

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WARREN

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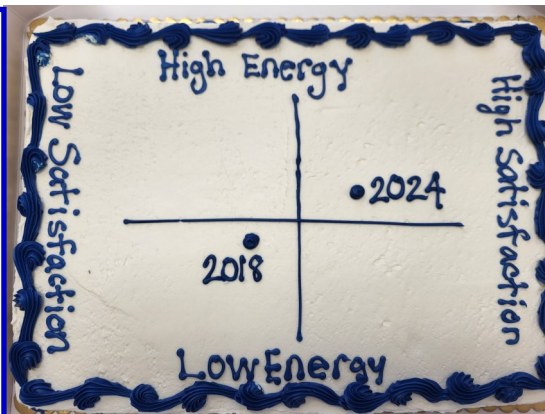
December

Merry Christmas from the staff of FPC!

Pastor Kelly, Melanie, Marissa, Kathie, Dave, and Cassy

HOLY COW CELEBRATION

On Sunday, October 27, Session hosted a celebration after worship. Fifty members attended and were informed of the great progress we have made since we did the Holy Cow survey in 2018.



WREATH

FPC Crafters made a wreath to present to the Trumbull County Veterans Service Commission on Veterans' Day.



THE SP^{IRE}



ISSUE 2024 VOLUME 12 DECEMBER 2024



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WARREN

December

ALTERNATIVE GIFT-GIVING



VETERANS' DAY SERVICE

On November 11, 2024, First Presbyterian Church hosted the Veteran's Day Service. The Cortland Community Band, Kelly Swiger, and Warren Harding Madrigals took part in the service. There were close to 200 in attendance.





As we enter the Christmas Season, the Board of Deacons continues to plan events and projects. We seek to support the needs of the congregation and community. We are always thankful for the support and generosity of our congregation.

The monthly Grocery/Lunch took place on November 19. A Thanksgiving lunch of turkey casserole, salad, cranberry sauce, pumpkin pie, and cookies was enjoyed by 60 guests. After lunch, they received a large grocery order with many items to help them prepare for Thanksgiving. Sixty-two grocery orders were given out. This was the largest distribution for the year. All were grateful for the lunch and groceries. Thank you to all the volunteers who help each month with this project.

The Annual Founders' Day dinner was celebrated on Sunday, November 24. Saratoga prepared 90 delicious meals for the event. The Fellowship Committee planned and served this annual event to celebrate the 221st anniversary of FPC.

The Congregational Care Committee finalized plans for the Christmas Season. The Care Member List was updated. They planned for the delivery of poinsettias to our Special Care Members. (Thank you to the Crafters for your creative decorations that will be included with each delivery.) Kathi Ensweiler delivered home communion on November 4 and December 2. If you are aware of any member's needs for us to address, please let us know.

During the holidays the Mission Committee continues their outreach to help those in need. Trumbull County Children Services received twenty "fast food" gift cards for the teenagers they care for at Christmas. The Committee approved \$500.00 for the DAV Chapter 11 to help provide Christmas Food Baskets for disabled veterans and their families living in Trumbull County. Microwavable food items were donated to the Student Pantry at Willard School (PK-8). Someplace Safe received funds to provide food for their Family Christmas Eve Party. (As you can see, the Deacons are "Busy Elves" this holiday season.)

"Christmas is most truly Christmas when we celebrate it by giving light of love to those who need it most."

Let Us Rejoice in the Birth of the Lord,

The Deacons

VOICES OF MICAH STUDY

Voices of Micah planned a two-part book study and discussion on "The New Jim Crow" by Michelle Alexander. Session One was held at First Presbyterian Church on November 3. This event was well attended and informative.



December Greetings from the Session and your new Clerk! Now that we've shared the good news of a very positive outcome from the Holy Cow Survey, we plan to have round-table meetings in January to hear what you think about the results and where our church should be headed. Please look for more information and dates about these significant meetings and plan to attend!

In addition, the Presbytery has now given us the go-ahead to form a Pastor Nominating Committee or PNC. This is good news at a perfect time, as Pastor Kelly's contract and time with us will end this February, one year after she started as Interim Minister. Lynn Griffith and the Nominations Committee are looking for three to five at-large congregation members, a Deacon, and an Elder to make up the PNC. Please consider serving on this vital committee, as we need your input, experience, discernment, and dedication to this church to help us find a new leader. If, after prayerful consideration, you find it within yourself to help, please let Lynn or me know.

In the meantime, with the help of the Presbytery, a Bridge Pastor will fill the gap until the PNC's work is completed and a new Permanent Pastor is found.

So, this is a time of joy in our church! In addition to the promise of the coming Advent season, we are excited to know that our church is alive and well with a promising future! Praise God!

Amy Burd, Clerk of Session

PRE-ADVENT STUDY

The annual Pre-Advent Study was based on *The Redemption of Scrooge*. As always, this study reinvigorated our Christian faith during this Advent season.



THE ANNUAL LOVE TREE tags have been distributed. Please remember to return the gifts to FPC by **Sunday, December 15**. Thank you for your kindness and generosity!

MEMORIAL LUMINARIES – It is time to order luminaries for this Christmas season. With the beautiful light glowing from many luminaries, the warm feeling of Christmas will permeate the Sanctuary. Please complete the form below and return it to the Church Office. ***All orders must be received by Friday, December 15, 2024!!*** (There is no cost this year.)

In memory/honor of: _____

Given by: _____

Your Name: _____





SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION Our next celebration of Communion will be *Sunday, December 1, 2024*, during our regular 10:00 a.m. worship service.

TWO-CENTS-A-MEAL OFFERING The Deacons will be collecting for the 2¢-A-Meal offering on **Sunday, December 1, 2024**, during our regular worship service. This program helps combat the crisis of hunger.

JOIN US THURSDAY MORNINGS for our weekly prayer talk. We meet in Fellowship Hall for guided devotionals with scripture, prayer, and fellowship at 9:00 a.m. All are welcome. Join us.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE If you or someone you know would like a call or assistance from the Deacons or Pastor, please call the Church Office.

LISTEN TO US EVERY SUNDAY MORNING at 10:00 a.m. on 1570 AM or 97.7 FM or watch us on Facebook at First Presbyterian Church of Warren.

2025 OFFERING ENVELOPES You can pick up your 2025 offering envelopes in Fellowship Hall starting **Sunday, December 1, 2024**, throughout the month. Names and addresses are printed on the boxes. Any questions, please call the Church Office @ 330-393-1524.

THE CRAFTERS will meet December 4, at 10:00 a.m., to work on the shut-in projects.

SPIRE DEADLINE will be **Thursday, December 19**. Please email your articles and photos of the Church Christmas events to kathietrowbridge@fpcwarren.org.

THE CHURCH OFFICE will close at noon on **December 24 and 31 and will be closed December 25 and January 1**.

GIVING All end-of-year giving must be postmarked by **December 31, 2024**, for it to be recorded for 2024.

MIRIAM ESTHER CIRCLE will discuss Lesson 3 of “Let Justice Roll Down” **Thursday, December 5**, at 11:00 a.m. in the Parlor. Lunch will follow at 12. Please bring a bag lunch and plan to stay and help decorate the Christmas tree in the Parlor.

ALTERNATIVE GIFT-GIVING

And the Grinch, with his Grinch-feet ice cold in the snow, stood puzzling and puzzling, how could it be so? It came without ribbons. It came without tags. It came without packages, boxes or bags. And he puzzled and puzzled 'till his puzzler was sore. Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before. What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store. What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more. (Dr. Seuss)



Alternative Gift-Giving will continue through Dec. 16, 2024. Be sure to give those special people special gifts this year by donating to one of the participating organizations: Animal Welfare League, FPC Wish List –Sound System, FreeThree, Free Indeed Ministries, Second Harvest Food Bank, and Water for the People. Any and all gifts will be greatly appreciated. Make out your check to First Presbyterian Church and put AGG on the memo line. Include the order blank with the name(s) of the charity (ies) you would like to support. Remember: *Happiness doesn't result from what we get, but from what we give.* (Ben Carson)



Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. Luke 21:33

There is an interesting little nugget in the gospel reading on Dec 1. On the first Sunday of Advent, Jesus is talking about signs of the end days. He likens this to the fig tree and other trees. When you see leaves begin to spout, you know that summer is near. Likewise, when you see these things happening, you will know that the kingdom of God is near. Then Jesus said something that has many of us scratching our heads. He said, “Truly I tell you; this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place.” We don’t know what exactly that means because, people did pass away and Jesus has not yet returned. Then he added, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.”

Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. Things in this world pass away. Ecclesiastes tells us that there is a time for everything including a time to be born and a time to die.

Have you ever considered that heaven would pass away? Me neither. But Revelation 21:1 does say something about that. *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.*

In an Avent study I once attended, our instructor said this very profound thing. “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. In a world where so many things pass away, what does not pass away?” His answer was this – “the nearness of God.”

Emmanuel means “God with us.”

*O Come, O come Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

In those words, we see hope for a nation that was waiting for the Messiah. Those same words bring us hope as we wait for his return and the completion of God’s reconciling of the world. We live in a time of the already and the yet to come. The Messiah was born, slain, and raised in the “already;” and as we wait for the Lamb to return in the “yet to come,” we know that God’s has never left us. What does not pass away?.....

God’s presence!

Blessings to you during this Season of Advent. *Pastor Kelly*



Wise Men and Women Still Seek Him

CHRISTIAN ED: We have been blessed with Marissa being hired to develop our program with children, youth, and families. We are thankful for your generous support with our Adopt-a-School, Willard. A new group, as yet unnamed, began this month with young adults. Our First Sunday speakers have brought many community needs to our attention.

As the new year approaches, we will be focusing on programs for the largest group of our church...adults! A number of ideas are being discussed. Two ideas to look forward to in January are a presentation by Pastor Kelly relating the Rubik’s cube to the Bible and a recurring Christian Meet-and-Greet with our members at Lake Vista.

Not only do we want to keep you informed of our programs, but we would also love to hear from you with any interests or ideas for our adults.



FPC BIRTHDAYS

- 12/02 Johnna Wright
- 12/03 Grant Case
- 12/05 Sandra Vine
- 12/07 Brittany Muccio
- 12/08 Sharon Kiracofe
- 12/09 Dianne Martin
- 12/10 Jacquelyn Odille
- 12/11 Jillayne Case
- 12/15 Amy Burd
- 12/19 Wanda Hanlon
- 12/22 David Skipper
- 12/29 Holly Meyer
- Ariana Shannon

If we have overlooked anyone's birthday, we apologize. Please contact the Church Office so that we may update our records.



FPC DECEMBER 2024



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 1st Sun. of Advent Communion/2 Cents-a-Meal 8:30 am Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am Worship	2 10:00 am OA, P 5:30 pm Girl Scouts, B 6:30 pm BGA Meeting, FH 7:00 pm AA, MC	3 9:30 am Al-Anon, MC 5:00 pm Girl Scouts, FH 5:45 pm NAMI Class, B 7:00 pm NA, MC	4 10:00 am Crafters 6:30 pm AA, MC 7:00 pm Church Growth Meeting	5 9:00 am Prayer Talk, FH 11:00 am Miriam Esther Circle, P	6 Office Closed	7 11:00 am AA, MC
8 2nd Sun. of Advent 8:30 am Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School 11:15 am Advent Tea Party, FH	9 10:00 am OA, P 5:30 pm Girl Scouts, B 7:00 pm AA, MC	10 9:30 am Al-Anon, MC 5:45 pm NAMI Class, B 7:00 pm NA, MC	11 5:00 pm Someplace Safe, B 6:00 pm NAMI Meeting, P 6:30 pm AA, MC 7:00 pm CE Meeting	12 9:00 am Prayer Talk, FH	13 Office Closed	14 11:00 am AA, MC 12:00 pm Girl Scout Christmas Winterfest, FH 4:30 pm Hometown Holidays on the Square
15 3rd Sun. of Advent 8:30 am Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School 11:15 pm Bell Practice 12:30 pm Caroling, Lake Vista	16 10:00 am OA, P 4:00 pm Deacons Mtg, FH 5:30 pm Girl Scouts, B 7:00 pm AA, MC	17 9:30 am Al-Anon, MC 10:30 am Free Lunch & Grocery Distribution 5:00 pm Girl Scouts, FH 5:00 pm Finance Meeting, P 7:00 pm NA, MC	18 1:00 pm Crossroads Bereavement Grp., P 6:00 pm Relay for Life Meeting, FH 6:30 pm AA, MC 7:00 pm Session, FH	19 SPIRE DEADLINE 9:00 am Prayer Talk, FH 12:00 pm Dessert and Dialogue Women's Study, P 7:00 pm Blue Christmas Service	20 Office Closed	21 11:00 am AA, MC 12:00 pm Wright Family dinner, FH
22 4th Sun. of Advent 8:30 am Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School 11:15 am Bell Practice 5:00 pm Caroling, Homes	23 10:00 am OA, P 5:30 pm Girl Scouts, B 7:00 pm AA, MC	24 Christmas Eve 9:30 am Al-Anon, MC 5:30 pm Early Service, S 10:00 pm Candlelight Service	25 Christmas Office Closed 	26 9:00 am Prayer Talk, FH	27 Office Closed	28 11:00 am AA, MC
29 10:00 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School	30 10:00 am OA, P 5:30 pm Girl Scouts, B 7:00 pm AA, MC	31 New Year's Eve 9:30 am Al-Anon, MC				