



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
OF HIGHLAND

# THE LARGER VIEW

Volume 13 Issue 12

December  
2020

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



Dear All,

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

We find ourselves in the season of Advent, the holy observance of expectant hope. During this time, we await the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God and Mary, the Word made flesh. In the beautiful mystery of our faith, we at once await the celebration of the birth of Jesus of Nazareth *and* the second coming of Jesus our King in glory. And so we expectantly hope for a beginning and an end and then a new beginning. This holy observance of expectant hope strikes me as especially significant in the world of right now! In such a difficult season in the history of the world, I imagine that many of us are longing for an end to suffering and a new beginning—not a return to “normal,” but a brand new thing.

Perhaps the most important lesson we can learn from Advent, though, is that there is this season of waiting before the new beginning. And that season of waiting is not always an easy one! For some it is filled with grief and loneliness. For others it is filled with worry and anxiety. For yet others it is filled with disquietude and uncertainty. All of these feelings seem perfectly understandable to me given all that we are coping with in the here and now of 2020! And yet, the mystery of the season of Advent reminds us that these challenging feelings can be held

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

along with and in tension with HOPE! In the fullness of time, Jesus was born to Mary, and in the fullness of time, Jesus will come back!

I recognize that the extraordinary difficulties of life right now are compounded by our need to suspend in-person worship and other gatherings at the church building. Although it is necessary to do so for our collective health, a consequence is that we find ourselves once again observing one of our holiest seasons physically apart from each other. Therefore, I urge all of you to be extra intentional about reaching out to God and to each other. I urge you to create designated times and spaces for prayer and reflection. I urge you to make use of materials sent out or posted by the church. I urge you to dive into the Word like never before. I urge you to join us for virtual studies and virtual fellowship. And I urge you to tune in at 10:30 every Sunday morning and at 7:00 PM Christmas Eve on your computers, phones, or mailed paper. Oh, and as often as you can, sing in the safety of your own homes! Sing the Advent songs you find most meaningful! Sing the Christmas carols that give you the most life! These are the ways that we can practice spiritual togetherness with each other and with God, and so these are the ways that we can keep our hope in this difficult time of waiting!

I close with words from one of those meaningful Advent songs: “O come, Thou Dayspring, from on high, and cheer us by Thy drawing nigh. Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!”

In Christ,

*Rev. Tyler Orem*





This month's *Matthew 25* spotlight shines upon the youth of First Presbyterian Church of Highland! At our most recent Youth Connections meeting, they sought to contribute to our congregational vitality by hanging the greens and preparing the sanctuary for filming worship services in a setting that will bring hope and joy to our worshipers. After doing so, they put together snack packs, wrote cards, and decorated envelopes for the residents of the Hammond City Rescue Mission. In performing these acts of service, they sought to bring joy to those surviving the impacts of systemic poverty. The youth will also be helping out with cooking for December's shelter meal!

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## SESSION SHORTS

Happy holidays everyone  
Your session met on Monday November 23rd

- We discussed stopping in house worship, and ceasing meetings in the building. It does not mean we will not be worshipping, just that we will be doing so at home until conditions improve in regards to the pandemic.
- The hanging of the greens went well. Thank you to all who participated!
- There are some new things coming up. Virtual coffee fellowship will start the first Sunday in December, and Mission is still doing the adopt a family project. Please contact Cheryl Steen for information.
- We learned that we are unable to ring the bells for the Salvation Army this year, so maybe we can either send a donation or drop something into the buckets when we are able to get out.
- We are in need of a list of agencies that provide help for those in need of services unrelated to food so that we can direct people in the right way if they show up in crisis (e.g. housing, clothing, substance use intervention, domestic violence response, etc.).

More will be sent your way by email, social media, mail, the church's website, or your deacon.

In God's Peace,  
*Lois Fozkos*  
Clerk of Session



## TREASURER'S REPORT

For the Month of  
October 31, 2020

	Month of October	Monthly Budget	Year to Date
Operating Revenue	\$7,711.20	\$10,553.00	\$103,334.57
Operating Expenses	12,026.52	13,424.00	117,030.37
Excess (Deficit)	(\$4,315.32)		(\$13,695.80)



### **Gifts given in the month of November to the Endowment Fund include:**

In Memory of: Barb Dye, Mary Howe, Dennis Sheets, Darren Suroviak, Dennis VanKooten

### **This gift was given by the following donor:**

Sandy Buono, Linda Skaggs

### **A Donation was given to the Food Pantry by:**

Barb Morton, Christine Small, Jane Vance

A Donation was given to the Food Pantry in Memory of Mary Howe by Arletta Schaefer

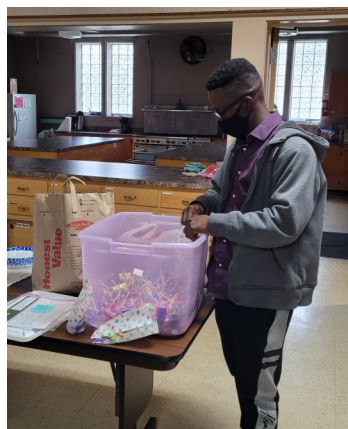


### Youth Connections

**SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, Dec. 12, from 1-3 pm.** Youth Connections will be helping cook the monthly meal that our church delivers to the Hammond City Rescue Mission.

All youth in grades 6-12 are welcome! We will tentatively resume our gathering schedule in January 2021 if Covid conditions allow – watch your email in the new year to stay up to date. Generally, we meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays each month after worship until 1 pm in the Youth Room for a faith lesson, a time of fun and games, and to do a variety of service and mission projects.

THANK YOU to the members of YOUTH CONNECTIONS who helped with Hanging of the Greens on Nov. 22! Not only did the youth help decorate the sanctuary for Advent and Christmas, they also put together treat bags and Christmas cards to be delivered to the Hammond shelter in December. All of this was able to be done safely with masks and distanced from each other – great job Abdul, Robbie, Savannah and Tristan!







### HOLIDAY CONNECTIONS -- ADVENT KITS

Since we will not be able to gather and worship in person during this Advent season due to ongoing challenges from Covid-19 in our communities, we want to provide you with some tools you can use to help guide your Advent observation and practices. Coming soon to your email or your mailbox (if you don't have email) will be a special Advent Kit:

- "Do Not Be Afraid: An Illustrated Devotional" A collection of weekly devotional readings and activities up through Christmas. This is for all ages and can be done individually or as a family/household.
- "An Illustrated Advent Wreath" Instructions and the pieces needed to create a paper Advent wreath complete with 3D paper candles. The pieces of the wreath can be colored in or left black and white, and there are prayers to go along with each of the 5 candles during Advent.

If you don't have a way to print these and would prefer to have a paper copy of either or both, contact Heather Casiano.



**2020 Blessing Box Advent Calendar:** This calendar can be found in this issue of The Larger View. Each day of Advent there is one type of item that is needed for our church's Blessing Box. We are asking you to participate as often as you are able, to collect and donate the listed items. The items can then be placed directly into the Blessing Box, or brought into the church building at entrance D (near the office) from 8-11 am Monday-Thursday. If you are unable to get to the church building and would like to donate, contact Heather Casiano at 575-932-9716 (cell phone) or [hcasiano@fpchighland.org](mailto:hcasiano@fpchighland.org) to arrange for a pickup of your items. And as always, if you are in need of anything from the Blessing Box, please take what you need. These blessings are for everyone whether you are giving or receiving.



# 2020 Blessing Box Advent Calendar

Participate as often as you are able! All donated items can be placed directly in the Blessing Box or brought into the church entrance near the office (Door D), 8-11 am Monday-Thursday. If you cannot get to the church but would like to donate items, contact Heather Casiano to arrange a pick-up of your items, 575-932-9716 (cell phone) or [hcasiano@fpchighland.org](mailto:hcasiano@fpchighland.org).

Thank you for helping our community during this season!

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 Canned soup	30 Deodorant	1 Baby cereal or jars of baby food	2 Toothbrushes & toothpaste	3 Bagged rice or beans	4 Baby diapers – all sizes	5 Cereal/oatmeal
6 Combs & brushes	7 Canned Fruit	8 Lotion and/or Lip Balm	9 Any non-perishable canned foods	10 Toilet paper	11 Canned vegetables	12 Baby wipes
13 Any non-perishable boxed or bagged foods	14 Bars of soap	15 Baby formula	16 Paper towels	17 Canned soup	18 Gloves/mittens	19 Feminine products (pads/tampons)
20 Socks – all sizes needed, kids and adults	21 Scarves/hats	22 Holiday treats (chocolates, candy canes, etc.)	23 Any personal hygiene items	24 Any non-perishable boxed or bagged foods	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS!!	26
27	28	29	30	31		

\*\* All foods must be non-perishable, unexpired and new/unopened. NO PRODUCE. For canned products, tab top openings are preferred.



## ADULT CONNECTIONS

**BYOB (Bring Your Own Bible)**: This group meets online via ZOOM each week on Wednesday evenings from 7-8 pm. In DECEMBER, we will only be meeting on 12/2, 12/9 and 12/16. Then we'll take a break until the new year and resume BYOB on January 6, 2021 (tentatively).

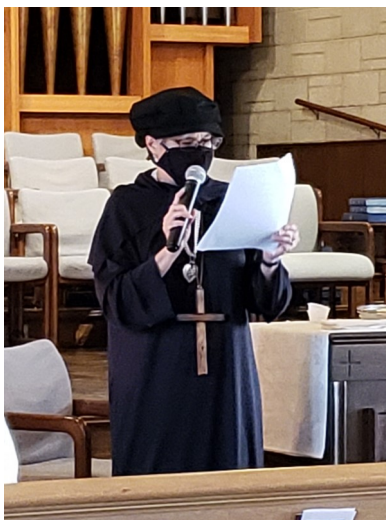
Each week's discussion is based on the Scripture passage(s) from the previous Sunday's worship service and sermon. If you don't have access to a computer, you can also join this study by phone. Each discussion is independent of the others, so you can jump in anytime and not miss anything. If you would like the log-in or call-in information for joining this study, contact Heather Casiano or Pastor Tyler Orem at the church.

If you have questions about any of our **Connections** opportunities or would like the log-in/phone-in information to participate in the Wednesday BYOB group, contact Heather Casiano at [hcasiano@fpchighland.org](mailto:hcasiano@fpchighland.org) or 575-932-9716 (cell phone).

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## Reformation Celebration

Our first ever **Reformation Tailgate Party** took place on Nov. 1! At the end of the worship service that day, "Martin Luther" joined us in the sanctuary to share a bit about Luther's life and work. Thank you to Charlotte Abernethy for her wonderful portrayal and costume! A small group then gathered in the Fellowship Hall for a socially-distanced lunch and celebration of being part of the Reformed (and always Reforming!) church. Everyone enjoyed taking their turn pinning the "Thesis on the Door," similar to the game "Pin the Tail on the Donkey," and competing in a friendly Reformation trivia game







## CHRISTMAS JOY SPECIAL OFFERINGS

CHURCH LEADERS—PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

### THE PERFECT GIFT

One of the most powerful things that Christians claim is that God saw the great needs of the world and offered a perfect gift in response, a gift that brought God and humanity closer together. God's perfect gift, Jesus Christ. "Emmanuel, God is with us!" our Advent dream proclaims, as God joins in human life, and draws us together as a result. "God is with us" shows God values togetherness and relationship with us, leading us to value togetherness and relationship with one another. When we are all together — and even when we are apart.

During these past months, many of us weren't able to be together in person, but we have always been together in spirit, and in faith. We have missed seeing faces we love — up close and personal, but the physical distance has also revealed, for us, the importance of those things which bring us together, even when we are physically far apart.

We offer our gifts during this Advent Season to the Christmas Joy Offering because God shows us the power and importance of being together, of "being with." We might not be able to meet face to face with those who need the support that our gifts provide, but we are very much still together. We see the potential of students of color who will become our leaders and we seek to come alongside them, to encourage them, to be together with them. And we see church workers who have critical financial needs and we come alongside them, to assist them — we are with them. And we see the witness of the whole Church, either gathered in buildings or connected home to home, member to member, sharing what we have, together. We thank God for being "with us" through the gift of Jesus and for joining us together as the Church and, through our gifts, with those who have need.

*[pcusa.org/christmasjoy](http://pcusa.org/christmasjoy)*



#### THREE WAYS YOUR MEMBERS CAN GIVE



Through your congregation



Text JOY to 20222 to give \$10



[www.presbyterianmission.org/give/christmasjoy](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/give/christmasjoy)

*If giving online,  
members should provide the name  
of their congregation so the church  
will receive credit for their gifts.*

Traditionally, Christmas Joy envelopes are placed in the pew racks during Advent. However, since in-person worship has been suspended at this time, envelopes will not be available. Anyone who chooses to make a donation to the Christmas Joy offering is encouraged to submit checks to the office through December 25th with the words "Christmas Joy" on the memo line.



### December liturgists:

12/6 - Carol Callaway  
 12/13- Lois Fozkos  
 12/20 - Bonnie Perryman  
 12/24 - Carol Callaway  
 12/27 - Charlotte Abernethy



### Salvation Army Food Give Away

On November 23, 2020 Jeff Savage and I packed up the pantry to deliver what food we had to the Salvation Army before Thanksgiving. Since we have had a lot of virtual services items have not been coming in for the food pantry as usual. We were able to give them some bags to help them with their Thanksgiving meals but with the pandemic there is an increased number of people in need. We also had a donation from the Girl Scout troop in Lowell that was greatly appreciated.

Our pantry is now like Mother Hubbard's cupboard—BARE--!

Please consider dropping off some food stuffs at the church office to give us a jump start on the next delivery which will be Veteran's Life Changing Services and then Love, Inc.

~Cheryl





## MINISTRY OF MISSION CHRISTMAS ADOPT – A – FAMILY EVENT

The Ministry of Mission has once again adopted two families from Love INC. for the Christmas Adopt-a-Family Event. Mission will be providing both families with all the necessary grocery items for their Christmas meal, as well as gifts for the children in each respective family. Mission greatly appreciates the congregation's support of this event over the past decade or so, and we are reaching out to let you know about the families we have adopted this year and provide you with an opportunity to help make this Christmas a very special one for these families.

As stated above, we have adopted 2 families. **Family A** includes Mom (age 33), her 14 year old daughter, 8 year old daughter, 10 year old son, 4 year old daughter and 2 year old son.

**Family B** includes Mom (age 40), her 15 year old daughter, 11 year old daughter, 9 year old son, 8 year old son and 6 year old daughter. Mission has been provided with a list of items that the ten children need or have requested from Santa. We are reaching out to the congregation for your support of this extremely worthy event, especially during these uncertain times. If you would like to support the Adopt-a-Family event and purchase a specific item for a child listed above, please contact **Cheryl Steen at (219) 838-4127** and she will provide you with the information. If you would like to support Mission and are not able to go shopping, or prefer not to, monetary donations are also welcome and Mission will do the shopping for you. Mission members are willing to make "no contact" arrangements to pick up the items you purchase or pick up your monetary donation. Please feel free to contact Cheryl Steen (219) 838-4127 or Tracy Oprea (219) 616-7181 to discuss the same.

2020 has been a very difficult year for so many people, and the financial uncertainty has taken a toll on so many as well. Please consider supporting this worthy cause to make Christmas special for the two families we have adopted. Providing food and gifts can make such a difference in their lives, and we are truly blessed to be a part of this event.

Blessings to all.

*Tracy Oprea*, Ministry of Mission



## November Shelter Report

On November 14th, we had the usual reliable group of chefs show up to cook the meal for the men at the shelter. We also prepared the 20 box lunches for those that are not residents of the shelter but are used to having a meal there before COVID changed things.

We are, once again, very thankful for the Food Pantry at St. Timothy's Church in Griffith. They shared beautiful pork roasts with us and a case of eggs plus a number of other items to help keep our pantry stocked and help with keeping our Blessing Box full.

A big pat on the back to Jamie Ham, Judy Toren, Sandra Higgins, Sherry Arroyo and Marie Kyrnicky for stepping up and being a constant in this Mission project. I couldn't do it without you! *Cheryl*



### **COLD WEATHER IS COMING!**

Ministry of Mission is once again sponsoring our annual Mitten Tree from November 29<sup>th</sup> through December 20<sup>th</sup>. We need donations of gloves, mittens, hats and scarves. All donations will be divided among Highland Public Schools by their counselor as needs dictate.

There will be a donation bin outside the church office. You can drop your items in the bin Monday through Thursday 8 to 11 AM.

Thanks for your ongoing support.

*Thank You!*  
**FOR YOUR DONATION**

Girl Scout troop 35641 in Lowell was looking for a way to work toward achieving a community service badge and decided to put together bags of food for those in need. The girls collected canned goods and then divided the bags among themselves for distribution to individuals and agencies that could put them to good use. Delaney Toren (daughter of Jake and Sam) chose to give her 3 bags of canned goods to FPCH's food pantry. They were delivered to us on 11/14/20. Additionally, the troop leaders contacted FPCH to see if they could participate in the Salvation Army Bell ringing. Covid restrictions are making that difficult, but FPCH's light is "shining bright" in Lowell, and the Ministry of Mission commends the Lowell troop leaders for instilling these examples of generosity in their scouts.



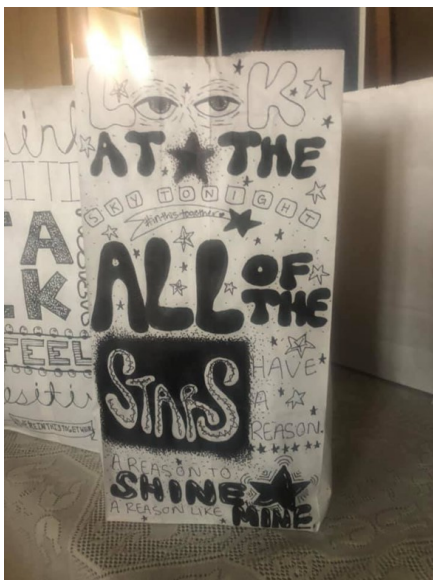




In mid-August we were serving 72 lunches each week. We increased the amount made during September and October to 100 lunches. Then on Oct. 31 we sacrificed the 7 sandwiches we planned on delivering to congregation members and neighbors. Rev. Tyler helped fill 7 more bags when we saw we would be short. We gave away 107 lunches and still turned away cars. The last car asked for more than we had, as we only had one to give. Behind that car were other cars and a man on a bicycle who visits occasionally. The cars pulled out of line when they saw we were out and the man on the bike just rode past. As we sadly watched as they were leaving after a long wait (the line starts to form around 11:15 and 11:30 and sometimes earlier), we saw the last car to receive a lunch, though short of their request, stop and flag the man on the bike to approach. We saw the last lunch handed to the man on the bike. We witness the hands, heart and feet of Jesus every Sackurday!

Krissy and I decided we needed a plan to avoid this deflating experience again, as this was not the first time we ran short. We also need to be good stewards by avoiding waste. So, on November 1<sup>st</sup> we decided we would make 120 sandwiches and prepare 100 sacks. We would use the extra if we needed by quickly putting together more bags, or by freezing the sandwiches to be the first used the following week. For the last two weeks we have not run out; we have handed out 120 lunches each week. Donations continue to be greatly appreciated as our needs are growing. We are now providing 3x the lunches from when we started on the last Saturday of March 2020.

This week we were gifted with decorated lunch bags. Veronica LaPage the art teacher at Lowell High School gave her students the opportunity to share their talent with uplifting messages. They were uplifting and beautiful in appearance and sentiment. See a sampling below.



We rejoice that we at times meet the needs of those in need. ~Sharon



## *Blessing Box*

Our Blessing Box has gained even more importance in this season of pandemic. Economic impacts are on the rise, and the most vulnerable in our midst are the most harmed. 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.



### DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

6	Evvy Kikkert
8	Kristen Wilson
9	Ben Porter
11	John Toren
12	Ron Shuck
18	Hilary Kikkert
27	Arletta Schaefer
28	Caroline Studer
29	Suzanne Gruoner
30	Rodney Fozkos



## Prayers of Christian Sympathy:

- To the Family of Mary Howe on her death 11/10
- To Yvonne Suroviak and family on the death of her son, Darren Suroviak 11/18



## Ongoing Prayers

The Prayer Circle prays for the people on this list, and for all other concerns named at that time. Please include the persons listed here in your daily devotional time. Thank you.

Anthony - Suzanne Gruoner's son  
 Alaina (Callaway)  
 Marge Ashton  
 Avery  
 Family of Thierno Bah  
 Bapst Family (Callaway)  
 Mike Bennett  
 Betsy (Rev. Tyler)  
 Curtis Black  
 Brady Vanes  
 Sonny Buono  
 Ina Chappell  
 Brandon Chong  
 U. Chong (Oprea)  
 Danielle  
 Dave  
 Laura Buono Domsic  
 Carol Finley  
 Frank (K. Scott)  
 Chester Goins  
 George Griner  
 Guy (B. Perryman)  
 Susan Hanley (Studer)  
 Gracie Helmer  
 Bill Holmes  
 Jessica (Abernethy)  
 Steve Lekan (P. Fozkos)  
 Holly Letnich  
 Daniel Litwicki (Catania)  
 David Markley  
 Tony Martinez  
 Ray Mendoza  
 Mildred (B. Perryman)  
 Jill Muller (Steen)

George & Barbara Nelson  
 Jeanne Nestor  
 Jan Oprea  
 Janet Orem  
 Jon Orem  
 Josh Orem  
 Sharon Orem  
 Rena's cousin  
 Rick Parker  
 Rhonda Penman  
 Chuck & Kathy Pumnea  
 Rodney (J. Toren)  
 Calvin Scott  
 Jay Smith  
 Steve & Melinda  
 Family of Jeannine Strom  
 Caroline Studer  
 Gary Studer  
 Bonita Sutton (Nolen)  
 Tarsha (Perryman)  
 Erin Taylor (Casiano)  
 Teachers & Students  
 Richard Terpstra  
 Family of Chierno Vah  
 Mattie Welch (Rena Martinez)  
 Cindy Waltz Family

\*\*\*\*\*  
 Due to federal regulations about privacy, ***we are no longer called by hospitals*** about patient admissions. Even if they ask you for your church affiliation when checking in, they do not call. If you or your loved one would like a visit while hospitalized, or would like a home visit, please call the church office at 219-838-6850.  
 Thank you!

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- 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 our country.
- We pray for first responders and front-line medical workers who are risking their lives for our health
- 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 those who are traveling.
- We pray for those we hold silently in our hearts.
- 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 in each new day.
- We pray for our home-bound.

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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 (838-6850).