The Presbyterian
A Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church
November 2026

Exalting Christ.
Denying Ourselves.
Loving Our Neighbors.

A Light in the Window

Sunday mornings can be a dangerous time for pastors. When I say that, I'm not thinking primarily of the worship service (though that is the case for some) but of the time immediately following the service. The experience is familiar to every pastor I've talked with over the years, regardless of church size or any other factor: people come up to you and want you to do something for them or for someone else, or they want to put something on your schedule, and they walk away thinking, "Mission accomplished." It's perfectly natural and understandable. If we want to talk to someone and we know we have a built-in time of the week when we'll have the opportunity to do so, we're going to take advantage of that opportunity. Indeed, I've done this to other pastors, and I've had other pastors do the same to me.

To be clear, the problem is *not* that I don't want to talk to people after worship, or that pastors in general don't. I'm sure there are some who don't, but I've never had a colleague say so. In particular, that can be a wonderful time of the week for conversations related to the service, whether questions raised by the sermon, a thought sparked by one of the songs, or what have you. It is, however, a terrible time for memory formation. Even for pastors who aren't generally absent-minded, if we don't get something down on the calendar or a to-do list right that moment, we most likely won't remember—but most people assume we will. Again, that's perfectly understandable; it's just not realistic.

Thinking about this a while back, it occurred to me there are two kinds of people who want to talk to the pastor after the service. (I'm fond of "two kinds of people" jokes—"There are two kinds of waiters, those who can remember what you order and those who bring you what you order"—but this is not that.) One, there are the people who want to talk to you because mentally and spiritually, they're still engaged with worship (whether the sermon, the songs, something else, or some combination) and they want to talk about it. They might be motivated by curiosity, or something they're struggling with, or simply the desire to not let go of worship quite yet, but whatever it might be, it's still in the flow of the service. (Which, I will note, makes it easier to remember if they want to schedule an appointment or to have something done.)

Two, there are people who have a different agenda, and as soon as the service is over, they flip back to that agenda. It might be an argument they're pursuing, a disagreement they have with someone else in the congregation, a political position with which they want agreement or for which they want support, an old grievance they've never released, or something else altogether. It's not necessarily a bad thing. Sometimes, in fact, it can be an agenda of celebration and blessing. Over the years, for example, I've bought more boxes of Girl Scout cookies on Sunday morning than any other time of the week. More often than not, however, external agendas are disruptive, and those pursued in a spirit of anger, irritation, frustration, hostility, malice, and/or judgment can be actively destructive. I've seen meaningful spiritual harm done to people in such moments; I've *suffered* such harm myself.

For my part, I would only ask that if you want to schedule something with me or ask me to do something, please don't let me forget to grab my phone (which I probably won't have on me) and get it properly recorded in the moment. Even if I do get it recorded, if you're gracious enough to follow up with me later in the week on top of that, I will be grateful. It's too easy for me to trust myself to remember something even when I have many years of experience telling me I probably won't. Beyond that, there's only the acknowledgement that if our Enemy can't keep us *out* of worship, he's going to try to *ruin* our worship. I'm not down on Girl Scout cookies or band

fundraisers or introductions to children or grandchildren—I think Jesus makes it clear that tasty food and cute kids both contribute to our worship. If we have something to argue about, though, even if it's something churchy, better we leave it at home and take it up later. God calls us to worship, and our worship should be all about him. You probably already knew that . . . but he asked me to remind you.



Group and Committee Dates



November

Adult Sunday school will resume on November 29 @ 9:00 am for a 4 week Advent Artwork study.

Finance Team – The next Finance Team meeting will be in December @ 3:00.

Deacon's Meeting – The next Deacon's meeting will be in December @ 6:30.

Gamma Delta will meet October 15th at 12:30 at Pepes

Session Meeting – The Session will meet on Thursday, November 19th @ 6:00.

Presbyterian Men - The Presbyterian Men's Bible Study meets each **Friday @ 7:00 AM, at the Pelican.** All men of FPC are invited to attend.



Don't forget to turn your clocks back
Sunday , November 1st (before you go to bed)



Birthdays

2	Emily Fox
10	Duane Rios
15	Dave Hablitzel
16	Carol Griffith, Alayna Hablitzel
22	Carson Britton
23	Cory Myers
28	Mary Ann Basinger, Hannah Schafer Julie Wells

Anniversaries

1 Ron & Marcia Burkhart

Ushers/Greeters

01 – Lori Rager
08 –
15 – Harley & Rachel Shaum
22 –
29 -

Flowers

01 – Al & Michelle Bacon
08 –
15 – Lori Rager
22 –
29 -

Liturgist

01 –
08 – Tasha Nickler
15 – Lori Rager
22 –
29 -

Prayer Requests

Shut-ins

Barb Leuthold, former secretary, Parkinson's, at Orchard Park
Donna Watts, at home, cards appreciated
Phyllis Reed, Commonwealth Senior Living at the Devonshire, 2220 Executive Drive, Apt 171, Hampton, Virginia 23666
Chet Johnston, cards can be sent to Altercare, Room 108. He would appreciate visitors.
Tom Ahlefeld, recuperating from surgery at Mill Creek Rehab, 900 Wedgewood Circle, Galion

Cancer

Sawyer Dennison, radiation treatments for a tumor, Cindy Inscho's 15 year old nephew
Jim Scott, Colon Cancer, Kathy Bardon's nephew
Marcia Dishon, continued prayers
Eliza Cole, completed radiation, Phyllis Cole's granddaughter
Sophie Beck, relative of Courtney Posey
Annette Cheney, metastatic breast cancer, friend of Kathy Bardon
Amanda Compton, Lori Rager's step-daughter

Surgery

Barb Price, up-coming knee surgery
Deb Hablitzel, recuperating from back surgery
Bob Thompson – Shoulder surgery

Members, Family and Friends of Members:

***Eva Cole**, Phyllis's daughter-in-law, safe travels (10-27 to 11/12) to Columbia South America on a mission trip to empower & bring the gospel to all abused women.
Judy Eichhorn, recuperating at home
Abigail Sutherland, Dishon's granddaughter
Pastor Rob's mother, Shari
Patty Neff for caring for her sister who has had a sudden loss of memory
Gary Bishop, Lauren Bishop's father
Donna Parsons, friend of Kathy Bardon
Kaitlyn Bardon
Simon, Courtney Posey's friend
Kathy Hildebrand, Courtney's Mother
Whitney Hildebrand, Courtney Posey's sister
Jenny McKee, torn retina, friends of Kathy Bardon
Becky Bellamy, Parkinson's, sister of Kathy Bardon

Military:

Keagan Rios, Gennie Rios grandson
Levi Diebler, member and Carrie Diebler's son
Grayson Robinson, Tami Robinson's grandnephew

First Presbyterian
Church News

Music Concert

Please join us as we welcome back Dr. Frederick Ripley and Joshua Brodbeck for a wonderful Violin & Viola and Organ concert on Sunday November 15 at 3:00 PM here at the church. Refreshments to follow.

Mission Team

The Mission Team will receive **the Salvation Army Christmas tags on November 5th**. All gifts will need to be back to the church by December 13th and will be delivered to the Salvation Army December 14th. The tree will not be up **yet** so the tags will be displayed on the table outside the church office.

Shoebox information – Shoeboxes are due on November 1st, 8th and 15th. There are copies of the list things for boys and girls that are allowed to be packed in the shoebox as well as a sheet covering the items that cannot be added to the shoebox, over by the empty boxes.

200th Anniversary
Planning Committee
1828-2028

In less than two years' time, our church will be celebrating its 200th anniversary! What an *amazing opportunity* for us to be part of this moment in history. As such, we are looking to form a "Think Tank" committee to begin generating ideas for what this momentous celebration should be. The initial planning committee is for idea generating, so anyone can be part of it. (Worker Bees will be asked to take part later!) It would be great to have a wide variety of ages represented. If you are interested, please contact Pastor Rob or any of the elders, Michelle Bacon in the church office, or Jan Fulton.

Congratulations Harley Shaum

Mohawk Track Coach Harley Shaum has earned Coach of the Monty honors from Lewis Family McDonald's in recognition of his work with student-athletes.

Shaum has spent three years coaching, including two years at Mohawk and one as a head coach. Having been involved in sports throughout his school years, he says he has always loved the idea of coaching the next generation.

Shaum said one of the most rewarding aspects of watching his athletes grow has been seeing them develop into hard-working and disciplined young men and women.

Shaum says he is very honored to be named Coach of the Month.
"It means a lot to know that what we are doing here is showing its results," says Shaum.

For the full article see Crawford County Now.

From My Cozy Corner Office

GOD, the Lord, is my strength;
he makes my feet like the deer's;
he makes me tread on my high places.

So ends the book of Habakkuk, chapter 3, verse 19. Our adult Sunday school class recently concluded an excellent study on this minor prophet. I think we all came away with fresh insights and renewed comfort that our sovereign Lord **is** in control and will use all manner of people and circumstances to bring about his purposes, even when and sometimes especially when we cannot see it or understand it. Many thanks to elder Jake Ritzhaupt for leading us. Jake will be taking time to dig into the other minor prophets, and so we will resume this study in the new year. Watch for that announcement.

In the meantime, Advent is fast approaching! Sunday, November 29 is the first Sunday in Advent. In 2024 we enjoyed an excellent 4-week study of sacred artwork focusing on the coming of the Christ child. While Jake takes time to prepare for our next series, let's gather and be inspired by sacred art as we prepare for the birth of Christ. All new art will be discussed and a few new tidbits will be offered for your Sunday morning reflections. You won't want to miss this!

As you gather with family and friends for the Thanksgiving feast, remember that we can rejoice in times of plenty and in poverty: our God reigns! Be joyful in the Lord and I'll see you in worship.

Blessings,
Marcia
Director of Spiritual Care

To Contact the Church

First Presbyterian Church Phone: 419-562-0861
PO Box 67
125 S. Poplar Street
Facebook: The First Presbyterian Church
Email: info@firstpresbucyrus.org
Bucyrus, Ohio 44820

Staff

Robert Harrison *Pastor*
Marcia Stout *Director of Spiritual Care*
Michelle Bacon *Administrative Assist*
Jan Fulton *Church Treasurer*
Deloris Kruse *Janitorial Service*

Session Elders

Rev. Rob Harrison, Moderator

Michelle Bacon, Clerk of Session

Class of 2027
Tom Britton
419-569-2988

Al Fulton
419-563-8277
afjlton@rrohio.com

Class of 2028
Harley Shaum
419-564-2733
hshaum35.hs@gmail.com

Jacob Rithaupt
314-322-3483
jacobritzhaupt@gmail.com

Class of 2029
Brydan Lohr
419-569-0368
brydanlohr@hotmail.co

Board of Deacons

Jan Fulton – Moderator
Courtney Posey
Sandra Britton
Barb Price
Victoria Lohr
Tami Robinson