

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
OF HIGHLAND



# THE LARGER VIEW

Volume 16 Issue 1

**January**  
**2023**

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Dear All,

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! We should always celebrate the Incarnation, but for the next couple of weeks we have the blessing of the liturgical calendar to do so with gusto. So let's keep our decorations up and our favorite Christmas carols going! We all could certainly use the joy of the season!

A new calendar year can carry a lot of meaning in our hearts, minds, and spirits. It can be a time of grief for all that happened in the previous year. It can be a time of celebration because a hard year is now behind us. It can be a time of existential anxiety as time keeps marching on. It can be a time of excitement and hope for all of the possibilities that lie ahead. It can be a combination of all of the above and even more, and that's ok!

## ADVENTure Follow-Up

## Community Connections

## Faith Development Visioning Session

## Exploring the Scriptures in 2023

## Installation of Officers

## Annual Meeting

## 2023 Offering Envelopes

For the family of First Presbyterian Church of Highland, my prayer is that we are able to hold the fullness of meaning that the new year contains AND that we will lean most heavily into excitement and hope. For, we have a lot to look forward to! In addition to our faithful monthly schedule of worshipping together, studying together, meeting together, and serving together, we have new things on the horizon. On January 8<sup>th</sup> we will be installing our new officers. On January 22<sup>nd</sup> we will be having our beloved annual meeting. On January 29<sup>th</sup> our

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**

Ministry of Faith Development will be doing some exciting visioning. As our tech team is able and available, we will proceed with our project of getting monitors in the sanctuary to assist with worship (to supplement, not replace, our bulletins!). We will also be exploring creative ways to streamline and add cohesiveness to all that we do so that we can keep our passion and joy without burning out. And who knows what else God's providence has in store for us?! I, for one, am excited and hopeful. I hope that you are, too! To 2023 and beyond!

Liturgically, January carries some important days for us to celebrate and incorporate into our spiritual lives. This month we celebrate Epiphany and the Baptism of our Lord. This is a brilliant time to consider who or what we look to as our guiding light. This is a brilliant time to consider how we do and can do better with using our giftedness to serve Jesus and his Kingdom. This is a brilliant time to remember our own baptisms and to keep them at the forefront of our hearts and minds. That means remembering that we are loved and claimed by God in the fullness of who we are. That means remembering that we belong to a big, beautiful, and diverse family. That means remembering that we are committed to the work of loving all, welcoming all, and building systemic peace. What exciting remembrance we have to do!

I will be taking some much needed time away in the middle of January to go to Puerto Rico with my family. In my therapy work, I say that if I encourage all of my patients to practice self care, then I must model it myself! So, I encourage all of you to focus on self care as well. January can be a long and cold month. Do what you need to do to keep your spirits bright and your bodies moving. Treat yourself and don't feel bad about it!

Let us keep shining bright, and let us keep following the brightest star, our Lord!

*"They set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh."—Matthew 2:9-11*

In Christ and with Love,

*Rev. Tyler*



At the start of the new year, let us be reminded of what it means for us to be a Matthew 25 congregation in a Matthew 25 presbytery in a Mathew 25 denomination!

- **Building congregational vitality** by challenging people and congregations to deepen their faith and get actively and joyfully engaged with their community and the world.
- **Dismantling structural racism** by advocating and acting to break down the systems, practices and thinking that underlie discrimination, bias, prejudice and oppression of people of color.
- **Eradicating systemic poverty** by working to change laws, policies, plans and structures in our society that perpetuate economic exploitation of people who are poor.

And now this initiative is becoming even richer and clearer! From the PC(USA)'s website: "In 2022, the Presbyterian Mission Agency recognized three intersectional priorities that will fully connect to the current Matthew 25 foci of dismantling structural racism, building congregational vitality and eradicating systemic poverty. These three intersectional priorities are: climate change, militarism, and gender justice/heteropatriarchy.

'Intersectionality' is a term coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 to describe 'the complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination combine, overlap or intersect, especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups.' In the same way, these 'intersections' provide critical overlays for the Presbyterian Mission Agency's foci (building congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism and eradicating systemic poverty).

These intersections were identified in the Presbyterian Mission Agency's strategic visioning process as persistent and serious threats to the well-being of communities thrust to the margins. However, simply identifying them is not enough. Working with our ecumenical partners, we are committed to preserving and enhancing the future of humanity and indeed all Creation."

*If you witness the Matthew 25 call being embodied by any person or group of people, please let Pastor Tyler know so that they can be lifted up in this section!*

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## SESSION SHORTS

- The Annual Congregational Meeting has been scheduled for Sunday, January 22, 2023 after worship.
- The Installation of Officers for 2023 will take place on Sunday, January 8, 2023 during worship.
- We discussed the budget for 2023 and it was approved. It will be presented to the congregation during the January annual meeting.
- Rev. Orem thanked all the Session for their work this year and gave a special thanks to Elder Jamie Ham, who will be rotating off the board after 3 years of dedicated service.
- Heather Casiano's job title is being changed from Family and Children Program Coordinator to Faith Development Coordinator as her job has evolved to reaching all ages in our congregation and outreach to the community. Her job description is being reworked to include more hours and

# SESSION SHORTS

- Rev. Tyler helped us review the many things that have been successful this past year: the success of our fundraisers, the generosity of our congregation, the support of the congregation for the mission projects, the hard work of our Finance Ministry, and the outreach we have achieved in streaming services and making worship more accessible to all.
  - Rev. Tyler reviewed the last Presbytery meeting where he was installed as moderator of the Presbytery of Wabash Valley for the coming year.
  - All ministries were reminded that the annual report should be in by the first week of January, and that they should review the website to recommend any updates.
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## Treasurer's Report

For the Month of  
November 30, 2021

	Month of November	Monthly Budget	Year to Date
Operating Revenue	\$19,964.42	\$9,226.93	\$142,579.22
Operating Expenses	13,690.16	13,873.77	140,556.69
Excess (Deficit)	\$6,274.26		\$2,022.53

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### Gifts were given in the month of December to the Endowment Fund:

In Memory of: Eason Engle, Norma Fross, Dr. Lowell Steen, Jane Vance

### These gifts were given by the following donors:

Steven & Sabrina Crooke, Stanley & Sara Hendricks, Linda Skaggs and Kaz Smailis



## Bringing Our Gifts to the Lord

by Pastor Tyler

In January we celebrate the Epiphany, our annual remembrance of the visit of the magi to the Holy Family in Bethlehem. Surely with the divine intervention of the Creator of the universes, a brilliant star led them to the place where the family had found refuge. They famously carried special gifts with them. Here is *Matthew's* account of those gifts: "On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh." Interpreters often attach a meaning to those gifts that goes way beyond their mere physical worth. It is often thought that the gift of gold was to represent the kingship of this child before them, as only gold would be fitting for a king. It is often thought that the gift of frankincense was to represent the divinity of this child before them, as frankincense was burned as an offering to please the gods. It is often thought that the gift of myrrh was to represent the truth that this child before them would experience an early death, as myrrh was commonly used for embalming.

As we continue to embody generosity as a spiritual practice, I encourage us to find meaning in the gifts that we give. Let us envision what our gifts might mean in the lives of those we serve, imagining how food, or kitchen supplies, or monetary assistance might change a life. Let us envision what our gifts might mean for our congregation as we continue to strive forward in sharing the Good News of God's love with the world. Let us envision what that Good News might mean for a world so desperately broken and hurting!

The magi brought gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. What do you carry in your treasure chests to give to the King, our God incarnate, the one who died so young in order to save us?





## YOUTH CONNECTIONS

Our youth and young adult members were busy in December, baking and decorating cookies for their annual Cookies and Caroling event. When the cookies were complete, the Youth Connections group delivered the cookies and sang Christmas carols at 7 church members' homes. Everyone had a great time!



The Youth Connections group also recorded their parts ahead of time for the Christmas Day worship service. If you haven't watched them tell the Nativity Story, you can find the recording of the Dec. 25 service on our church's website, Facebook and Youtube pages. Great job to all the youth and young adults who participated!

For January, Youth Connections will meet on Jan. 8<sup>th</sup> after worship for lunch, check-ins and a hands-on spiritual practice activity. On Jan. 22<sup>nd</sup>, in place of Youth Connection, the congregational annual meeting will take place after worship. This is a great time to celebrate what our congregation has done in the past year and to get ready for the next year of ministry in all areas of the church. I encourage all youth and young adults to stay for this meeting. We can sit together after worship if you'd like, and there will be a fun little game with prizes during the meeting for all Youth Connections participants who attend.

Youth Connections generally meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays each month after worship, with an occasional service project or local field trip at other times. Youth Connections is open to all youth in 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades, and young adults post-high school through mid-20s. If you would like to be involved with Youth Connections, please contact Heather Casiano or Pastor Tyler.



## ADULT CONNECTIONS

Adult Connections offerings are back in full swing this month!

- “The Bible in Today’s World” class starts back up on Jan. 8 and takes place each Sunday morning at 9 AM in the upstairs meeting room. They are finishing up the “Animate: Faith” curriculum, which includes short videos and lively group conversation. Contact John Toren or Bonnie Perryman with any questions.
- The Wednesday evening “BYOB” (Bring Your Own Bible) discussion starts up on January 4 and continues each Wednesday evening from 7-8 pm online on Zoom. We will start by looking at different hymns that tie into the lectionary readings, including the history of the hymns and the scripture passage referenced in the lyrics. The link to log on to Zoom is emailed out weekly. Contact Heather Casiano with any questions.

If you have an idea for a new small group or class, please let us know. We would love to help get a new group formed as there is interest. Groups can meet any day of the week, at the church or elsewhere. Share your ideas and we’ll help make them happen!

## ADVENTure Follow-Up

Thank you to everyone who attended the ADVENTure gatherings in November and December! We hoped they added to your observance and celebration of Advent leading up to Christmas. A special thank you to those who contributed to our congregation-wide art project by coloring in our lettered coloring sheets each of those 4 Sundays.

When put all together, those coloring sheets spell out “Emmanuel” – God with Us -- and create a mosaic representing the beauty of our congregation! Individually we each have our own colors, but together these colors make a beautiful picture of the kingdom of God. We can experience “God-with-us” Emmanuel when we see the image of God in each other and the gifts and talents we’ve each been given. If you haven’t seen the completed masterpiece, it is in the narthex above the double doors heading into the sanctuary.





## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

We have a new faith development opportunity for everyone this winter and spring:



Introducing **“Spiritual M&Ms”** – a weekly Meditation and Mindfulness class led by Jay Smith. This class will meet every Tuesday morning, starting on January 31<sup>st</sup>, from 10-11 am in the Fellowship Room at the church. Jay will use contemplative prayer, meditation, and other mindfulness techniques to help us enhance our own faith journeys. These classes are open to the community, so bring a friend or two along. All ages are welcome! “Spiritual M&Ms” will be a hybrid class, so if you aren’t able to make it in person, you will also be able to participate online on Zoom. Watch your email for the Zoom information toward the end of the month.

If you have any questions about this exciting new opportunity, contact Jay Smith or Heather Casiano.



### **Faith Development Visioning Session**

On Sunday, January 29, after worship the Faith Development committee will be holding a visioning session for 2023. We are always open to new team members, so if you would like to help discern where God is leading our congregation in faith development in 2023, this is a great opportunity to get involved. Lunch will be provided before we begin our visioning, dreaming and brainstorming that afternoon. If you would like to attend, please let Bonnie Perryman or Heather Casiano know ahead of time.

Starting in February, the Faith Development committee will meet on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday each month following the worship service. We’d love to have you join us!





## EXPLORING THE SCRIPTURES IN 2023

Congratulations to everyone who read any part of the Bible in 2022 – whether you completed the entire “Read the Bible in a Year” challenge or only read 1 day! The important part is that you made time to dive into God’s Word.

So we’ve read all or parts of the Bible in the last year – what’s next? Each month in the Larger View, we will be offering resources to help you get to know the scriptures even better. Perhaps there are passages you read and have questions about, or don’t understand. Maybe there is a particular book or books of the Bible you’d like to study more in-depth. Whatever your interest may be for becoming more familiar with what the Bible is saying to you, we can help.

This month’s highlighted resource is the collections of Bible commentaries in the church library. The library is in the classroom across the hall from the church office. There are a couple different series of commentaries, arranged by the books of the Bible. These volumes are written by various Biblical scholars and clergy offering their interpretations of the Scriptures, including explanations of the people, places and concepts mentioned. They can also provide information about who they believe wrote each book and the time period during which it was written. Commentary entries can often help you make connections between one Bible passage and others with a similar theme or idea.

If you prefer to look things up online, there are also a variety of Bible commentaries online. Consider these resources in your exploration of the Scriptures:

- Bible Gateway free collection of Biblical commentaries: <https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/commentaries/>
- Bible Hub collection of Bible commentaries: <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/>
- The Enduring Word Bible commentary: <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/>



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### PRAYER WALL

Our interactive prayer wall continues into the new year. Located inside Door D near the church office, the prayer wall is a hands-on way to express prayer needs and create visual prayer art. The many colorful ribbons represent prayers and praises for people and situations around the world, and there is room for many more!

The next time you are in the church building, feel free to add one or more ribbons to the prayer wall, and take a moment to pray for the situations represented on there already.



### January Liturgists:

1/1: Nancy Veltman  
 1/8: Jean Smith  
 1/15: Robbie Casiano  
 1/22: Tracy Oprea  
 1/29: Bonnie Perryman



### January LiveStreaming

1/1: Jean Smith  
 1/8: Robbie Casiano  
 1/15: Tristan Casiano  
 1/22: Jamie Ham  
 1/29: Tracy Oprea

**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

Peter & Gale Churitch, in honor of their 40<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary

Lois Fozkos, in memory of family

Rodney & Peggy Fozkos, in memory of loved ones

Lexa Miller, in memory of her parents

Rev. Tyler Orem, in memory of Pappy, Aunt Teresa, Raymond Gudino

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

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

Diane Yeazell, in memory of Jim & Norma Wilson



## December Shelter Report

We had the privilege of having 7 girl scouts join us for the food preparation on Saturday, December 10. They have been with us before and want to come back to assist again. After preparing the food and even washing the dishes, they made Christmas cards for the clients in the shelter. Thank you so much for joining us!!



## PANTRY DELIVERY



This pantry delivery went to the Veterans Life Changing Services. There were 22 bags and boxes! They received this bounty right before Thanksgiving, so they had many items to select from for the holiday.

So, now we start all over again to collect items that can be passed on to the Salvation Army. Grab a decorated bag in the narthex and fill it with as many items as you can and bring it to church with you. Thank you for helping those less fortunate.



A huge thank you to all who participated in the bell ringing for the Salvation Army. They so appreciate our being willing to help them out each year even if it's only one day a week. We are stretching our volunteers, but somehow we have succeeded another year!



Thank you to everyone who baked and bought items at the Bake Sale on Sunday, December 18th!





Installation of Officers will be during  
Worship on Sunday, January 8th



The Annual Congregational Meeting  
will be on Sunday, January 22nd,  
after Worship



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.



The 2023 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!*



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





# Prayers & CONCERNS



## Pray For...



Anthony  
George Nelson  
Brady Vanes  
George Griner  
Guy Hendricks  
Bill and Anettia Holmes  
Daniel Litwicki  
David Markley  
David Kingen  
Carmelo  
Diana and Ray Mendoza  
Janet Orem  
John Mullen  
Jeanne Nestor  
Cindy Waltz and Sister  
Andrew Bobalik  
Gale Snyder  
Yvonne Suroviak  
U. Chong  
Wendy  
Georgette Sknerski  
Jakob Holden  
Denise Matthys  
Steve & Melinda  
Gary Studer  
Jan Oprea  
Janet Vargo  
Robbie  
Kate Abernethy  
Betty Strauser  
Peter Churitch  
Chuck Murphy  
Piper  
Bill Yarling

Laura Buono Domsic  
The Windstrups  
Ruth Dekker  
Rick Parker  
Barbara Morton  
Caroline Studer  
Robert Lestina  
Cary and Jennifer Pearson  
Carol Finley  
Huilin  
Holly Letnich  
Lily Renfro  
Marla and Jerry Renfro  
Jaden Mendez  
Frank Falzone  
Myrna Grove  
Doug and Sue Matthews  
Kiki Ho  
Janet Terpstra and Family  
Robert Urich  
Richard Simmons  
Glen Nahler  
Claudia Szymaszek  
Tammy  
Tony B  
Tom  
Renee Williams  
Jana Tolley  
John Tolbert  
Kathy Elroy  
Shirley McKnight  
Jay Smith  
Mary Keilman  
Charlene Calabro

- We pray for victims and survivors of gun violence.
- We pray for peace and peacemakers!
- 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 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).