

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

# PRESBYTERIAN CONNECTION

NOVEMBER, DECEMBER 2021

## GREETINGS,

Within all of our hearts is a longing for something more. We intuitively know that we were created for more than we experience in life. Even the most heart-felt, joyous, fulfilling, and memorable moments fade from before us and we are left with longing. I believe that this longing is God-given. It creates within us a desire for deeper connection to God and to life within the Kingdom He has prepared for us.

As we take in the sights and sounds of the world around us, we are aware that there has to be something better... something more... something different. Our original design was for a life of righteousness, peace, and joy, not the corruption, injustice, strife, polarization, sorrow, and despair that prevails around us. We know intuitively that the way things are, the way people exist, the way things run, and the way justice is parceled out is well short of the way things should be. The noise, the chaos, the endless reminders of pettiness and discontent, the scandals, the brooding sense of distrust, and all the mini world crises are enough to leave us weary and disheartened; even as believers in Christ.

The refreshing and energizing thought of a New Kingdom that replaces all of the less-than-ideal realities of our current life is the only remedy to our situation. As believers, looking forward to a New Kingdom provides a hope that re-

news us, and a faith that sustains us. We long for something more and “the more” is firmly rooted in the New Kingdom. Lions and lambs together, nothing to threaten our young ones, spears turned into pruning hooks, prevailing peace, life without tears, mourning and sorrow, life in the fullness of God’s presence and love amid people of every tribe and nation, and rulers all pledging allegiance to the Lamb that was slain all speak to a radically different way of life. The very thought of these realities of the New Kingdom should create a deep sense of yearning in us.

We need to understand that we are right now citizens of this Kingdom and aliens and strangers in this world. The good news is that as strangers, we are not tied to the things we see around us forever. Even now we can by faith fix our gaze upon this New Kingdom. We are not captive to what we observe around us. As the great black preacher, E.V. Hill has preached regarding the horrible reality of the death of Jesus to his followers, “It is Friday but Sunday is coming.” The crucifixion was horrible but it was not the end of the story; resurrection was.

The call to Advent is upon us. Never in my life have I anticipated a church liturgical season more than the season right in front of us.

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Our King Jesus, celebrated in his arrival to our world bringing peace, hope, joy, and life and anticipated in his 2<sup>nd</sup> coming to bring about final redemption of our world, will be the focus of our attention. The one true unchanging Kingdom will take center stage and will hopefully drown out the deteriorating sounds of our current earthly kingdoms that are consumed by chaos.

All of this serves to remind us that we must be intentional about turning our eyes to Jesus as we approach the Advent Season and beyond. With everything that is before us in our personal lives, our church's life, and the unsettledness of our world, we now more than ever must turn to the reality of God's Kingdom that will never fail us.

Blessings,  
Tom

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## COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING DAY DINNER

**At St. Paul Lutheran Church  
Glenwood Ave., Napoleon  
Thursday, November 25, 2021  
11:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m.  
Drive-thru Only**



Donations of pumpkin pies may be dropped off at the church on Wednesday before Thanksgiving. Monetary donations and volunteers are appreciated. Call 419-592-3535 with questions.

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## ADVENT DEVOTIONAL



Advent begins Sunday, November 28, 2021. Pick up your copy of "Daily Reflections for Advent and Christmas" in the back of the sanctuary or south alcove at any time. If you would like one sent to your home, please email [fpc-napoleon@gmail.com](mailto:fpc-napoleon@gmail.com) or call the church office, 419-592-7736. A \$2 donation is appreciated but not necessary.

## SESSION NOTES

Since the last Session meeting in August, there has been a Called Congregational Meeting to make changes to the By-Laws and a Called Session meeting. The congregation approved changing the quorum for Congregational meetings from twenty-five members to ten members and changing the make-up of the Nominating Committee from four to three (one elder and two active members). The Called Session meeting reviewed COVID protocols for church services and approved the purchase of a new laptop computer for the Pastor.

The regular Session meeting was Monday, October 18 via Zoom. The dates for Communion in 2022 were approved. Lynn Yarnell reported on the September Presbytery meeting where a committee is working to help churches establish a vision of their mission. Rev. Dr. Matt Meinke will be installed as General Presbyter in November.

Bibles and devotional materials were donated to St. Paul Methodist Church for missions. According to their sign, 1,277 Bibles were collected. A possible mission outreach for our church is Lifewise Academy. More information will be coming. Christmas Giving Projects this year will be Operation Christmas Child, Christmas Cheer (money donations only), and Project We Care.

Operations Team reported the new sump pump for the elevator shaft has been installed, but there is still a hose for drainage that must be replaced before winter. Session approved authorizing the Team to resolve the drainage problem for the church. There are also two major leaks in the roof, one over the Pastor's lectern and one in the hallway to the left of the chancel. There is a problem finding a roofing company that will work on a tile roof like ours. Fall Clean-Up projects have been assigned.

Nancy Johnston, Clerk

### 2021 SESSION

#### MEMBERS:

DAN BADENHOP

OLGA HALL

JILL BOKERMAN

JACK SCHROEDER

LYNN YARNELL

BETSY MORGAN

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## CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

8:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

# STATISTICS FOR SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER

## Attendance

September 5	30
September 12	35
September 19	31
September 26	33
October 3	29
October 10	31
October 17	29
October 24	30
October 31	30

## Financial

Budgeted expenses/month	\$ 12,635.00
September contributions	\$ 8,955.36
October contributions	\$ 9,145.72

THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR  
SUPPORT OF THE  
CHURCH,  
COMMUNITY,  
AND THE  
WORLD.



2022 Commitment Cards will be mailed to your home soon. Prayerfully consider how you will support the church in the coming year. Session is in the process of planning and making budgetary commitments for next year's programs and your prompt response will be helpful in making these decisions.

## CHRISTMAS JOY

### SPECIAL OFFERINGS

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CHURCH LEADERS—PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE



THE  
CHRISTMAS JOY  
OFFERING

opens doors of opportunity  
which lead to hopeful futures  
for young people  
at Presbyterian-related schools  
and colleges equipping  
communities of color.

CHRISTMAS JOY  
SPECIAL OFFERINGS  
LEADERSHIP, PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

## BIRTHDAYS!

### NOVEMBER

1 Tom Polker  
9 Shirley Reece

### DECEMBER

10 Lisa Keller  
19 Bob Keller  
24 Letty Badenhop



## LIFEWISE ACADEMY

### WHO WE ARE

LifeWise Academy is a Released Time Religious Instruction (RTRI) Program which provides Bible based character education to public school students. Under RTRI laws, students can be released from public school during the school day to attend religious classes, provided the program is off school property, privately funded and parent permitted.

### OUR PHILOSOPHY—WHY WE EXIST

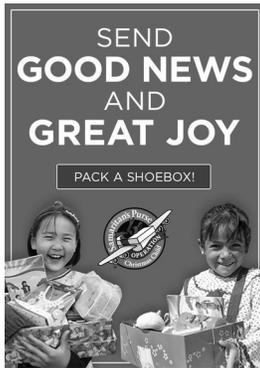
**For the good of Students**—LifeWise Academy serves students by offering practical Bible-based education for the betterment of students' academic performance, character development and mental health. We believe all students can benefit from the message of the Bible and take great care to make all instruction relatable and helpful to those without a church or Christian background.

**For the Good of Public Schools**—LifeWise Academy serves alongside educators by reinforcing and complementing their efforts. In addition to seeing improved behavior and academic performance, public schools with a local RTRI program can attract families who may otherwise opt out of public education for lack of religious instruction. LifeWise Academy is careful in adhering to federal, state, and district policies and flexible in coordinating with school officials, remembering that we are serving them, not vice versa.

**For the Good of Communities**— LifeWise Academy serves communities by providing a practical way for community members to positively impact rising generations. We seek out partnership with like minded individuals and organizations who desire to invest in the future of the community.

**During this holiday season, our church will be adopting LifeWise Academy as a Christmas Blessing to our community. Donations to this Christian outreach may be made in the Sunday offering, or mailed to the church. Mark your contribution "LifeWise".**

# Merry Christmas PROJECTS



**Operation Christmas Child** Shoeboxes are available in the south alcove of the church. Pick up a box or two on Sunday morning or stop in at the church during office hours, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 8:30 -1:00. Gift filled boxes need to be returned to the church by Sunday, November 14, 2021. You can also build a box online at [samaritanspurse.org/buildonline](http://samaritanspurse.org/buildonline).

**Henry County Christmas Cheer** will only be accepting monetary donations this year due to the Covid pandemic. Donations may be put in the Sunday offering or sent to the church Sunday, November 28, 2021. Be sure to mark your envelope "Christmas Cheer".



We will again be participating in **Project We Care 2021**—a program designed to supply needy children and families in our area gifts during this Christmas season. We will use the same process as last year to distribute individuals and families to those of you wishing to participate. The church office will be sending out an email listing families and their children and ages. If you would like to sponsor a child or family, just respond to my email with your request of child, age, or family.

If you would rather make a monetary donation and have someone at the church purchase gifts, checks (made out to the church) may be put in the Sunday offering or mailed to the church. Please make monetary donations by November 28.

Wrapped gifts, with the child's first name and family #, should be returned to the church by Sunday, December 12.

Thank you for participating in this important community project!

## IN OUR PRAYERS



LUTHERAN HOME: Lois Stange

ALPINE VILLAGE: Sherry Joseph, Connie Cobb

FULTON MANOR: Kathy Rubinstein

HOME: Bob Brubaker, April Brown, Sandy Johnson, Dan Badenhop



*Our deepest sympathy is are extended to April and Bruce Brown following the death of their husband and father, Franklin Brown. Frank died on Friday, October 22, 2021 at Fulton Manor. Funeral services were held at First Presbyterian Church on Saturday, October 30, 2021, with Pastor Tom Polker officiating.*



*Our sympathies are extended to Dan and Letty Badenhop following the death of Dan's father, Donald Badenhop, on Saturday, September 18, 2021.*

*Our thoughts and prayers are extended to the family and friends of Janet Baker who died on Saturday, October 2, 2021.*



To Mom's Church Family

Your church was truly a wonderful blessing in our Mother's life. Mom so loved all of her church family! Thank you to Tom and all who helped at her funeral. Your kindness and compassion was wonderful!

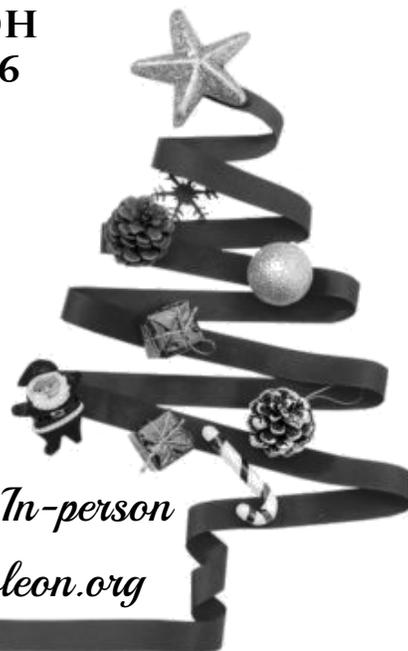
In Christian Love, The Family of Ann Spieth

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH**

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**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
303 WEST WASHINGTON ST.,  
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*10:00 a.m. Worship In-person  
or Online at [fpcnapoleon.org](http://fpcnapoleon.org)*