

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
OF HIGHLAND



# THE LARGER VIEW

JANUARY  
2026

Volume 19 Issue 1

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Dear All,

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

Happy New Year 2026! Happy Epiphany! Those nativity scenes, or crèches, are now complete with the magi having followed the star to Bethlehem—*Oooo, star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright!* When they got there, they were overwhelmed with joy! They entered the house and saw Jesus and Mary. Then they offered those famous gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. “Epiphany” comes from the Greek *epiphaneia*, and in ancient usage it had two very specific meanings: the appearance of the sun as it broke through the dark at dawn and the manifestation of a divine being to a worshiper. Wow! Talk about special words! Talk about powerful meanings! Talk about *words of power!* A star, a faraway sun from another solar system across the universe, appears in the dark above Bethlehem—shining forth so brightly as to attract the attention of astrologer-astronomers in distant lands. It shines so brilliantly, in fact, that these astrologer-astronomers realize that it can only be the result of God’s direct intervention. It can only be the result of God’s *manifestation*—the in-breaking of the God who made the stars into the physical realm of existence.



**Note from Rev. Tyler**

**Session Shorts**

**Christmas Caroling**

**Star Words**

**Poinsettia List**

**Taking Down the Greens**

**2026 Offering Envelopes**

**Prayer List**

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**

I pray that we all will experience epiphanies in 2026! I pray that we all will experience the ways that God enters into our reality and intervenes in our lives. The ways are manifold, and the ways are beautiful! If we but open the eyes of our hearts, we will encounter God shining with the light of the stars everywhere! For, the truth is that God's light is always shining in all places. God's light is always shining upon all Creation. As we seek God's light, let us also seek to *be* God's light for others. Let us shine with the light of love and goodness and kindness.

Vima and I are starting out the new year with loved ones in Puerto Rico. We will ring in 2026 and then, on January 6, we will celebrate *El Día de los Tres Reyes Magos* (Three Kings Day). Vima always tells me that Puerto Rico has the longest (and best!) Christmas in the world, and Three Kings Day is the crowning jewel. We look forward to telling you all about it upon our return! We will try to bring back some warmth as well!

In the meantime, please enjoy the pages of this edition of the Larger View. Enjoy the images of joy from caroling and feasting. Enjoy articles on the life of our congregation. Enjoy learning about opportunities to engage more actively in that life! 2026 is a great year to get involved with your many God-given gifts!

I leave you with these words from *Isaiah*:

*Arise, shine, for your light has come,  
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.  
For darkness shall cover the earth  
and thick darkness the peoples,  
but the Lord will arise upon you,  
and his glory will appear over you.*

In Christ and with Love,

*Rev. Tyler*

Happy  
Epiphany





## SESSION

- The church budget is being finalized. It will be ready for our January meeting and then the congregational meeting on January 25, 2026.
- The congregational meeting on January 25, 2026, will be a church potluck with Session providing the chicken.
- Fundraising: The craft sale made over \$700! Thanks to all who supported this sale! We will have soup sales again on January 18<sup>th</sup> after worship.
- Taking down the greens will be on January 4, 2026, after worship.
- Ordination and Installation of officers will take place on January 11, 2026.
- The Session met with Vimary (Vima) Couvertier Cruz, who has requested to be under care of Session as an inquirer in pursuing ordination in the Presbyterian Church (USA). Her request was approved unanimously. Elder Jean Smith was approved as a liaison between Vima and the Presbytery's Commission on Preparation for Ministry.
- A request for baptism was approved for Ophelia Giglio, daughter of Amber (Farkas) Giglio. The tentative date is February 22, 2026.
- Pastor Tyler thanked all of the elders on Session for their work the past year and gave special recognition to Elders Carol Callaway and Tracy Oprea who are completing six years on Session and will be rotating off the Board. He also thanked Trustee Jeffery Savage who has served faithfully on Trustees for many years and will now be joining Session as an elder next year.

### Fellowship Hosting Schedule for January and February 2026:

Jan 4	Shine the Light/Endowment	Feb 1	Stewardship and Finance
Jan 11	Deacons	Feb 8	Trustees
Jan 18	Worship and Music	Feb 15	Faith Development
Jan 25	Session/Potluck	Feb 22	Mission



## TRUSTEES

President of the Trustees, Jeffery Savage, reported that the Trustees are still working on projects that include winterizing the fans and repairing shingles on the sanctuary roof. The sanctuary doors are also still difficult to open. Anyone coming in those doors needing assistance should knock loudly so the ushers can assist them.

## DEACONS

- Sunshine Bags: A Sunshine bag for Kamri Bean’s baby is being prepared.
- Prayer Shawls: The Prayer Shawl Ministry continues to work diligently to make beautiful comforting shawls for those in need.
- Blessing Box: The Deacons continue to check the box daily.
- Gladys’ Table: The Deacons delivered 12 meals on November 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Sackurdays: Kiwanis prepared 60 meals on November 29<sup>th</sup>.
- Smock Grant: Pastor Tyler Orem was able to replenish, through application, additional funds through the Smock Foundation. The funds will be disbursed at Pastor Tyler Orem and Pam Porter’s discretion.



## Treasurer’s Report

For the Month of  
November 30, 2025

	Month of November	Monthly Budget	Year to Date
Operating Revenue	\$7,767.03	\$9,677.50	\$113,482.98
Operating Expenses	15,580.33	15,141.42	157,595.66
Excess (Deficit)	<b>(\$7,813.30)</b>		<b>(\$44,112.68)</b>



Stewardship  
And Finance

Thank you to everyone who came out and made the Stewardship luncheon a success! It was great to share a meal and some fellowship with everyone. We look forward to more camaraderie in the new year!





## FAITH DEVELOPMENT

### SPREADING HOLIDAY JOY WITH CAROLS

It wasn't quite 12 drummers drumming, but rather 12 Presbyterians singing, on Sunday Dec. 21 for the annual Cookies & Caroling Event. This awesome group visited 4 of our congregation's homebound members and sang Christmas carols to them, spreading Christmas joy and love to all. They also delivered a tray of cookies to each home – Thank you to all who baked and donated the cookies! In addition to holiday fun, the carolers had the privilege of singing "Happy Birthday" to Caroline Studer, who celebrated her 101<sup>st</sup> birthday shortly after Christmas. It was a wonderful day of sharing delicious treats and sweet fellowship with those who aren't able to gather at the church in person anymore. Thank you to everyone who participated, and a special thank you to Faith Development committee for providing a delicious lunch for everyone!





### **STAR WORDS for 2025**

On Epiphany Sunday (January 4), those in person at the worship service are encouraged to select a Star Word. This word is to help guide you with your prayers and meditations throughout the year, and to focus on a particular way God might be working in your life. Star Words are a journey for the year, so you may see some connections and epiphanies to your word right away, or it may be a little while before God starts showing you how the word is appearing in your life. All ages are encouraged to participate.



If you aren't able to attend in person to get a Star Word and would like one, it's not too late! Contact Heather Casiano at [hcasiano@fpchighland.org](mailto:hcasiano@fpchighland.org) or call the church office and leave a message for her that you would like a Star Word, and she will get you one. You can also get a Star Word online by visiting <https://wheelofnames.com/b4f-7sn>. May your Star Word guide you and your relationship with God throughout the year!

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### **WINTER BIBLE STUDY AND DISCUSSION OPPORTUNITIES**

There are two options to join a Bible study or sermon/Scripture discussion group. These opportunities are open to all who are interested, from middle school students to the most mature of adults. You don't have to be a church member to participate, so invite your friends and family to join in the discussions with you.

- “The Bible in Today's World” Bible study group meets on Sunday mornings from 9-10 am at the church. **Class resumes on Jan. 4, 2026.** This group is reading through the book, “A is for Alabaster” by Anna Carter Florence. Each week is independent of the other weeks, so come as you are able. If you need a book or have any questions, contact Heather Casiano.
- “BYOB” (Bring Your Own Bible) discussion group meets on Wednesday evenings from 7-8 pm online using Zoom. **We will resume BYOB on Jan. 7, 2026.** Each week this group takes a look at the scriptures from our Sunday worship services, asking questions, bringing up different perspectives, and hopefully encountering the Holy Spirit in a fresh way. The link for the Zoom meetings is emailed out weekly. You can connect to Zoom with a smart phone, tablet or computer. If you're not familiar with how to use Zoom, or to get on our mailing list, please contact Pastor Tyler or Heather Casiano.



**A gift was given to the Endowment Fund in Memory of Carol Adams by:**

Peter & Gale Churitch

**A gift was given to the Endowment Fund in Honor of John and Judy Toren’s 60th Wedding Anniversary by:**

Peter & Gale Churitch

**A gift was given to the Endowment Fund in Honor of Ron & Cathy Toren’s 50th Wedding Anniversary by:**

Peter & Gale Churitch

**A gift was given to the Endowment Fund in Honor of Jerry Veltman’s 80th Birthday by:**

Peter & Gale Churitch

**A gift was given to the Endowment Fund, in Lieu of Poinsettias, in Memory of Barry McKnight by:**

Shirley McKnight



As we’re all aware, the price of just about everything continues to rise. In an effort to keep the congregation informed, it was decided by the Board of Trustees to publish the amounts of our NIPSCO, water and phone bills in the Larger View monthly. In explanation of the bills, keep in mind that the NIPSCO bill includes gas and electric; the water bill includes two meters for the old sanctuary and the rest of the building; and the phone bill also includes internet service. Hopefully, this explains in part why our budget numbers are what they are. Below are the amounts for December.

	<u>December</u>
NIPSCO	813.98
Water	193.12
Phone	421.41
Maintenance	1,795.00



The Ministry of Mission would like to thank the congregation for their generous support of the Christmas Adopt-a-Family event. This event is near and dear to our hearts and would not have been a success without each one of you.

We are ecstatic to announce that Santa had his work cut out for him in delivering all those wonderful gifts to the children and Mom. Additionally, Mission provided all the groceries needed for both Christmas breakfast and Christmas dinner for the family. Thank you again to everyone that supported this cause!

Mission wishes everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



**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:**

Fred & Carol Callaway, in memory of Loved Ones

Peter & Gale Churitch, in memory of Loved Ones

Lois Fozkos, in memory of Loved Ones

Rodney & Peggy Fozkos, in memory of Loved Ones

Marvin Kohler, in memory of Helen Kohler

Shirley McKnight, in memory of her husband, Barry McKnight

Julia McStravog, in memory of Grahamaantha

Melissa Melendez, in memory of Mary, Gloria, Cassy and Jackie

Marjean Reed, in memory of Dr. Ronald R. Reed; Reed & Maxwell Families

Tyler Orem & Vima Couvertier Cruz, in memory of Grandma Virginia, Sergio Centeno, Dr. David Daniels III, Titi Isabel, Pappy Jamie, Aunt Teresa, and Esther Chishala

Jean Smith, in memory of Jay Smith and Bob & Arlene Diekman

Cheryl Steen, in memory of Dr. Lowell H. Steen and Laura Wisner

In Lieu of Flowers:

Shirley McKnight, in memory of her husband, Barry McKnight

# Worship & Music



We will be taking down the greens after Worship on Sunday, January 4th.

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## Worship Leaders

### January Liturgists:

- 1/4: Jean Smith
- 1/11: Karen Lounsbury
- 1/18: Hunter Balczo
- 1/25: Bonnie Perryman



### January LiveStreaming

- 1/4: Tristan Casiano
- 1/11: Tracy Oprea
- 1/18: Nolan Severson
- 1/25: Jamie Ham

# News from the Pews



The 2026 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!*



The Per Capita for 2026 is \$45.08 per member.



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.



## JANUARY

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



## 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! @firstpchighland



*Prayers*  
& CONCERNS



Anthony  
 Brady Vanes  
 George Griner  
 Guy Hendricks  
 Bill and Anettia Holmes  
 David Markley  
 Pat & David Kingen  
 Diana and Ray Mendoza  
 Janet Orem  
 Cindy Waltz and Sister  
 Yvonne Suroviak  
 Georgette Sknerski  
 Jakob Holden  
 Denise Matthys  
 Jan Oprea  
 Florance Cody  
 Laura Buono Domsic  
 Annie & Mike Windstrup  
 Kevin Windstrup  
 Loved Ones of Ruth Dekker  
 Rick Parker  
 Gary Everhart  
 Ella P.  
 Melissa J  
 Keren, Zuriel & Gedeon  
 Darlene O'Brien  
 Charles  
 Robin  
 Dustin  
 Noreen  
 Tyler Gall  
 Phil  
 David  
 Trina & Scott  
 Joe & Kathy  
 Sue Heth

Barbara Morton  
 Caroline Studer  
 Doug and Sue Matthews  
 Janet Terpstra  
 Glen Nahler  
 Tom  
 Jana Tolley  
 Larry & Bonnie Perryman  
 Delta Rose  
 Winnie Owen  
 David Hamblin  
 Breeanne  
 Mom Bechtler  
 Victor  
 Marian Clayton  
 Luana Sulkowski  
 Katie  
 Rita Stromczek  
 OGB  
 Edna Cruz  
 Jerry & Rena Martinez  
 Betsy  
 Jean  
 Kim  
 George  
 Mary Ellen Edeus  
 Pastor Jane  
 Jessica  
 Nicole  
 Greg  
 Jane & David  
 Flora R  
 Mike Kelly  
 Eunice  
 Lupe  
 Breanne Polan  
 Tammy  
 Alex  
 Ben

- We pray for migrants in this country and across the world.
- We pray for the people of Cuba, Haiti, Jamaica, Palestine, Sudan, and Ukraine.
- We pray for victims and survivors of gun violence.
- We pray for peace and peacemakers!
- We pray for people experiencing chronic physical and mental illness
- 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.

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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).