FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HIGHLAND



THE LARGER VIEW



2022

Volume 15 Issue 1

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Dear All,

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

Merry Christmas! Yes, loved ones, we still get to say it! In the calendar of the Church, the season of Christmas lasts at least until our celebration of the Epiphany. And really, Epiphany itself, our observance of the visit of the three wise ones to the Christ child, is where some of our most iconic Christian traditions come from—the giving of gifts and the star on top of our trees. With that, in January let me also say, "Merry Epiphany!" And Happy New Year! And Happy Baptism of Jesus! Some of us probably experience a bit of melancholy after Christmas, after so much anticipation and then celebration. Let us not despair, though! As the liturgical calendar makes clear, we still have so much to celebrate! Let us keep that in mind as we enter January, a month that to me always feels like the longest, hardest month. As winter weather finally sets in, as the cold gets into our bones, as we long for more sunlight and vitamin D, and this year as COVID again surges, let us remember and hold onto the reasons that we do have to celebrate and embody our joy!

In so many ways, our transition to 2022 feels like our transition to 2021. We are still in the midst of a pandemic that all of us hoped and prayed would be over by now. Really, things seem worse now than they have for months. We are still facing the uncertainty of how things will resolve, of if things will resolve. We are still collectively anxious, and I'd be willing to bet

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

collectively depressed. Loved ones, I don't have easy answers or quick fixes. But I do have Good news!

When the angel Gabriel spoke to the shepherds in the field to tell of the birth of Jesus, child of Mary, in Bethlehem, he said:

"DO NOT BE AFRAID!"

Then he continued:

"For see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."

Loved ones, there is certainly a lot going on in the world right now. There are many reasons to feel concerned, to worry, and to ask existential questions. But we must not let fear take hold. For, in the midst of all the uncertainty there is right now, the truth of the Incarnation is certain. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. The Word became flesh and thus was one of us. Immanuel. Our God is with us, and our God will always be with us!

Let us reflect once more on the words of 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.
Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.
Lift up your eyes and look around;
they all gather together, they come to you;
your sons shall come from far away,
and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.
Then you shall see and be radiant;
your heart shall thrill and rejoice!"

In Christ and with Love,

Rev. Tyler





This month the *Matthew* 25 spotlight is shining upon our entire congregation! Throughout the month of December, everyone pitched in to share God's love and the joy of the birth of Jesus with those most in need of it. Meals were prepared. Gifts were purchased and distributed. Cookies were baked. Carols were sung. Salvation Army bells were rung. Upon the tree of warmth hats and scarves were hung. These efforts and so many other contributions of our collective gifts combined to work towards the threefold *Matthew* 25 mission of eradicating systemic poverty, dismantling structural racism, and building congregational vitality. Well don, First Presbyterian Church of Highland!

N.B. If you notice somebody or somebodies living into the *Matthew* 25 call, please let Pastor Tyler know so that they can be highlighted in this section!



- Session thoughtfully reviewed the protocols and mitigations during this pandemic, and the decision was made to continue with these current protocols:
 - Mask-wearing indoors
 - Ventilation of the sanctuary by leaving windows open
 - Social distancing
- The decision was also made to suspend coffee fellowship after worship and suspend our future soup sales as well. This will be revisited after the January Session meeting.
- The Annual Congregational Meeting was set for January 30th. It will be held immediately following the worship service in the sanctuary.
- The contract of Heather Casiano, Family and Children Program Coordinator was approved for 2022.
- The dates for Communion for next year were set.
- Elder Jamie Ham presented the preliminary budget for 2022, which Session then approved. The final budget numbers will be ready in January and will be presented to the congregation at the Annual Congregational Meeting on January 30th. Please send in your pledge card if you have not already done so.
- Elder Lois Fozkos gave a report from the last Presbytery meeting in December. Our pastor, Rev. Tyler Orem, was nominated and elected to the position of Vice-Moderator of the Presbytery Assembly. Congratulations, Pastor Tyler!
- Rev. Orem and Session expressed gratitude to Elders Charlotte Abernethy and Lois Fozkos for their dedicated service on Session. Their voices and leadership have been integral to our church. They have faithfully served through a pastoral leadership change, a pandemic, and youth leadership change. Thank you so much!



Treasurer's Report

For the Month of November 30, 2021

	Month of	Monthly	Year to
	November	Budget	Date
Operating Revenue	\$5,715.22	\$9,965.00	\$105,469.01
Operating Expenses	13,643.03	13,409.00	129,397.05
Excess (Deficit)	(\$7,927.81)		(\$23,928.04)



A gift was given in the month of December to the Endowment Fund:

In Memory of: Barbara Wagner

This gift was given by the following donors:

Bob & Charlotte Abernethy

Donations were given to the Blessing Box by:

Gerald & Nancy Veltman



"What the Church Means to Me" ~ Lois Fozkos

Someone asked me: What does the First Presbyterian Church mean to me?

The building brings memories of all the people who had a dream in 1938. They wanted to build a church community. I'm not quite that old to remember the beginning, however I do remember when the current sanctuary was opened and dedicated. But I do have memories of pews filled to capacity, the families who sat in those pews, the youth Sundays, the fellowship in the classes, the youth trips, and most of all the friends both young and old.

Enough down memory lane, though!

Now it means more because it not only touches my heart; it soothes my soul. As I enter the doors and am greeted by a friend, and as more friends come in the chatter gets louder (I think it's because of our age). It's because we have entered a family that really cares for the well-being of its members.

So what does the church mean to me? Comfort and Joy! That warm fuzzy feeling you get from loved ones.

In God's Peace,

Lois



Stewardship Luncheon

A big thank you to everyone who attended the Stewardship luncheon. A great time was had by all!















What an ADVENTure!

Thanks to everyone who joined us on our ADVENTure! The videos on each Advent candle's theme were great and gave us perhaps some new ways to think about Advent. The participation in our Advent paper chain was wonderful! Many of you wrote down what Hope, Peace, Joy and Love mean to you, and we put them together to reflect our thoughts and feelings as a community of faith. Along with some ornaments made by our youth, our paper chain made the Advent tree in the Fellowship Hall look very festive.





<u>"The Bible in Today's World"</u> class will resume on Sunday, Jan. 2nd, at 9 am in the Session room. We are starting a new study, "*Animate: Faith*." This study will help us imaginatively explore central topics of Christianity through short videos and group discussion. The 7 topics we will look at include:

- God: Faith Is a Quest
- Religion: Spirituality Is Not Enough
- Jesus: The Revolution of Love
- Salvation: Abundant Life Now
- Cross: Where God Is
- Bible: A Book Like No Other
- Church: An Imperfect Family

There are no books required, so just show up and enjoy the short videos and participate in the discussions. There is an optional participant journal available for purchase for those interested. If you have any questions about this study, contact Bonnie Perryman or John Toren.

BYOB (Bring Your Own Bible): This weekly online-only Bible study resumes on Jan. 5th. BYOB happens each Wednesday from 7:00-8:00 PM on Zoom. Each week we look at a different Scripture passage that is not connected to previous weeks, so there is no way to fall behind! All are welcome! If you would like to sign up to receive the Zoom log-in information, email fpchighland.org to request being added to the BYOB list.





YOUTH CONNECTIONS

Youth Connections will meet on Jan. 9th and 23rd, after worship until 1 pm in the Youth Room. All youth in grades 6-12 are invited to hang out with us, and friends are always welcome. We'll be doing a couple of shorter themed lessons this year, as well as some service projects and fun events.

THANK YOU to all the youth and friends who baked and decorated Christmas cookies for some of our congregation members! Thank you also to all the adults who helped our youth in the kitchen and those who came caroling with the youth. A lot of joy was spread that day from our church building to each home we visited. Smiles were apparent on the faces of everyone in their teens to their 90s!

















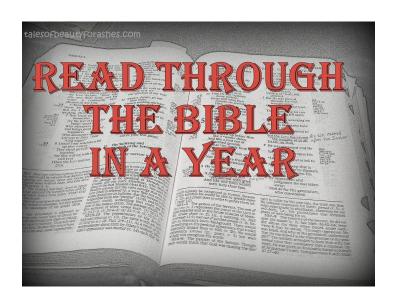
The Faith Development team is always open to new members! If you are interested in helping plan opportunities for all ages to grow in their faith and relationship with Jesus Christ, join us! We generally meet after worship on the first Sunday of the month in the Session room. If you have any questions, contact Heather Casiano. Hope to see you!



CONFIRMATION CLASSES STARTING

Pastor Tyler is starting confirmation classes this month for all youth in 7th-12th grades who have not been confirmed previously. Confirmation classes will be after worship until 1 pm on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month. On those Sundays, confirmation students will join with Youth Connections for part of the time and separate for part of the time for their unique lessons. If you are a youth or you know a youth who would like to participate in the confirmation process, please let Pastor Tyler know.





Read through the Bible in a Year – Together!

For 2022, the Faith Development ministry is offering a challenge of Biblical proportions – namely, to read the entire Bible in one year! Sounds daunting? Don't worry, we've found a reading plan that breaks up our Scriptures into smaller pieces to be very manageable no matter what your schedule looks like. This reading plan does not go straight through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation; rather it mixes up readings from the Old and New Testaments each day, and some days also include a Psalm.

You can read along at your own pace, and if you don't keep up with what the reading plan says, that's ok. There are no prizes nor penalties, so you choose when and how much reading you can do. We want to encourage everyone to make the Bible a regular part of your daily life no matter when or how much reading you do.

Each month in the Larger View newsletter and on our church's website (www.fpchighland.org), we will publish the current month's reading plan. Look in this issue for the January 2022 Reading Plan. If you would like the reading plan emailed to you as a separate document, contact Heather at https://hcasiano@fpchighland.org. May this year in the Bible be a blessing to you!



2022 Bible Reading Plan

		Ja	January 2022	12		
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
						☐ Genesis 1-2
2 □ Genesis 3-4 □ Psalm 116	3 Genesis 5-6 Psalm 12 I Corinthians 1	4 □ Genesis 7-9 □ 1 Corinthians 2	5 □ Genesis 10-11 □ 1 Corinthians 3	6 Genesis 12-14 Psalm 110 Orinthians 4	7 ☐ Genesis 15-17 ☐ 1 Corinthians 5	8 Genesis 18-19 Corinthians 6
6	10	11	12	13	14	15
☐ Genesis 20-21 ☐ 1 Corinthians 7	☐ Genesis 22-23 ☐ 1 Corinthians 8 ☐ Psalm 115	☐ Genesis 24 ☐ 1 Corinthians 9	☐ Genesis 25-26 ☐ 1 Corinthians 10	☐ Genesis 27 ☐ 1 Corinthians 11	Genesis 28-29 1 Corinthians 12	☐ Genesis 30 ☐ 1 Corinthians 13 ☐ Psalm 15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
☐ Genesis 31 ☐ 1 Corinthians 14	☐ Genesis 32 ☐ 1 Corinthians 15	☐ Genesis 33-34 ☐ 1 Corinthians 16	☐ Genesis 35-36 ☐ Psalm 60 ☐ Obadiah 1	☐ Genesis 37-38 ☐ 2 Timothy 1	□ 2 Timothy 2 □ Genesis 39-40	☐ Genesis 41-42 ☐ 2 Timothy 3
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
☐ Genesis 43 ☐ 2 Timothy 4 ☐ Psalm 31	☐ Genesis 44-45 ☐ Acts 1	☐ Genesis 46 ☐ Acts 2 ☐ Psalm 16	☐ Genesis 47-48 ☐ Acts 3	☐ Genesis 49 ☐ Acts 4	☐ Psalm 33 ☐ Genesis 50 ☐ Acts 5	□ Exodus 1-2 □ Acts 6 □ Psalm 3
30	31					
□ Exodus 3 □ Acts 7	☐ Exodus 4-5 ☐ Acts 8					

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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 Rodney & Peggy Fozkos, in memory of loved ones Barbara Morton, in memory of Chester & Lillie Belle Morton; Bill Bannon, Jc McDonald; Clarence, Don and Jim Morton

Rev. Tyler Orem, in memory of Fr. Graham Golden; K.C. Matthew Achen; Aunt Teresa

Marjean M. Reed, in memory of Dr. Ronald R. Reed and Families

Jay & Jean Smith, in memory of Robert & Arlene Diekman Cheryl Steen, in memory of Dr. Lowell H. Steen



January LiveStreaming

1/2:	Peter Churitch	
1/9:	Jamie Ham	
1/16:	Robbie Casiano	
1/23:	Jean Smith	
1/30:	Jamie Ham	



January Liturgists:

Robbie Casiano

1/2 -	Carol Callaway
1/9-	Lois Fozkos
1/16-	Bonnie Perryman
1/23-	TBD

1/30 -

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December Shelter Report

Once again, I have to say a huge "Thank You!" to St. Tim's for the donation of ground turkey for our November meal. We had 15 lbs of meat with which we made tacos for the hungry crew on State Street. We had all the fixings - diced tomatoes, shredded lettuce, salsa, sour cream, and chips - which all had to be packaged in individual cups because of COVID. We also had flour tortillas and refried beans. The dessert was fruit cocktail (in individual cups) and special brownies made by our own Lauren Wilson, who is getting to be quite the chef!!

We had the usual hard boiled eggs and milk.

A huge THANK YOU to the kitchen crew—Judy, Jamie, Lauren, Sandy and her sister Sherry. Without them this would not be possible every second Saturday of the month.

Girl Scout Troop Donates Food to Pantry and Blessing Box

Once again Laney Toren's Girl Scout Troop #35641 collected and donated food to our pantry and Blessing Box.

The scouts started doing this project last year and making us the recipients of their labors. They are located in Lowell, IN. We are extremely grateful for their hard work and the fact that they recognize how important it is to help those in need.

We send them a huge THANK YOU and know they will continue to help others.







After not being able to participate in the bell ringing last year, Mission decided to try at least one day for 4 weeks this year. I have to thank the members that signed up for the one hour ringing on Wednesdays in the month of December. We were blessed with fairly decent weather and everyone that signed up was able to keep their commitment. A huge thank you to one and all!!!! I tried to get everyone's picture, but if I missed someone I'm sorry.

Here's a list of the bell ringers!!!

John Toren, Nancy O'Donnell, Charlotte Abernathy, Carolyn Ham, Jeff Savage, Winnie Owen, Jean Smith, Tracy Oprea, Peggy Fozkos, Bonnie Perryman, Peter Churitch, Jamie Ham, Kaz Smailis, Pam Porter, Dakota Olah





















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TREE OF WARMTH

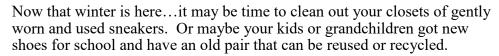
Once again, this year the congregation and our 98-year old lady from Nova Scotia who knits and donates many items have loaded our tree of warmth with mittens, gloves, hats and scarves to make sure local children are warm this winter.

Ministry of Mission boxed and delivered 30 hats, 4 hat & glove sets, 26 pair of mittens, 23 pairs of gloves, and 8 scarves to the Griffith Public School administration center to be distributed to all Griffith schools when they return on January $4^{\rm th}$.

Thank you for such wonderful participation in this project!



GOT SNEAKERS?



The sneakers that we all collect will help raise money to support our church's mission AND will help our environment by keeping sneakers out of landfills.

So far we have sent 4 bags with 10-15 pairs of gently worn, used, and new sneakers in each bag. We are doing great but we still need your help!

Please take a moment to look through your closets and to ask your neighbors and friends to do the same. We are counting on you!

Bring the sneakers (athletic shoes) to the church and put in one of the blue bins...either by Door D (inside and outside) or in the narthex. (Athletic shoes only) Or call the office (219-838-6850) or Jean Smith (219-322-4896) and we will come and pick them up from you.



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The 2022 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!



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
17	Jennifer Vuckovich
22	Wanda Weston
24	Bailey Parker
27	Dan Miller
31	Peggy Fozkos



Prayers of Christian Sympathy to:





Anthony Avery George Nelson Brady Vanes Sonny Buono U. Chong Danielle George Griner Suzanne Gruoner Matt Hanft Guy Hendricks Bill and Anettia Holmes Daniel Litwicki Frank David Markley David & Pat Kingen Garry & Georgette Sknerski Carmelo Diana and Ray Mendoza Jamie Orem and Janet Orem Glenda Munger Linda Claudia Szymasczak John Mullen Jeanne Nestor Calvin Scott Steve & Melinda Richard Simmons Dave

Dirk

Gary Studer Richard Terpstra Laura Buono Domsic Kevin Windstrup Ruth Dekker Rick Parker Barbara Morton Elwyn Studer Jackie Linda Kubiak Robert Lestina Laura Wisner Cary Pearson **Bob Dignam** Carol Finley The Family of Clester Goins Huilin Holly Letnich Jan Oprea Lily Renfro Marla and Jerry Renfro Paige Szulewski Mary Ellen Edeus Gale Snyder Andrew Bobalik Loved ones of Barbara Wagner Loved ones of Carol Atkins Jaden Mendez Gale Osgerby

- 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 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 each new day.
- We pray for our home-bound.

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).