



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF WOOSTER

TOWER TIDINGS DECEMBER 2023

Dear Friends,

The chill in the air is a brisk reminder that we are in the season of Advent and on our way to a joyous celebration of Christmas. It all begins this first weekend of December with the Downtown Historic Church Tour on Friday afternoon and evening that will bring our Wooster neighbors into our beautiful sanctuary. Then on this coming Sunday afternoon, First Pres will host the Alternative Gift Market in Bruch Hall. Festivities continue the following Sunday after church with our annual Holiday Potluck Lunch.

Our Sunday worship this month will feature an “Eventide-led” service on December 10, the children and youth Advent Celebration on December 17, the Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols and Candlelight beginning at 6:45 on the 24th, and finish on the last Sunday of the year in our sanctuary with our friends from Westminster Presbyterian leading us in worship.

The days between Sundays include the fellowship of Mixed Company and Friday Fellowship and the special return concert this coming Saturday, December 2, by the much beloved Sonnenberg Station.

We are reminded to take notice that the new church pictorial directory is in the works. Individuals, couples, and families may upload a photo or have a picture taken at church in Bruch Hall. A photo opportunity will also be provided during the Holiday Potluck on December 10.

Finally, I draw your attention to the financial update provided by the Resource Development Ministry. We are invited to join in the support of our church and its mission, ministry, and fellowship by submitting a pledge card for the 2024 budget. No pledge amount is too small, and we are strengthened for the future by the participation of all. For those who are above the age of 70, the tax advantages of a Qualified Charitable Distribution from an IRA is well worth looking into.

Each of the four Sundays of Advent focuses on a theme that underscores the faith we have in a gracious and generous God: Hope, Peace, Joy, Love. May you experience these gifts as we journey through this time together and anticipate a new year dawning.

Blessings and Peace,

David

Session Highlights

2024	2025	2026	Staff
Carol Gates	Paula Abrecht	Wes Davis	Rev. David Rice
Jeff Perkins	Dave Earley	April Gamble	
Jim Webster	Bobbi Jentes-Mason	Laura Neill	
Mark Gordon	Mimi Lewellen	Kris Evans	
Mattie Dunlap (YE)			
		Lisa Rumbaugh, Clerk	

This highlight for Tower Tidings is written to update the congregation on the work of the Session in November 2023.

Session has been busy this month, responding to various notifications during the process of selling the property at 637 College Avenue. This sale was completed on 11.28.2023 and the bulk of the proceeds were used to pay off the loan that financed the new heating system in 2022. The Church will benefit from the savings from the cost of servicing the loan, as well as reduced building maintenance and insurance costs. Many thanks to the RDM team, especially Stu Miller, who worked very diligently to make this sale happen.

During the monthly meeting, members of Session heard reports from each of the coordinating teams. Many activities are planned for the Advent season, providing wonderful opportunities for worship and community together. Pastor David reported that he and several deacons recently offered communion to several members who are in care facilities. This sacrament is offered to all who request it, so please let the church office know if you or a loved one would like to receive it.

Session also heard an update from Women's Fellowship who has welcomed a new Leadership team and is working through a process of reorganization in order to continue to uphold the strong "pillars" of Fellowship, Service to First Presbyterian Church and Mission. This group has a strong history of service to the church family and community, for which we are all grateful.

Members of Session were reminded to participate in the new Photo Directory. The link to the information form and to upload a photo will continue to be in the weekly bulletins and News Flash publications as a reminder.

Members of Session will continue to meet on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. There will NOT be a meeting of Session during the month of December. **The next meeting is planned for January 24, 2024.** Please reach out to any of the Elders listed above with questions or concerns. Positive feedback is also welcomed as this team is working diligently to listen, discern and communicate successfully. Minutes from each Session meeting are located in a notebook in the Gathering Area. If you have any questions or concerns to be shared with the Clerk of Session, please use this email address:

sessionclerk@firstpreswooster.org



Merry Christmas from the Resource Development Ministry!

A big thank you to all who participated in making the 2024 Stewardship Campaign happen! Some of the highlights of the campaign over the last few weeks included Laura Neill kicking off the campaign, then Sara Reith giving us an update of the accomplished charitable work that O'Huddle has done over the years with the help and support of First Presbyterian Church. Joe Szeker from People to People expressed his appreciation to our congregation for the continued volunteer support and sharing our facilities on the corner of Bowman and Beall. Youth Sunday and David's words on pledge Sunday were great reminders of the importance of supporting our Church now and into the future for generations to come.

If you were unable to submit your 2024 pledge card, it not too late! The cards are a critical part of planning for the mission work, programming, and structure maintenance for next year. Please mail or drop off your pledge card as soon as you get a chance.

As we approach the end of the year, it is important to remember the tax advantages of supporting First Presbyterian Church through a tax-free gift from your IRA. A qualified charitable distribution (QCD) allows you to donate up to \$100,000 each year to FPC without incurring income tax on your withdrawal and reducing your taxable income. Please contact anyone on the RDM or your tax professional to learn more about the tax advantages and guidelines of this direct contribution to FPC.

Blessings and Peace,

Tom Rumbaugh, Chair

Dana Brooks, treasurer, Mark Gordon, Stuart Miller, Laura Neill, Jeff Perkins, and David Rice



Letter to Women of the Congregation of First Presbyterian Church, Wooster

Calling all Women of the Congregation:

First Presbyterian Church has a long history of women active in the life of the church. Women's Fellowship, formerly known as Presbyterian Women, has raised money, guided projects, and support the goals of the church and its congregation. Some of those past projects are:
Mission giving and financial contributions

- Speakers, retreats, programs
- Teas
- Church Cookbook
- Contributions to FPC such as refinishing the exterior doors, landscaping
- Furnishing the kitchen in 2005
- Quilt shows
- Sanctuary Lighting

Now we are called to a time re-imagining, re-visioning, and re-vitalizing the future vision of Women's Fellowship. Your ideas and suggestions are needed and valued. What should the group be called? How should the group operate? How should we communicate with one another? How should the funds be spent? What does the future look like? Much has changed in our world and especially since the COVID pandemic. This is a good time to brainstorm and include ideas from all women of the congregation.

A Leadership Team has been created, and changes are being made for the financial procedures of this organization.

There are faithful women who have been a part of this group for many years. They hold the history of the group and need and want everyone's input. Please give this matter prayerful consideration and submit your concerns in any way that convenient for you: by phone to those listed below, email, letter, or in person.

Future ways of gathering are being discussed so that all can be included going forward. It would be helpful to have your thoughts by then. All women of the church are invited to participate and share their thoughts. Thank you!

Blessings to you all!

Mimi Lewellen: mlewellen@wooster.edu; 330-345-8684

Karen McQuate: kmcquate@sssnet.com; 330-262-9321

Lisa Rumbaugh: tomlisarum@gmail.com; 330-466-5796





IT'S TIME. . . .

For a new CHURCH DIRECTORY

Let's celebrate our growing church family by creating an updated directory, including photos and contact information. The goal is to include ALL friends who attend FPC Wooster!

The most recent directory was completed in 2019 and was composed by a formal photography company. The 2024 directory will be created here at FPC using resources we already have.

Information about you and your family can be added easily using the link below. When you click on the link or QR code, you can complete an information form and upload a photo if you choose. Other photo options include: using your photo from the previous directory, having your photo taken at church, or opting not to include a picture.

Another opportunity to have photos taken at church will be offered at the Holiday Potluck on December 10th. Contact Lisa Rumbaugh at 330-466-5796 if you would like a picture taken at church any Sunday.

Bring your best smile!

Let's create a wonderful way to put names with faces and make connections with each other.

<https://www.firstpreswooster.org/surveys/fpc-directory-information>





First Presbyterian Church of Wooster
Advent Season
2023



Sunday, November 26

9AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 6:30PM Eventide

Friday, December 1

11:30AM Friday Fellowship

4-7PM Downtown Historic Church Tour

Sunday, December 3

9AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 6:30PM Eventide

11:30 Alternative Gift Market in Bruch Hall

Sunday, December 10

9AM Sunday School 10:15AM Worship 6:30PM Eventide

11:30 All-Church Holiday Potluck

Sunday, December 17

9AM Sunday School 10:15AM Children's 6:30PM Eventide

Advent Celebration

Sunday, December 24 - Christmas Eve

6:45 Music 7:00 Service of Lessons and Carols

Sunday, December 31

10:15AM Combined worship with Westminster at FPC



Eventide

Sunday Evenings - 6:30 PM
First Presbyterian Church of Wooster

'Tis the Season

Grounding ourselves in what matters
most during the holidays

Nov. 12, 19, 26 and Dec. 3, 10, 17

Eventide is a casual gathering for worship, reflection, and fellowship.
Encouraging each other as we wrestle with what it means to live out our faith.

All ages are welcome.





*Celebrate the Season with
Children's Music at FPC*

Join us on Sunday, December 10
for some special youth music
during 10:15 worship and Sunday,
December 17 for our children's
Christmas musical and even more
special music!



First Presbyterian Church of Wooster Presents:

Follow The Star

A Christmas Musical for Children & Youth



Sunday, December 17 during 10:15 Worship



This month we will begin our Advent series, looking into Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. Please plan to join us in this most important time of year!

Upcoming events

December 10th- Holiday Potluck and Caroling

The youth had a great time bowling at our November youth group! Our next gathering will be Sunday December 10th for caroling after the holiday potluck.





Anyone who is interested in joining the youth in caroling is welcome to join us. We will be leaving around 12:30 (after the potluck) on December 10th. All are welcome!



Our next Friday Fellowship is quickly approaching! This month we will meet together on **Friday, December 1st at 11:30 a.m. in Bruch Hall**. The speaker will be Gayle Byrne from One Eighty. Come learn how One Eighty helps those in need in our community and how we can help One Eighty. There is a donation asked to cover the cost of the lunch. See Amy Baxstrom for more information or call the church office to RSVP.



Join us to explore historic churches throughout Downtown Wooster with music, holiday decorations, refreshments, and more on Friday, December 1 from 4 - 7:00 PM - this tour will be a hop on/hop off style. Buses where guests can sit and wait for the stop/church they would like to see. The shuttle driver will call out the stop number and guests can hop on/hop off as they like. ***Please park at the Wayne County Public Library, 220 W Liberty St., where the bus will be loading & unloading after each loop.*** *The shuttle is free, but tips for the driver are appreciated.* First Presbyterian Church is part of the tour!!!



HELP IS STILL NEEDED

The other way to help is by adopting a child or guardian I have received from the Salvation Army. I have 7 children and 2 adults. These community members need some help to provide some holiday cheer. Consider taking a list and purchasing the gifts to help these families in need. Please email me if you'd like a child. All gifts need to be wrapped and returned to the church the week of December 11th.

Thanks
Amy Baxstrom



Westview Healthy Living Craft Show & Soup Extravaganza

Saturday, December 2 - 10am-3pm

The Connection, Conference & Event Center

1034 Country Club Drive, Wooster

Soup Stravaganza

11am - 2pm

\$8.00 Per Person

Includes: Soup, Roll, Cookie & Beverage



Sonnenberg Station Christmas Concert at First Presbyterian Church on Saturday, December 2, at 7:00 pm.



The next Mixed Company gathering will be Friday, December 8th at 11:30 am at Pine Tree Barn. Please call Kathy Turning - 330-347-6620 - by Tuesday, December 5th if you are planning to join us.



Holiday **POTLUCK**

Faith & Nurture invites the FPC church family to a Holiday Potluck on Sunday, December 10 following worship.

Turkey and ham will be provided; please sign up to bring a side dish in the Gathering Area or by calling the church office. Volunteers to help set up, serve and clean up are also appreciated. We look forward to celebrating the season with you!

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU!!!

Thank you all for your hard work on this year's rummage sale. There were 47 of you who helped in one way or another, quite a crew! According to Mimi, \$1,804 is the current sale total.

In addition, Mimi was happy to get a full set of dessert plates that almost match our china, which she valued at approximately \$500.00 Kate from People to People was the first shopper and bought several items that PTP needed. Creative Academy was also invited to come and take some toys (free of charge). And \$80 of items went to help a family who just arrived from Honduras last week and speaks no English (I got to practice my Spanish ;). So in addition to our profits, we were able to help others fill their needs.

You all have my heartfelt thanks.

Carla Hall

Climate Change and the Church

Our own David Rice, along with the College Director of Campus Sustainability Brian Webb, presented "Climate Change and the Church" at Wooster Science Cafe on Nov. 1. The announcement said "...`With their moral and ethical foundations, religious institutions have the potential to inspire people toward climate solutions. . . We'll look specifically at Christianity [although Brian referenced other religions] to examine how the church engages with climate change and what factors might create opportunities - or barriers - for faith-based climate action within the Christian tradition." If you missed it, you can see a recording at:

https://www.woostersciencecafe.org/talks/climate-change-and-the-church?fbclid=IwAR1NLSQKzq52coqHZXydIxlB27TF_255REo-XDZ5CoYqtnzTAm-aZkPtbxE



Plastic Bag recycling isn't just for plastic bags!!! This time of year you may be getting lots of those Tyvek and other plastic shipping envelopes and packages containing air pillows and bubble wrap. And various retail bags, even the heavier ones, are all recyclable with the plastic bag recycling in the container next to the church office, or at Kohl's and other retailers. If you have questions, contact Carla Hall or Shannon Foster or the Trex webpage at:

<https://nextrex.com/view/educate#materials1>



ALABAMA LIVING LEGACY PILGRIMAGE

Alabama Moments that Reverberated Throughout the World



INFO

5 Days / 4 Nights, April 2-6, 2024

On this Pilgrimage, you'll visit historic sites in Birmingham, Montgomery, and Selma, Alabama and meet unsung heroes and foot soldiers of the Civil Rights Movement.

As a spiritual pilgrimage, we'll reflect on what we experience together so when we return home, we can apply what we've learned to make a difference in today's world.

Find out more and register today!

Livinglegacypilgrimage.org

Sunset on the Edmund Pettus Bridge, Selma, Alabama

A series of events took place in Alabama and throughout the South in the 1950s and 60s that culminated in the ultimate passage of the 1964 National Civil Rights Act and the 1965 National Voting Rights Act. On this five-day, four-night pilgrimage, you'll learn how each event, from the day in 1955 when Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus in Montgomery to the 1965 Selma to Montgomery March, moved the arc of the universe a little closer to justice.

On this Pilgrimage, you'll visit historic sites, walk about the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, and meet unsung heroes and foot soldiers of the Civil Rights Movement. As a spiritual pilgrimage, we'll reflect on what we experience together so when we each return home, we can apply what we have learned to make a difference in today's world.

You'll also visit the Equal Justice Initiative's [Legacy Museum: From Enslavement to Mass Incarceration](#) and [National Memorial for Peace and Justice](#) in Montgomery. The museum provides a comprehensive history of the United States with a focus on the legacy of slavery and the memorial tells the story of racial terror lynching victims in the United States.



We're happy to announce that the Alternative Gift Market will be held at First Presbyterian Church this year on Sunday, December 3 at 11:30.

You may purchase \$5 shares in one of 20 different carefully vetted organizations from around the world, everything from backpack medics in Burma to food and healing for Ukraine's refugees to water wells in South Sudan. These shares make thoughtful gifts for everyone on your shopping list! Just ask Don Beane who annually buys shares for over 20 members of his family!

In addition, we'll have goods from World Crafts of Kidron, handmade bags from Ghana, maple syrup from Pleasant Hill Outdoor Camp, fair trade coffee, and olive soap and lotion to create awareness for a just peace for Palestine-Israel.

Lunch will be available for a donation. We hope to see all of you there!

Faith and Practice Committee

THE MITTEN TREE

In the gathering area you'll now see the Mitten Tree, a familiar sight each Advent season. For years members have placed their hand-knitted or purchased mittens, gloves and scarves on the tree. Then after Christmas Faith & Practice sends the mittens to The Shack Neighborhood House in Pursglove, WV.

You may recall that the founder of The Shack is Mary Behner, a 1928 graduate of The College of Wooster. We still haven't solved the mystery of who first thought to send mittens to Pursglove, WV but we're pleased that they did.

In addition to the mittens, gloves and scarves, Faith & Practice will this year be collecting new men's and women's warm socks for the homeless in our area.

We hope to see the tree filled with your generous contributions!





Christmas Poinsettias

Poinsettias in honor or memory of loved ones will be used to enhance the beauty of our sanctuary this Christmas. You may purchase a plant for \$10.00 each. If you do not wish to own a plant, you may choose to donate to the Special Christmas offering or the FPC Flower Fund (indicate on your check's Memo line where your donation should go). Names of your loved ones will be listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin and scrolled during the broadcast. Plants may be picked up after the service. Those left will be distributed.

Please submit your request to the Office by December 15, 2023.

Your Name

In Memory: Plant or Donation (circle one)

Name(s)

In Honor: Plant or Donation (circle one)

Name(s)

**ART OF INCLUSION
PRESENTS**



Saturday

December 16

Christmas Party

4-6p

Music

Fellowship

Treats

Pictures



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF WOOSTER 621 College Ave.**

We just wanted to invite you to our Blue Christmas service of HOPE- sometimes the holidays can be sad and depressing to those who have lost loved ones. We want to support you. Please join us.

For those of us experiencing loneliness, sadness, and loss, the Christmas season can be difficult. The "most wonderful time of the year" can seem overwhelming.

You are not alone. Join us in a simple service reflecting on God's hope for us and presence in our story.

**Milton Presbyterian
Church
Sunday December 17
4 pm**

Milton Presbyterian Church



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

December 5	Letitia Patterson, Emily McMillen
December 9	Dennis Boen
December 11	Joan Firmin, April Gamble
December 13	Thomas Gregory
December 17	Hudson Baxstrom
December 23	Joyce Murphy, Sid Cammer
December 26	William Wepler
December 27	Elli Gordon, Jane Taylor
December 29	Mona Buehler
December 31	Connie Barnard





**LITURGIST SIGN-UP - YEAR 2023
IN THE SANCTUARY**

If you or a member of your family (all ages are welcome)
would like to sign-up to be a liturgist during the 2023 year,
please sign-up at the following link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/liturgistsfpc>

THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING!



**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE SIGN-UP
YEAR 2023
IN THE SANCTUARY**

If you would like to sign-up for Prayers of the People during the 2023 year,
please sign-up at the following link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/prayersofthepeople>

Thank you for Volunteering!

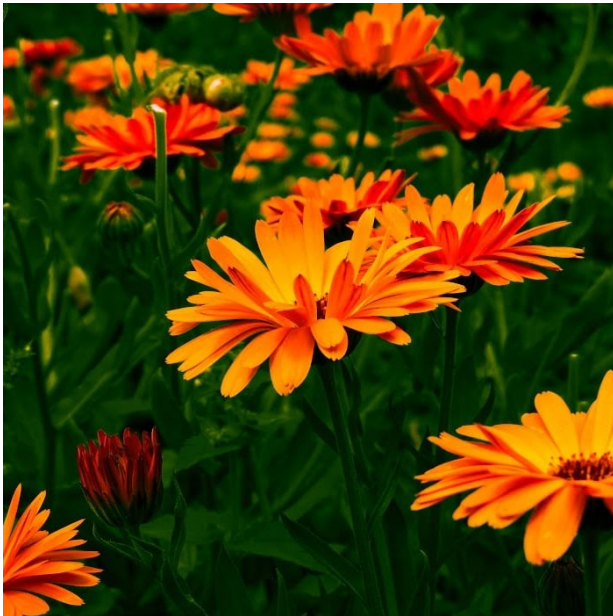


**FLOWERS IN THE SANCTUARY
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP
YEAR 2023**

If you would like to dedicate flowers in honor or memory
of a loved one in the Sanctuary
on Sunday mornings during the year 2023,
please sign-up at the following link:

Thank you!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/sanctuaryflowers>



First Presbyterian Church
621 College Avenue
Wooster, OH 44691

Phone: 330-264-9420
Fax: 330-262-7305
Hours: M, T, Th - 9-4
Wed & Fri. - By Appt.

Address Service Requested



www.facebook.com/FPCWooster/
www.firstpreswooster.org

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Deadlines

FPC News Flash
Tower Tidings
Bulletin
Session
Session Packets

Submission Deadline

Wednesday by noon
15th of each month
Wednesday
2nd Monday of the month
2nd Monday of the month

Approximate Delivery

End of Week
End of Month
Weekly
4th Wed. of each month
3rd Sunday of the month