

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF HIGHLAND



THE LARGER VIEW

Volume 14 Issue 1



2021

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Dear All,

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

It is hard to believe that we are already welcoming 2021. I imagine that most of us are happy to say farewell to 2020, a year that was like none other in our collective memory. As I look forward with hope to this new year, though, I cannot help but to also look back in reflection upon the year that has passed. A dear friend recently reminded me of the importance of doing so with an attitude of gratitude to God, no matter how difficult things may have been. And considering all that has happened in the world and therefore with our congregation, I can't help but be thankful to God for helping our Church family to survive and thrive, for providing us with the tools to stay connected to each other and to God, and for gifting us with creative and effective lay leadership in a time of crisis. So, I thank God, and I thank all of you! Along with gratitude, though, it is also important to express grief in our reflection. The list may be too long to include in this letter, but I am sure that we are all aware of reasons to grieve what happened in 2020 to the world, to the Church, to our loved ones, and to ourselves. Please know that grief is complicated and that grief is necessary. So, as you join me in reflecting about 2020, please grieve well and grieve fully.

Along with reflecting on the past year, let us also look forward to this new year with intention. Let us commit to living more faithfully by following the call set forth in *Micah 6:8*—"What does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" Let us continue to seek creative and effective ways live into this call as we continue to navigate the troubled waters of the world today together!

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**

A great way to do so is to get more involved with our church family by joining one of our ministries or committees, participating in our educational and fellowship opportunities, and volunteering for worship leadership. If you would like to do so or have other ideas about possibilities, please do not hesitate to reach out to me or to one of our ruling elders or deacons!

The changing of the year also inevitably carries changes within our individual and collective lives. My life is no exception! As many of you know, I have been taking a break from other employment for the past six months or so. Vocationally and financially, though, the time has come for me to once again live into my other calling as a mental health therapist. Starting the first week in January, I will be working as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker at a health clinic on Chicago's far south side, about fifteen minutes from the church building. This will mean that my office hours will be moving to evening hours—Monday through Thursday from 6 PM to around 9 PM. Kristen will continue to be in the office in the mornings. You all have been incredibly gracious with me through my various life and schedule changes, and I appreciate your continued grace in this newest season of adjustment. I trust that we will make it work with God's help, as we always have! If you have any questions or concerns about this, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly. I will be praying that changes in your lives will be positive and life-giving!

I close with these famous words from *Ecclesiastes 3* for our shared contemplation: "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to throw away; a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace. What gain have the workers from their toil? I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with. He has made everything suitable for its time; moreover he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; moreover, it is God's gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil."

In Christ,

Rev. Tyler Orem





This month's *Matthew 25* spotlight shines upon those who are rotating off of our boards of Session, Deacons, and Trustees. One of the *Matthew 25* areas of focus is congregational vitality, and you all have been instrumental to our congregation's ability to survive and thrive in the hardest of seasons. You have helped to keep us connected to each other and to support each other, to keep our building up and running, to ensure that we are properly stewarding our resources, and to shine the light of God's love upon this community and the world as a whole. Thank you for your hard work and commitment to our mission of being the heart, hands, and feet of Jesus Christ!

SESSION SHORTS

The session held its last meeting for 2020 on Monday, December 21st.

We reviewed how we have experienced a very unusual Church year. We have met in our homes, outside in the garden, virtually, and in the sanctuary with the windows open, and we have survived!

The Trustees have kept the building running and warm.

The Ministry of Finance has been working hard getting the new budget up to date, so if you haven't sent in your pledge card this year, PLEASE DO SO.

Faith Development is trying some new ideas, so keep reading emails and checking out the website.

Hospitality has been making sure, when we are able to meet in or at the church, that we have worship necessities and welcome guests.

The Ministry of Mission has been busy with feeding the hungry, adopt-a-family, and Heifer International just to name a few.

Worship and Music is working on some new ways to add music to our worship.

Deacons are keeping up with their clusters by mail, e-mail, and phone calls.

We are looking for a list of agencies that provide support for those needing shelter or psychological help.

We are checking with the library as a possible resource.

We discussed changing Tyler's office times to evenings.

Thank you to Hilary, John, and Vince for their service on Session; they are rolling off this year.

Also, a big Thank You to those who will continue on the Session and those coming into the new Session season.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

In God's Peace,

Lois Fozkos

Clerk of Session



TREASURER'S REPORT

For the Month of
November 30, 2020

	Month of November	Monthly Budget	Year to Date
Operating Revenue	\$19,788.11	\$10,553.00	\$123,122.68
Operating Expenses	14,534.95	13,424.00	131,565.32
Excess (Deficit)	\$5,253.16		(\$8,442.64)



Gifts given in the month of December to the Endowment Fund include:

In Memory of: Murray Faris, & Earl Yoho

These gifts were given by the following donors:

Peter & Gale Churitch & Linda Skaggs

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A Donation was given to Sackurday by:

Bob & Charlotte Abernethy, Doran & Karen Lounsbury, Roy & Joan Miller, Mary Quinn

A Donation was given to the Blessing Box by:

Gerald & Nancy Veltman

A Donation was given to the Food Pantry by:

Christine Small

A Donation was given to the Food Pantry in Memory of Darren Suroviak by Arletta Schaefer



Youth Connections

Too Many Cooks... Makes for a Fun Afternoon!

On Dec. 12, 2020, 7 of our youth and friends joined Cheryl Steen and her faithful kitchen crew to help prepare a meal for the Hammond homeless shelter. Each adult was paired with one or two youth, and they worked on their part of the meal. By the end, the youth had helped clean, season and stuff chickens; chop fruit and veggies; make cake; add bacon to beans; put sandwiches together; and fill up boxes for grab-and-go- lunches. At a previous gathering, the youth had put together treat bags and decorated Christmas cards that were delivered to the shelter with the meals they helped cook. The youth also helped put away 3 totes worth of donated food from local Girl Scouts so we now have a well-stocked food pantry. The youth said they enjoyed working in the kitchen and would like to do it again in the future, and it looked like the adults all had a good time as well.



2021 Youth Gatherings

- The next gathering will be on Sunday, January 24, 2021, at 1 pm. Most likely this will be a Zoom gathering, but watch your email for an announcement mid-January for more specific information.
- We're hoping to have a Winter Fun Day in January or February, depending on the weather. If you have ideas of fun places to go for sledding, winter hiking, or other winter outdoor activities, let Heather know.





ADULT CONNECTIONS

BYOB: This mid-week study on ZOOM begins again on Wednesday, Jan. 6, 7-8 pm. If you are not on the email list for the ZOOM log-in information and would like to be, contact Heather Casiano at the information below.

Sunday Morning Study Group: This group is on hiatus while the church building is closed for in-person activities. Watch for an announcement for restarting once it is safer to do so. If there is someone who would like to lead this group online on ZOOM during this interim period, contact Heather Casiano to get things set up.

* Is there a topic, curriculum, or book of the Bible you would like to see as an Adult Connections study group? A new group or Bible study can be started any time online on ZOOM or in person as conditions allow. If you aren't comfortable with technology but are interested in meeting online with a small group, we have people who get all the "tech" stuff set up for you. Please send your ideas to Heather Casiano – we want to know what you're interested in!

RESOURCES FOR YOU

Did you know our church has a library? It may not look fancy, and you don't need a library card to use it. Our church library is located in the room across the hall from the Church Office. If you are interested in borrowing anything from the library, you can come into the church during regular office hours, Monday-Thursday from 8 - 11 am. You can also contact Heather Casiano for a porch drop-off of materials if you can't make it into the church building.

Each month, we'll be highlighting one resource. This month the focus is Audio Bibles. Audio Bibles are great for those who are having trouble reading the smaller print of many Bibles, and for those who would like to hear the Word perhaps while doing other activities at the same time. The long, cold days of staying inside might be a nice time to listen to God's Word.

Our church library has two different types of audio Bibles available: the New Testament on CD and the entire Bible on cassette tape.

The New Testament on CD is a collection of 18 CDs, which can be checked out separately. They are read in a male voice from the King James version. The CDs can be played on any device that is compatible with standard audio CDs.

For any of you who may still have a functional cassette tape player, our library has the entire Bible – Old and New Testaments – available for check out on cassette tape. There are four volumes of twelve tapes each, read from the New International Version.



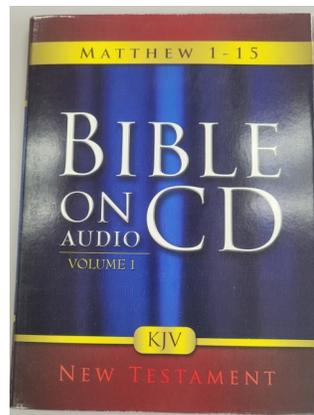
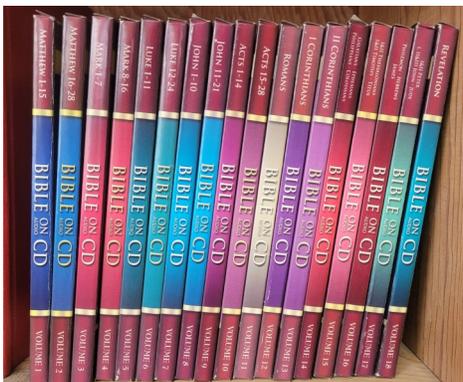
There is a sign out sheet on the table in the Library at the church to fill out each time you borrow an item. Returned items can be put back on the shelf or left on the table in the center of the room.

If CD or cassette audio Bibles don't appeal to you, there are audio Bible options online as well for smart phones, tablets or computers. Here are a few free options:

<https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/audio/> You can choose from several Bible translations and voices in the drop down menu. There are also a variety of non-English language audio Bibles available.

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/audio-bible/> Available in four translations: English Standard Version, King James Version, New Living Translation, and the World English Bible.

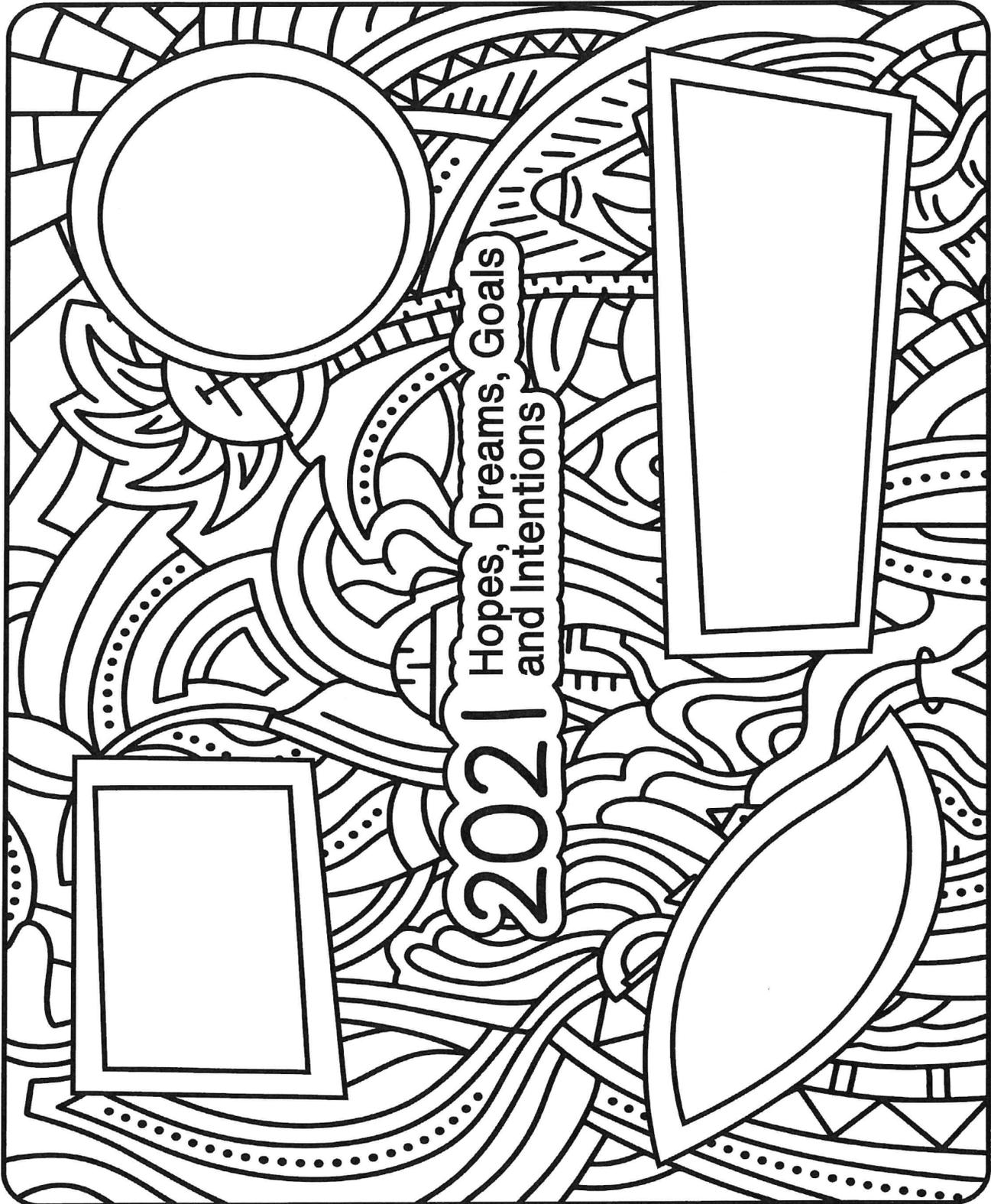
<https://dailyaudiobible.com/> Click or touch "Listen Now", then click/touch "Continue as Guest" if you don't want to create an account. This will take you to the player and the current day's reading, as well as past days and other options.



LENT DEVOTIONAL

This year for Lent, we thought it would be meaningful to have a devotion that is written by all of us for all of us. We're asking for volunteers to write or draw/illustrate a short reflection on a Bible verse – the verses will be provided for you, and then everyone's reflections will be compiled into a booklet for you by Ash Wednesday (Feb. 17 this year). There are 40 verses for the 40 days of Lent, so we need lots of volunteers – adults, youth and kids are welcome! You may sign up for more than one verse as well. Contact Heather Casiano **NO LATER THAN Jan. 10** to sign up to create a Lent devotion.

If you have any questions or concerns about anything happening in Faith Development, or ideas for future programs, please contact Heather Casiano at 575-932-9716 (cell phone) or hcasiano@fpchighland.org (email).



**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 Charles & Florence Baudouine and
Paul & Mary Callaway

Lois Fozkos, in honor of her children and grandchildren

Rodney & Peggy Fozkos, in memory of loved ones

Diane Mason

Barbara Morton, in memory of her mother, father, brothers, grandfather,
nieces & nephews

Rev. Tyler Orem, in memory of Thierno Souleymane Bah and
Nancy Harvey

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

Casimir Smailis, in memory of Dr. Lowell H. Steen

Cheryl Steen, in memory of Dr. Lowell H. Steen

Diane Wilson Yeazell, in memory of Norma H. Wilson

In Lieu of Flowers:

Rodney and Peggy Fozkos, in memory of loved ones

Shirley McKnight, in memory of her husband, Barry McKnight



January Liturgists:



- 1/3 - Jean Smith
- 1/10- Hilary Kikkert
- 1/17 - John Toren
- 1/24 - Bonnie Perryman
- 1/31 - Heather Casiano



December Shelter Report

We continue to follow COVID-19 guidelines according to the CDC, cooking at the church and delivering the meal to the shelter so they can serve themselves. We continue to make 20 meals for the non-residents who used to eat with us but now are not permitted into the shelter.

We had the pleasure of having our Youth join us on Saturday, and they were a huge help. Each Youth had a kitchen mentor from our regular crew who oversaw the Youth's assigned project. Everything ran smoothly, and we were finished in record time.

I certainly encouraged the Youth to come and participate in the cooking again!!

A special thank you to the Youth Leaders, Rev. Tyler and Heather, for helping with this project.

We also had our regular transporters, John Toren and Jeff Savage. Thank you! *Cheryl*





WE DID IT

A very special thank you to all who helped make our two adopted families have a Happy Thanksgiving and a VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS.

As you know, we had the same two families for both holidays and that really helped get to know them a bit better.

For Thanksgiving, they had ample food for a lovely dinner. They were also supplied with a breakfast meal for Thanksgiving and some extra food for whenever they needed it.

Christmas gifts were a challenge with the pandemic and no one going to church or coffee fellowship. HOWEVER, our congregation were troopers and extremely generous. All the wishes on their sheets were fulfilled and then some. Everyone dropped off their gifts at the church and we were able to deliver food for two meals and the gift items one week before Christmas. It gave the mothers time to wrap the children’s gifts with the paper and tape we provided. The children really didn’t ask for much this year in the line of toys; it was more needed clothing items.

A huge virtual hug and thank you to all that helped make this project a success this year.

Another big vitural hug to Jeff Savage for being my muscle and ride along assistant. Some of these residences aren’t the easiest to get to, so it is always so nice to have his help!! *Cheryl Steen*





The Ministry of Mission recently had its last meeting for 2020 and to fulfill its Mission Statement, Mission unanimously decided to support Heifer International and “be an emissary for Christ’s love and compassion for those in need throughout the nation and the world.” Mission was able to purchase a pig, a flock of ducks, bees and a Hope Basket, which contains chicks and rabbits. Mission is extremely grateful and blessed to be in a financial position to purchase these animals and insects, which will help many families in need, in more ways than we will ever know.

Tracy S. Oprea
Ministry of Mission

Hope Basket
\$50

What can be more hopeful to a struggling farmer than a gift of fast-multiplying livestock?

The **Hope Basket**, with **chickens** and **rabbits**, offers just that to Heifer’s project participants.

Rabbits are easy to care for and reproduce quickly, allowing their owners to sell the offspring for extra income once they’ve fulfilled Heifer’s Passing on the Gift promise. Chickens lay eggs and provide manure for vegetable gardens. This gift of hope goes on and on, lasting much longer and helping more families than the usual gift basket ever could.

Honey Bees
\$30

Sweeten Christmas morning with a gift of bees that will provide delicious honey. Elsa, 8, Guatemala

Duck eggs help build a healthy diet for families all around the world. Vet, 12, Cambodia

Flock of Ducks
\$20

The most special part of Christmas is spending time with family — gathering around the table, sharing a meal, playing games, opening gifts. This time refreshes and connects us. Your gift of a pig and training in its care will help nourish a hungry family and help them enjoy their time together with a new sense of hope.

The gift of a pig provided Modesta and Martin:

- A valuable source of protein
- Income from the sale of offspring
- Natural fertilizer to nourish crops and soil.

Pigs need little land and can thrive on crop and garden by-product scraps. And since a sow can provide up to 16 piglets a year, many more families will soon benefit as your gift is passed on.

Gift of a Pig \$120
Share of a Pig \$10

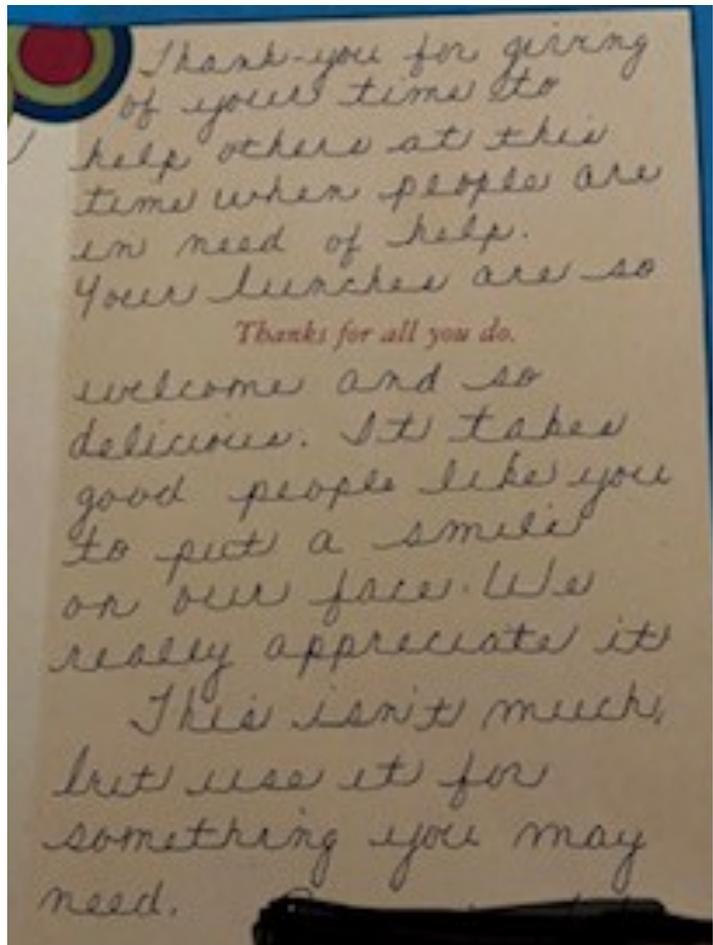
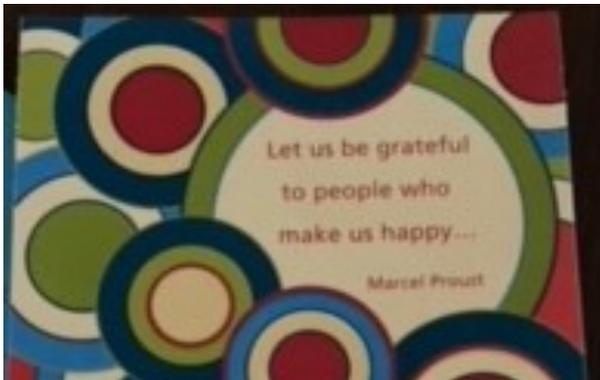


Thank You!
FOR YOUR DONATION

A big "Thank You" to the Girl Scouts of Troop #35641 of Lowell for their continued support of the mission work of FPCH. On December 15th, Scout Delaney Toren delivered a bag of 20 caps, gloves and mittens collected by the troop for our Mitten Tree. Although distance separates the scouts from us, it has not diminished their desire to express the Spirit of Christmas by helping us help others. Their light shines brightly, all the way to Highland and we offer the scouts and their leaders a "well done" and thanks, again!



**Appreciation from
 Sackurday meal recipients**





The Per Capita PER member is \$42.00 for 2021



The Annual Congregational Meeting will be on January 31st.



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.

Please do not donate homemade or perishable items.



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

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



Notes

Child and daughter of FPCH, Gail Holck Snyder has been diagnosed with breast cancer. She had surgery last Thursday and is doing well. Cards can be sent to:
35610 180th Street
Green Isle, MN 55338

We would like to thank Sharon LaFlech and her helpers for all the sack lunches. You are doing a great job.

Elwyn & Caroline Studer

Prayers to:

The New Officers of Our Church



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
- Bapst Family (Callaway)
- Mike Bennett
- 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)
- Krissy LaFlech
- 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
- 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
- Gary Studer
- Bonita Sutton (Nolen)
- Tarsha (Perryman)
- Erin Taylor (Casiano)
- Teachers & Students
- Richard Terpstra
- Family of Chierno Vah
- Cindy Waltz Family
- Mattie Welch (Rena Martinez)
- Kevin Windstup

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 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).