

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF HIGHLAND



THE LARGER VIEW



Volume 13 Issue 10

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A Note from Rev. Tyler

Matthew 25 Church

**Kids, Youth and Adult
Connections**

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Dear All,

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

It has been a true blessing over the past month to see our Fall activities come to life in creative and exciting ways! You may have noticed in our bulletin announcements and will see in this issue that we are using the language of CONNECTIONS to describe our opportunities for growing in faith. This is a wonderfully apt framework because our faith finds its nourishment fully in connecting with each other and connecting with God. My prayer is that all of you feel fully connected to your FPCH family no matter how you are able to join us in the midst of this pandemic—physically, spiritually, and virtually. If you feel disconnected or would like to be more connected, please do reach out to me and to each other. We are all in this together!

Speaking of being in this together, I am thrilled to announce that our Session voted on September 21, 2020, to accept the invitation to be part of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s Matthew 25 initiative. This initiative takes to heart the mission set forth by Jesus with these words: "Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me

*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*

food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.” The initiative seeks to live into this mission by focusing on three areas: 1) Building Congregational Vitality, 2) Dismantling Structural Racism, and 3) Eradicating Systemic Poverty. As our Session discussed this invitation, we named several ways in which we are already living into the Matthew 25 call. And for that, let me affirm all of you in the good and faithful manner that you serve the Lord by serving the most vulnerable! I encourage you to do your own brainstorming to name the ways that we as a church family are addressing these three focus areas. Now let us commit to doing even more! Stay tuned for opportunities to explore, engage, and enact—in short, to connect!—on this commitment. You can begin your exploration here: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/>.

As temperatures begin to drop, it is likely that we will soon need to move our worship services indoors. When we do so, we will follow the same mitigation protocols that we have followed on rainy Sundays in order to maximize health. That includes having doors and windows open for better ventilation, so feel free to bring whatever you need to bundle up! We will stay outdoors as long as we can, though...so again, feel free to bring whatever you need to bundle up! You will notice that I have begun to take some much needed time for rest and rejuvenation, with guest preachers stepping in about once a month for the remainder of the year. We will be blessed by their wisdom and perspectives. On that note, I encourage all of you to take care of yourselves with intention—physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually—as we continue to navigate the deeply challenging wilderness of our current times together. Remember that through it all our great Jehovah is guiding us and providing for us, our Lord Jesus is loving us and interceding for us, and our Holy Spirit is inspiring us and giving us life.

I leave you with the encouragement to imagine the frame story surrounding the Matthew 25 call, with Jesus coming back to make all things right. “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him.” Imagine that glory, and be renewed!

In Christ,

Rev. Tyler Orem



From the Presbyterian Church (USA) Website

What is a Matthew 25 church?

Matthew 25:31–46 calls all of us to actively engage in the world around us, so our faith comes alive and we wake up to new possibilities. Convicted by this passage, both the 222nd and 223rd General Assemblies (2016 and 2018) exhorted the PC(USA) to act boldly and compassionately to serve people who are hungry, oppressed, imprisoned or poor. There are already PC(USA) congregations that identify themselves as Matthew 25 churches. We aim to help multiply this loving commitment to radical and fearless discipleship by partnering with mid councils and congregations to help them embrace one or more of these three focuses:

- **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.

How the vision unites all Presbyterians

By accepting the Matthew 25 invitation, you can help our denomination become a more relevant presence in the world. We recognize Christ's urgent call to be a church of action, where God's love, justice and mercy shine forth and are contagious. And we rejoice how our re-energized faith can unite all Presbyterians for a common and holy purpose: our common identity to do mission.

SESSION SHORTS

Session met on September 20, 2020 at 6:30 PM

Check out the note, from our Treasurer Vince Catania:

The Trustees are in the process of getting the boiler replaced, installing new bricks, and they have finished replacing a toilet in one of the rest rooms. They are also looking into changing our internet server from AT&T to Comcast.

Finance is going to continue with the current budget for 2021.

Faith Development has changed Sunday School to “Youth Connections” and “Adult Connections.” BYOB (Bring your own Bible) is up and running every Wednesday Evening at 7:00 PM via ZOOM. They are planning something special for Reformation Sunday, November 1, 2020 (this is also All Saints Day).

We are looking to restart Prayer Shawl and Book Club. Details will be sent to the congregation.

Session agreed with Ministry of Mission to do Bell Ringing starting the week before Thanksgiving and possibly do Habitat Tree trimming project. Details to follow.

Worship and Music is looking into additional ways to have music in the worship service. Communion is going well, and the outdoor services are working. As to when we go back to the sanctuary depends on the weather. So maybe around mid to late October.

We voted to become a Matthew 25 Church. This is a Church that basically supports the needs of the community and follows the guidelines of Matthew 25. We will get the brochure and have some available.

With sad hearts ,we accepted the transfer of Laura Jones. She has been such an asset to our church home.

If you have not received your church Directory, please let us know.



TREASURER'S REPORT

For the Month of
August 31, 2020

	Month of August	Monthly Budget	Year to Date
Operating Revenue	\$8,664.20	\$10,553.00	\$87,102.47
Operating Expenses	10,437.36	13,424.00	83,874.14
Excess (Deficit)	(\$1,773.16)		\$3,228.33



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

In Memory of: Barb Dye

In Honor of Sharon LaFlech for making masks and in Honor of Linda Skaggs

These gifts were given by the following donors:

Vince & Debbie Catania

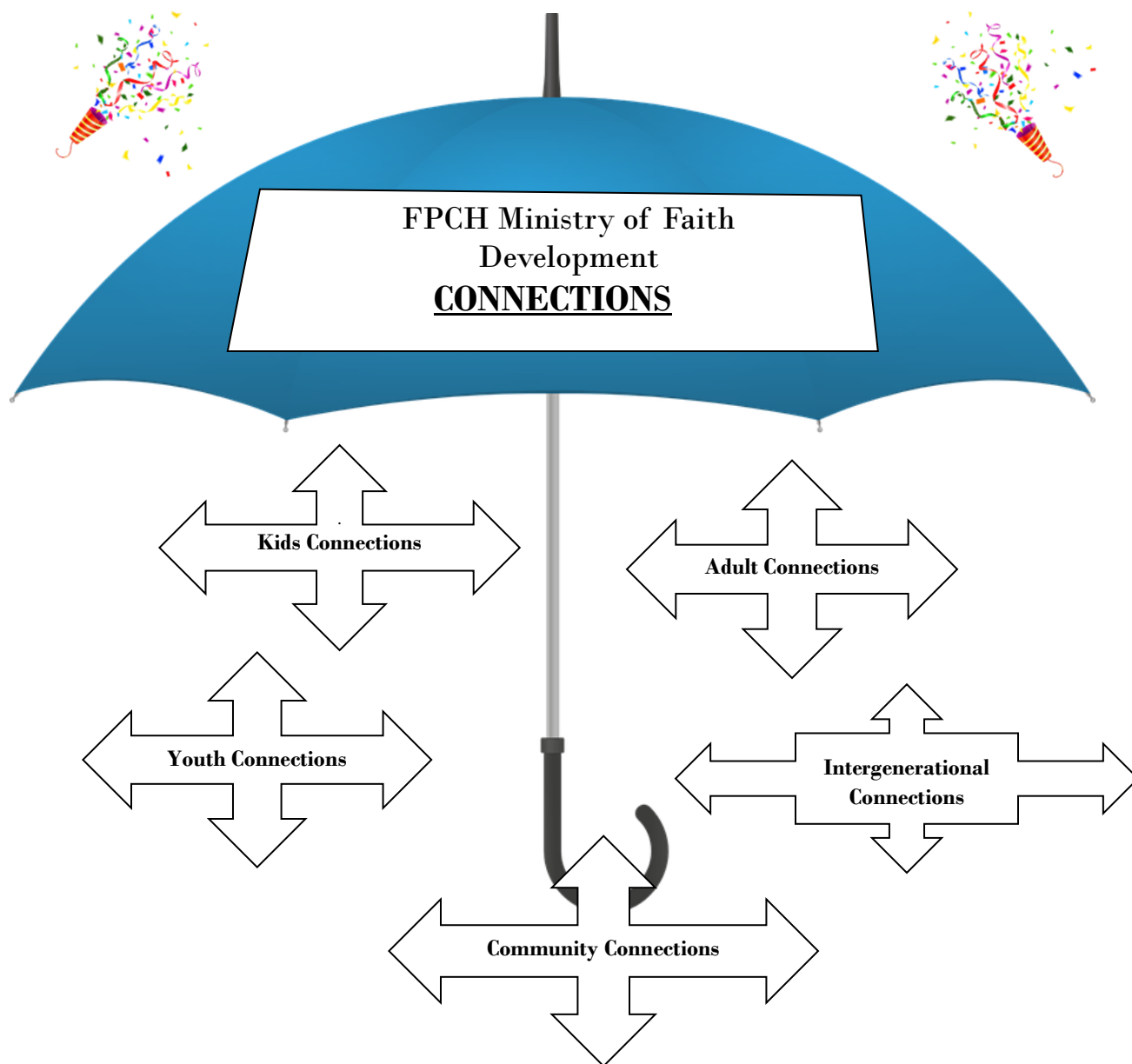
Gifts were given:

To the Food Pantry by Christine Small



From the Ministry of Faith Development comes...

CONNECTIONS!



We're updating the name we use for all the various faith development offerings at our church. We want to be more reflective of our purpose – providing opportunities to make **Connections** with God, with Jesus, with the Bible, with each other, and with the community. Under the **Connections** “umbrella” are several options for you to participate. We haven't gotten rid of anything, and in fact are optimistic about the many things we can bring to our family of faith in the future!



Our current **Connections** are:

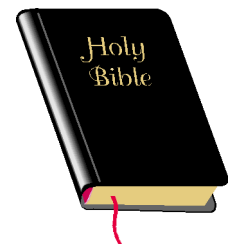
Kids Connections – (formerly known as Sunday School) **Kids Connections** is a work in progress to provide faith lessons and resources to families of elementary-age children to do at home while we are not able to have in-person gatherings.

Youth Connections – (formerly known as Youth Group) **Youth Connections** is for all youth in grades 6-12. We meet on the 2nd & 4th Sundays each month after worship (about 11:30 am) to 1 pm. This great group of middle and high school youth share a faith lesson, a time of fun and games, and do service and mission projects throughout the year. October **Youth Connections** are on Oct. 11th & 25th. A face mask or other facial covering is required, and social distancing will be maintained. Bring a snack if you'd like and a friend – everyone is welcome!

Adult Connections – (formerly known as Adult Sunday School) Two options this season!

1. **Sunday Study Group**: This group meets each Sunday from 9-10 am in the church's Fellowship Hall for some Bible study and discussion following a quarterly theme. Books are provided, but you may want to bring your own Bible if you have one. A face mask is required, and social distancing will be used as much as possible. For more information on this group, contact Carol Callaway.
2. **BYOB (Bring Your Own Bible)**: This group is a mid-week online discussion group using Zoom. It takes place from 7-8 pm each Wednesday. Each week's discussion is based on the Scripture passage(s) from the previous Sunday's worship service. If you don't have access to a computer, you can also join by phone. Each discussion is independent of the others, so you can jump in anytime and not miss anything.

As pandemic conditions improve in the future and it is safer to gather in person more often, we are looking to add **Intergenerational Connections** and **Community Connections**. Stay tuned for updates!



This Photo by

If you have questions about any of the new **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 or 575-932-9716 (cell phone).



August Shelter Report

We had an unexpected guest visit the usual chefs for the preparation of the August meal for the shelter.

Rev. Tyler joined us and learned how to make a dump cake. We find that he has a great potential for becoming a super chef!! We thank him for his participation.

The usual crew was there and did a wonderful job: Jamie Ham, Judy Toren, myself and my two newest regular members, Sandy and Sherry.

We still just deliver the meal and don't serve due to the virus. I found that the shelter continues to be negative for COVID-19, which is wonderful. The number of people living there has decreased because a social worker is trying to find as many homes for the people as he can. We still make 20 box lunches and provide fruit for those that don't live in the shelter. Through our work with Love INC., we have been able to help with the kitchen supplies for 4 of these individuals.

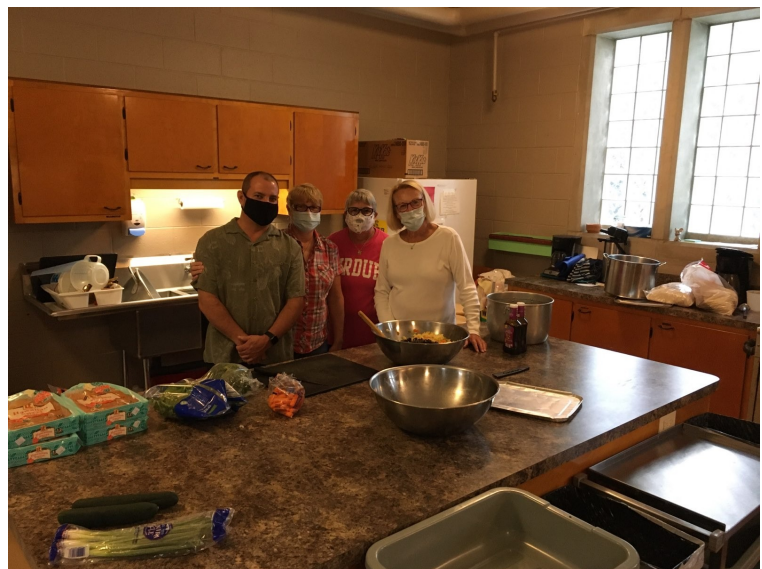
We still continue to receive a lot of food from St. Timothy's church pantry in Griffith. They have been so generous with their donations. We have been able to share some of these items with Sharon LaFlech and her Saturday sack lunches.

I also want to thank Jeff Savage for being "on call" and helping me transport the items to our kitchen. Many times the cases are just too heavy for me to handle.

Even though we are not having regular church services indoors, our pantry work is continuing, so please stop by and drop off a can or two for those in the need.

Thank you for your support!

Cheryl





Bell Choir



Handbells will have rehearsals on
Thursdays at 6:30
starting September 3rd



October liturgists:

10/4 - Tracy Oprea
10/11 - Jean Smith
10/18 - Charlotte Abernethy
10/25- John Toren



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.



Carolyn Ham

3731 Sandlewood Drive
Highland, IN 46322
219-595-5530



OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

4	Cheryl Steen
13	Nolan Severson
15	Bob Abernethy
17	Lois Fozkos
	Pam Porter
	Eric Severson
19	Carol Callaway
23	Dennis Van Kooten



Prayers of Christian Sympathy to:

- Treva Sheets and family on the death of Dennis Sheets on September 16th
- The Family of Umaru Savage



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
 Connor (L. Fozkos)
 Dakota (Steen)
 Danielle
 Dave
 Laura Buono Domsic
 Frank (K. Scott)
 George Griner
 Guy (B. Perryman)
 Susan Hanley (Studer)
 Gracie Helmer
 Bill Holmes
 Jessica (Abernethy)
 Abelardo Lacano
 Steve Lekan (P. Fozkos)
 Holly Letnich
 Daniel Litwicki (Catania)
 Tony Martinez
 Mary (Callaway)
 Mary & Gary (T. Oprea)
 Shirley McKnight and family
 Ray Mendoza

Mildred (B. Perryman)
 Jill Muller (Steen)
 Jeanne Nestor
 Janet Orem
 Jon Orem
 Josh Orem
 Sharon Orem
 Rena's cousin
 Rick Parker
 Rhonda Penman
 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
 Dennis VanKooten
 Mattie Welch (Rena Martinez)
 Cindy Waltz Family

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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).