holistic understanding of stewardship as a way of life. We invite you to reflect on those descriptions that speak most to you.

Stewardship is

Gratitude: Stewardship is living a life of gratitude - taking the time every day to recognize the gifts that God has given and to be grateful for them.

Transformative: Stewardship is transformative. Once we embrace the stewardship message, it changes the way we look at every decision we make. Stewardship becomes a total way of life.

A Love Response: Once we allow God to truly take up residence in our hearts, we become so overwhelmed by God's abundant love for us that we naturally feel the need to join our lives with God and dedicate our time, talent and treasure to carrying out God's work here on earth. Our generosity comes from within and not from any external pressure or reward.

Proportionate Giving: Stewardship calls us to realize that each of us is called to give as God has given to us. We no longer base our giving on what others are giving. We no longer excuse ourselves from giving because we do not see others giving. Rather, we give in proportion to all that God has given to us.

Prayer - Spending Time with God: Stewardship involves spending time with God. Recognizing that every day is a gift from God, we strive to spend some of each day with God, through prayer, worship, communion, scripture reading, meditation and other spiritual activities. During this time, we ask God how to use the gifts given to us by God.

Participation - Sharing Talent: Stewardship involves sharing talent. Recognizing that God has given each individual unique skills and talents so that together we can do the work of Our Lord. We strive to share our own talents and to encourage and welcome others to also use their talents to participate in the mission and ministry of the Church.

Generosity - Giving Treasure: Stewardship involves giving treasure in addition to time and talent. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus challenged us to give as it has been given to us. Aware of our tremendous financial blessings, we strive to give generously to support the building up of God's kingdom. We regularly strive to increase our generosity.

Trust in God: Stewardship is trusting God. We believe that our generous God will always provide for us. None of us will ever have all that we want, but we will always have all that we need.

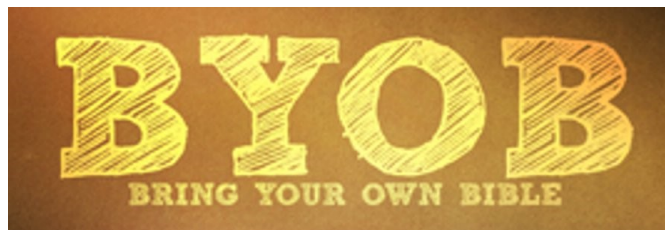
Counter-Cultural: Stewardship is counter-cultural. While society encourages us to continually strive for more and more, stewardship helps us to recognize that we already have more than enough. In fact, we have enough to share.

Discipleship: Stewardship is discipleship. We strive to put God first in all things and to follow where Our Lord might lead.



ADULT CONNECTIONS

“The Bible in Today’s World” class meets in person on Sunday mornings from 9-10 am in the upstairs meeting room. We are finishing up our study of 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. Our last class for this spring will be May 19th, and then will be on break for the summer.



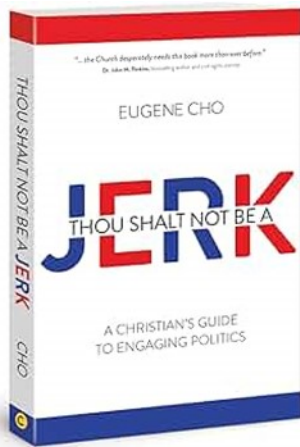
BYOB (Bring Your Own Bible)

The Wednesday evening “BYOB” discussion group is meeting weekly through May 15. BYOB meets online on Zoom from 7-8 pm. We are currently looking at garden-themed Scripture passages, and discerning their messages for us. Each week is independent of the other weeks, so you can join in whenever you’re available without missing a lesson. The link to join the Zoom meetings is emailed out weekly. If you are not on the email list and would like to be, contact Kristen in the church office or Heather Casiano.

BYOB and The Bible in Today’s World classes are open to all youth and adults. Friends are always encouraged to participate as well – you do not have to be a member of this congregation.



SPRING READ-A-LONG AND BOOK DISCUSSION



Faith Development is sponsoring a spring read-a-long. The book is “Thou Shalt Not Be Jerk: A Christian’s Guide to Engaging Politics” by Eugene Cho. This book, published in 2020, and our discussions, will not endorse any candidates or political parties, so no matter where you may find yourself on the vast spectrum of thought, there is room for all voices.

Here is a summary from the publisher, David C Cook: *According to Eugene Cho, Christians should never profess blind loyalty to a party. Any party. But they should engage with politics, because politics inform policies which impact people. Cho encourages readers to remember that hope arrived—not in a politician, system, or great nation—but in the person of Jesus Christ. With determination and heart, Cho urges*

readers to stop vilifying those they disagree with—especially the vulnerable—and asks Christians to follow Jesus and reflect His teachings. In this book that integrates the pastoral, prophetic, practical, and personal, readers will be inspired to stay engaged, have integrity, listen to the hurting, and vote their convictions.

Author Eugene Cho is the founder and visionary of One Day’s Wages, which works to alleviate extreme global poverty; the president and CEO of Bread for the World, a Christian advocacy organization urging U.S. decision makers to do all they can to pursue a world without hunger; and an ordained pastor.

There will be several ways to engage in discussion:

- A private Facebook group for this read-a-long – jump in anytime with comments and questions
- A Zoom discussion on the first half of the book on May 22 at 6:30 pm
- An in-person discussion of the last half of the book on June 12 at 6:30 pm at the church

We have 5 copies of this book at the church that can be checked out to read. They are in the library room across from the church office. Please sign the check-out sheet when you take a book, and sign it back in when you are finished so more people may enjoy the book. “Thou Shalt Not Be A Jerk” is also available in paperback and as an e-book (Kindle) through many retailers and bookstores. If you have any questions, contact Heather Casiano.



CELEBRATING THE CLASS OF 2024!

Congratulations to all who are graduating from high school or higher education this year! Your church family wishes you all the best in your future endeavors. We will be celebrating our graduates on May 19th during worship and fellowship.

Piper Booth, daughter of Melissa Melendez, is graduating with National Technical Honors from Highland High School. She was active throughout her time in high school as part of the swim team (served as team captain senior year), played on the volleyball team and participated as a team manager, and as a manager for the football team. Piper has attended the Area Career Center the last two years in the health science and EMT programs and has been an active member of HOSA (Health Occupations Students of America), attending state leadership conferences. This fall, Piper plans to attend Purdue Northwest to major in nursing. She would like to become a labor and delivery nurse in the future, as well as study reproduction, infertility, and genetics.



Nolan Severson, son of Holly and Eric Severson, is graduating from Highland High School. He plans to attend Ivy Tech Community College in Valparaiso this fall to study Cyber Security. His love for video games and had computers definitely helped him make this decision.

Braden Certa, grandson of Gale and Peter Churitch and son of Shannon Sutton, is graduating from Griffith High School. Braden participated in cross country, track and field, and swim teams. He also was part of the Griffith High School Theater Company, where he was a co-star in “Grease”, and lead roles in “The Play that Went Wrong” and “The Beauty and the Beast.”



Erin Fozkos, granddaughter of Peggy and Rodney Fozkos, graduated from Saline High School in November, 2023. She will pursue her interest in art and art therapy at Michigan State University Residential College in the Arts and Humanities in East Lansing, Michigan, beginning August 2024.

Rose Shulund, daughter of Jeff Savage, is graduating from Purdue Northwest with a Bachelor of Science in Accounting degree. Rose graduated from Forreston High School in 2019.

Lauren Wilson, daughter of Kristen Wilson, is graduating from Jackson College in Jackson, Michigan, with an Associate’s degree in Health Sciences and a certificate in Phlebotomy. She was a member of the Jackson Women’s Soccer Team. Following graduation, Lauren will return home to finish her Respiratory Therapy degree locally and work as a phlebotomist.



Kayla Grennes, granddaughter of Rodney and Peggy Fozkos, is graduating from Purdue University West Lafayette with a Bachelor’s degree in Plant Genetics, Breeding and Biotechnology, a minor in Fermentation Sciences, and a certificate in Applications in Data Science. Active in both her sorority and the School of Agriculture, she was president of the Purdue Ag Week Task Force. She’ll be pursuing a Ph.D. in Applied Plant Sciences and doing a Research Assistantship in the Department of Applied Plant Science in the College of Food, Agricultural, and Natural Resource Sciences at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis-St. Paul.

Worship & Music

Worship Leaders

May Liturgists:

- 5/5: Carol Callaway
- 5/12: Karen Lounsbury
- 5/19: Tracy Oprea
- 5/26: Vima Couvertier Cruz



May LiveStreaming

- 5/5: Tracy Oprea
- 5/12: Jamie Ham
- 5/19: Tristan Casiano
- 5/26: Robbie Casiano



Pentecost Sunday is on May 14th.
Please wear RED to Worship!

Ministry of Mission

 The logo for the Ministry of Mission, which consists of a stylized heart shape. The heart is outlined in yellow and filled with a gradient of pink and red.


Ministry of Mission's 2024 Flower Voucher Sale Has Begun!

The Ministry of Mission is once again selling vouchers for Zandstra's Greenhouse, located at 10202 Kennedy Avenue, Highland, Indiana.

The vouchers are \$17.00 and are worth \$17.00 at Zandstra's just like cash. You can purchase anything from flowers, to veggie plants, to potting soil, to flower pots, etc.

If you are interested in purchasing vouchers, please see any Mission Member or contact Tracy Oprea @ (219) 616-7181.



Ministry of Mission's New News!

To continue to fulfill our Mission Statement, "to be an emissary for Christ's love and compassion for these in need throughout the community, the nation and the world, Mission has recently supported the following organizations:



**PRESBYTERIAN
DISASTER
ASSISTANCE**

OUT OF CHAOS, HOPE

Mission recently donated \$1,000.00 to the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) to support humanitarian assistance to Israel/Palestine. The response efforts encompass a wide array of vital humanitarian interventions, including but not limited to medical supplies, shelter, WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene), food and non-food items and delivering crucial psychosocial support to individuals.

The Ministry of Mission also sent \$500.00 to the PDA to support the denomination's assistance with the Texas Panhandle Fires. The Smokehouse Creek fire is the largest fire on record in Texas, and there are several fires affecting this area; more than a million acres have been scorched. The PDA is working with the Synod of the Sun's Presbyterian Disaster Relief on this response.



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF GREATER
NORTHWEST INDIANA**

Locally, the Ministry of Mission donated \$500.00 to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Northwest Indiana to assist with their program needs.



**WOUNDED WARRIOR
PROJECT®**

Finally, Mission financially supported the Wounded Warrior Project with a monetary donation in the amount of \$200.00. This project is near and dear to so many people, and by our financial support we can be a part of an organization that helps our military personnel heal and find peace.



Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!
We were recently the recipient of a large donation to the pantry.
Our own Bill Holmes turned 80 years old last weekend and requested, in lieu of presents, donations be made to FPCH's pantry.
We thank you for your thoughtfulness. These gifts will help feed many!

GEORGE GRINER CELEBRATES HIS 101ST BIRTHDAY!!



(Linda Skaggs on Face Time with the group)



Don't forget that Tuesday, May 7th, is Election Day.

FPCH will be a voting site for Highland, Precinct #8



BIN OF HUGS

Bring in gently used and clean stuffed animals for Pastor Tyler and Abdul to distribute to migrant families in Chicago.



*calling all
crafters*

Discussions have begun about participating in a Craft Show Fundraiser again this year. The sales will be used for the church's general fund. We will be meeting on Sunday, May 19th, after worship to continue the discussion. All are welcome! Please bring your ideas. We will determine if there is enough interest to proceed.



DOING SOME SPRING CLEANING?

Did you know that your gently worn sneakers/athletic shoes could help us at First Presbyterian of Highland?

Our church is still participating in a fundraiser where there is nothing to buy or sell; all we need is your support and your gently worn, used, or new sneakers! Here's how you can help.

As you clean out your closet, gather as many pairs of sneakers (only athletic shoes, please) that you no longer want; maybe you've out-grown them, they're out of style, or worn out. You can ask your neighbors, kids, grandkids, friends or co-workers to help out. Every pair counts!

The sneakers that we all collect will help raise money to support our programs and projects here at FPCH **AND** will help our environment by keeping sneakers out of landfills.

Blue bins are located inside DOOR D by the office, outside door D and also in the narthex.



The Prayer Shawl Ministry will be meeting on May 28th.



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.



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!



MAY

- 6 Bob Cooke
- 8 Kamri Nixon
- 12 Stan Weston
- 14 Ron Toren
- Ella Severson
- 24 Cindy Vuckovich
- 29 Donna Helmer



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



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!



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
 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
 Nick
 Laura Buono Domsic
 Annie & Mike Windstrup
 Kevin Windstrup
 Ruth Dekker
 Rick Parker
 Gary Everhart
 Gale Osterby
 Bonnie Kern
 Collin & Kathy Stein
 Peter
 Tim

Barbara Morton
 Caroline Studer
 Cary and Jennifer Pearson
 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
 Paulina Martinez
 Winnie Owen
 Charity Lynn
 Chestine
 Shannon
 David Hamblin
 Judy
 Breeanne
 Joe Petersen
 Susan Agbor
 Mom Bechtler
 A Close friend
 Gloria
 John Shields
 John Miramontes
 Colton Bobonick
 Cletus
 The Family of Andrew Bobalik
 Mary
 Victor
 Mary Ellen Edeus

- We pray for the people of Haiti, Palestine, Sudan, and Ukraine.
- 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).