

# The Presbyterian

## A Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church

December 2024

Exalting Christ. Denying Ourselves. Loving our Neighbors.

### THE TERRITORY AHEAD

Hello Church Family! As you know we all are on a JOURNEY TOGETHER toward THE TERRITORY AHEAD. This journey includes both: keeping the church operational (lining up sermons and services, as well as day-to-day operations) -- and -- working through the process of bringing on a new pastor. First, our Pastor Search Committee is continuing the process to locate the right person to fill our vacancy. As you heard in Chairman Jake Ritzhaupt's update on November 17, we did have one candidate that we strongly zeroed in on. Being a young man, he had not yet served as pastor of any church, but his credentials and his heart seemed to check all our boxes. Unfortunately in the end, he and his family decided it was not currently in their best interests to relocate from their area. He has been working full-time as a Hospice-Chaplain and it appears he may also be called to a second/additional job in the ministry. Both in recently talking to us about his decision (and also to our Presbytery's Ministerial Committee) he had nothing but good things to say about our church and our leadership (which says a lot about our community of faith). With regret, our Search Committee is moving on to other candidates that have expressed interest. Please continue to keep our Church Family, our Search Committee and all potential candidates in your thoughts and prayers, as we seek God's Guidance on getting together with the right person. God certainly has someone already in-mind to fill this opening. This reminds me of the Old Testament story of the priest/prophet Samuel being called by God to meet with the sons of Jesse, one of whom was to be chosen by God to become the next king. Samuel went down the line of Jesse's sons, thinking each in-term would surely be God's chosen one, but God said no. Finally Jesse called in from the fields his youngest son and the Lord said "arise, anoint him, for this is he". And the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon David from that day forward.

Second, it's hard to believe but the Season of Advent, Christmas and the New Year are right around the corner. Soon our sanctuary and other areas of the church will be "dressed" for the season, in all the familiar trappings that are part of our traditions and also which signify our hopes of God's promises for the future. In this time of celebration, we join churches all around the world in proclaiming our faith in the birth, life and resurrection of God's Son, Jesus Christ the Messiah. Advent is a season of anticipation and preparation. Each Sunday during Advent (beginning on December 1st) we will begin each service centered around our Advent Wreath -- which is a circular garland of evergreen branches representing eternity. On that wreath, five candles are arranged, each of which represents an aspect of the spiritual preparation for the coming of our Lord. Families or individuals give devotional readings while lighting the candles on the Advent Wreath, adding a meaningful dimension to our worship. In this way, we repeat the traditions of the church, as a way of deepening and making our spiritual preparations more intimate and personal. Throughout Advent, Pastor Josh Hanson of the Findlay Gateway Church will be providing our sermon messages (except for December 22 when Josh's predecessor Pastor Ben will be the speaker). On Christmas Eve at 7:00pm a special worship service is being planned by Marcia Stout, our Director of Spiritual Care -- this service will include biblical readings and hymn singing, in a slightly different presentation than what we've done over the few years. Please be sure to attend and bring your friends and neighbors !

In each of the upcoming Newsletter Articles, we will continue to remind us all that - the overall process of securing a new pastor will take time and much patience and prayer. As always, if you have any comments or questions, we strongly encourage you to reach out to any of our current Session Members.

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## Group and Committee Dates



For December 2024



Ladies there is a special message for you at the end of the  
Newsletter from Good Hope

**Session Meeting** - The Elders will not meet in December.

**Deacon's Meeting** – The Deacons will meet on **Wednesday, December 11, @ 6:15 PM.**

**Gamma Delta** - The Gamma Delta group will meet on **Thursday, December 19<sup>th</sup> @ 12:30** for their annual Christmas Potluck and wrapping gifts for the Salvation Army.

**Finance Team** will meet in January, date to be announced.

**Discipleship Groups** – The **Ladies' Discipleship Group** will meet at **6:30 PM** on Tuesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Ladies Discipleship** will **not** meet during the months of January and February.

The **Men's Discipleship Group** will meet on Tuesday December 10<sup>th</sup> @ 7:00 PM

**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.



*Please Join December 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM*

*for our Christmas Eve Service*

**“People and Places of the Nativity”**



### Happy Birthday

- 3 Tim Mutchler
- 15 Tami Robinson
- 19 Victoria Lohr
- 25 Chet Johnston, Janet Kohls
- 31 Kevin Kohls,

### Anniversary

- 28 Alan & Michelle Bacon

### Liturgist

- 01 – Tom Britton
- 08 – Tami Robinson
- 15 – Lori Rager
- 22 – Tami Robinson
- 29 - Marcia Stout

### Worship Leaders & Sermon

- 01 – Tami Robinson – Gateway
- 08 – Tami Robinson – Gateway
- 15 – Tami Robinson - Gateway
- 24 – Marcia Stout – Al Fulton

### Ushers/Greeters

- 01 – Lori Rager
- 08 –
- 15 – Tami Robinson
- 22 – Gary Irwin

### Flowers

- 01 – Al & Mary Ann Basinger
- 08 –
- 15 – Tami Robinson
- 22 – Christmas
- 29 – Tasha Nickler



### Shut-Ins:

Mary Lou Hastings, Sue Headley,  
Joe Ann Johns is currently in Altercare, 1929  
Whetstone Street, Room 411. Prayers & cards  
are greatly appreciated.  
Chet Johnston, cards can be sent to Altercare,  
Room 108. He would appreciate visitors.

### Cancer

Annette Cheney, a friend of Kathy Bardon  
Amanda Compton, Lori Rager's step-daugh-  
ter

### Surgery

Jeri Hargis, Knee Replacement  
Nedra Baum, Judy Diederich's daughter  
Kathy Hildebrand, Courtney's Mother, re-  
ceived a liver transplant

### Members, Family and Friends of Mem- bers:

Judy Eichhorn, prayers for acceptance, en-  
durance and patience while Judy lives with  
chronic pain  
Bob Thompson, heart issues  
Dan Price  
Lou Ross, Lori Rager's Dad, Dementia  
Whitney Hildebrand, Courtney Posey's sister  
Abigail Sutherland, recovering from heart  
surgery, Dishon's granddaughter  
Mike McKee, Heart problem. Friend 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 grand-  
nephew

## First Presbyterian Church News

### **Kudos and Updates from Jan:**

**A huge thank you** to everyone who helped Marcia Stout with the Caregiver's Luncheon on October 27th. Kudos to Courtney, Mary Ann and Alan for their delicious soups and condiments and to Sue and Tami for the tasty pies and salads. Thank you to Vickie, Tasha, Mary Ann and Alan for assisting our deacons with service and clean up. Marcia planned a lovely time of respite and nourishment for some of our dear and faithful caregivers.

**Many thanks to everyone** who made a pledge to support our church financially in 2025. It is comforting to know how many of you are committed to the security of our church home, programming and staff.

I think we were all very happy to be able to share our church with our Good Hope Lutheran neighbors after their steeple was compromised by the April tornado. Patti Neff was kind enough to gift us with her beautiful organ music during the months that her congregation attended our church. I will have a card for Patti that everyone may sign showing our love and gratitude for her stellar talent and gift of love to us.

Good Hope gave us \$1,800.00 as a thank you for allowing them to use our facilities. We will be splitting that between B.O.R.N. and the Salvation Army. Just as we helped our Good Hope neighbors, it is only fitting that this money be passed on to two important organizations in our community that continually serve our neighbors in need.

2024 pledges will be wrapping up in December and must have a 2024 date on them in order to be included with 2024 receipts. If you need to know the balance due on your pledge, please let me know. Also, if you sponsored bulletins or worship flowers

and have not paid for them yet, please do so before the end of December.

Christmas cards will be added to the free cards and stamps located in the Resource Center. Please help yourselves!

 Kudos to everyone who stepped up to help decorate for Christmas. Many hands definitely make light work!!

The order form for poinsettias can be found in the body of this newsletter. Please have your orders with payment in to the church by Sunday, December 15th. They will be displayed on Sunday, December 22nd, and you may take yours home after the Christmas Eve service on December 24th.



**The Deacons** will host a light lunch with Wassail on Sunday, December 15th, right after worship. Don't forget: If you would like to donate cookies, please let me know! Last year we had enough cookies so that everyone was able to fill a plate with a delicious variety of sweets to take home and enjoy.

Jan Fulton, Treasurer, 419/561-0263

### Greetings from my Cozy Corner Office!

My mother always said, "Time goes faster as you get older." I have certainly found her words to be true. Here we are preparing for the Christmas season once again. This year I am excited to be hosting a special, 4-week adult Sunday school, and I hope you will join me as we look at religious artwork that goes with the messages of Advent: Hope, Faith, Joy, and Peace. We will discuss two pieces of art each week in Fellowship Hall, beginning on December 1 at 9:30. Prepare your minds and hearts to be inspired!



Additionally, **our Christmas Eve service** will be held at 7 p.m. this year and I know you will be blessed. We will be shining a light on the ordinary people and places of the Nativity. The service will be a beautiful time for us to unite as the body of Christ, remember His birth, and celebrate the gift of God's love and unending mercy. Prepare your minds and hearts to worship the Birth of the King!

May you find many moments to worship in spirit and in truth all through December and beyond.

**Ladies' Discipleship** concludes their book study of John MacArthur's *Twelve Extraordinary Women* on Tuesday, December 3 at 6:30. We will be discussing Ch. 11 "Lydia: A Hospitable Heart Opened" and the "Epilogue." We will also be having a Christmas potluck. Marcia will provide the drinks and table service; everyone else is asked to bring a dish to share.



**Advent wreath lighting volunteers are as follows:**

December 1 The Purple Candle of Hope  
Kathy, Kaitlyn & Peyton Bardon  
December 8 The Purple Candle of Faith  
Howard and Lucy Gilliland  
December 15 The Pink Candle of Joy  
The Ritzhaupt Family  
December 22 The Purple Candle of Peace  
Brydan and Victoria Lohr  
Christmas Eve The White Christ Candle  
The Britton Family  
Thank you, volunteers!

Stay tuned for another special **adult Sunday school beginning on February 16. *The Passion of the Christ, Fifty Reasons Why Jesus Suffered and Died* by John Piper.** It will be a wonderful Lenten study. I hope you will make plans to join us.

## **"Advent Artwork"**

**A special, 4-week, Adult Sunday School Class**

**December 1, 8, 15, and 22  
at 9:30 in Fellowship Hall  
Marcia Stout, leader**

Join us as we explore religious artwork that depicts images central to the messages of Advent: Hope, Faith, Joy, and Peace.



## **To First Presbyterian Ladies from Good Hope**

Dean Ladies of the Presbyterian Church, The members of Good Hope were welcomed so graciously to your church when we were forced to vacate our building that we, WELCA Board members, **wanted to extend an invitation to you to join our ladies for a Christmas Gathering.**

This gathering will be on **Monday, December 2, at 12:00 with a lunch in the church dining room and some fun and fellowship.** We will be singing a few Christmas tunes and carols, playing a crazy game or two, and joyfully looking forward to the birth of our Savior after enjoying a lunch (menu yet to be determined, but we won't have sauerkraut soup as we had last year.) We always expect to have much conversation and laughter and hope that you'll be our guests. Enjoy all the Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas activities coming up. Stay joyful, Stay safe, and know the blessing of being Children of a Loving God.

Sarah Jane Gebhardt,  
President of Good Hope WELCA

***If you are planning to attend please contact Michelle or Sign up on the sheet in the Resource Center, so that your name can be added to the list, she will make the reservations.***



## Poinsettia Order Form

This year we will be purchasing poinsettias from Norton's. Colors available are red, white, and pink. **Orders must be in by Sunday, Dec. 8th.** Checks should be made out to the church and payment of **\$14.50 per poinsettia** is appreciated with your order. Poinsettias may be taken home after the Christmas Eve service.

*Thank you! Jan Fulton*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Qty \_\_\_\_ Red \_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_

Qty \_\_\_\_ Pink \_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_

Qty \_\_\_\_ White \_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_

Total \$ \_\_\_\_

In Memory of

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I will take my poinsettia home \_\_\_\_\_

Please give to a shut-in \_\_\_\_\_



The Mission Team would like to thank everyone that filled an Operation Shoebox for the boys and girls. Our grand total this year was 68 Shoeboxes. These gifts are greatly appreciated.

