



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF WOOSTER

TOWER TIDINGS NOVEMBER 2025

Dear Friends,

A fall chill is in the air to greet the gathering colors of burnt orange, golden yellow, and fiery red that the autumn foliage is tossing up into the azure sky. I feel a sense of anticipation as this transitional season deepens, and we leave pumpkins and fantastical costumes behind and head towards a time of thanksgiving and the dawning of Advent.

In the life of the church, as well as in our family lives, November offers special occasions for us to enjoy. On All Saints' Sunday, November 2nd, we will remember our faithful friends and loved ones who have journeyed beyond this earthly dimension but who will never be forgotten. Sunday, November 9th, brings a celebration of the gifts of faith and joy with which our young people grace us in worship. The following Sunday, November 16th, we will bring and bless our pledges of financial support for this next year in the life, work, fellowship, and worship of our congregation, rededicating our lives to God's mission through us in our community and our world.

In this edition of the Tower Tidings, Mimi Lewellen has given us a wonderful article recapitulating the 20-year history of the "new addition" to our now nearly 100-year-old 1929 sanctuary! In my twelve years of ministry with you here at FPC, I cannot imagine our congregational and community life without this "new" twenty-year-old part of our church building. In this season of thanksgiving and prayerful consideration for our financial future of ministry in our community, we can celebrate the gift of this facility that we have given to our community.

In closing, I want to lift up the talents, gifts, and skills of our remarkable youth in their Highschool successes as runners, swimmers, soccer and field sport competitors, musicians, actors and backstage artisans . . . we are so grateful to receive their gifts and want to give them all of our support and encouragement as they continue to grace us with their performances.

Blessings and Peace,

David

Session Highlights

2026	2027	2028	Staff
Wes Davis	Tammy Brooks	Paula Abrecht	Rev. David Rice
April Gamble	Mark Gordon	Mark Gooch	Amy Baxstrom, CE
Laura Neill	Steve LoGuidice	Jack Rogers	
Kris Evans	Jeff Perkins	Becky Webb	
Calin Baxstrom-youth			
Elli Gordon-youth			
Aiden Hiner-youth		Lisa Rumbaugh, Clerk	

This highlight for Tower Tidings is written to update the congregation on the work of the Session of First Presbyterian Church. This summary will include information from the regular meeting of Session on October 22, 2025. Carol Gates was acting Clerk for this meeting. Communion for the month of November has been rescheduled for November 9, which is Youth Sunday.

Session heard a report from Tom Rumbaugh about potential renters for the lower level of the church (under Bruch Hall). There is also a group that is interested in using the kitchen on that level of the church. Faith and Structure team members and other hard-working church members continue to paint and refresh these areas to create a welcoming space for future occupants. Many thanks to the volunteers who have contributed their talents and efforts to this renovation project.

Each of the Coordinating Teams offered updates from their most recent meetings. The Faith and Worship team reported that All Saints Day is November 2, Youth Sunday; November 9 and decorating the church for Advent is November 23. Faith and Structure reported that the dishwasher in the main kitchen broke and the part to fix it has been ordered. Women's Fellowship has provided the funds to make this major repair to this vital piece of equipment. The meeting of the chairs of the coordinating teams was moved to a date in November.

As mentioned in last month's Tower Tidings, the Session continues to meet with Rev. Matt Skolnik, General Presbyter of Muskingum Valley Presbytery as we plan for the future of the church's pastoral leadership. During these meetings, we have been provided with information about the current culture and landscape of church leadership, which has changed significantly during the recent years. These are healthy conversations about what is needed by our congregation, our invaluable staff and the FPC community. Session members are putting together plans to engage all of you in significant discussions as we celebrate our strengths and envision our future together.

The next regular meeting of Session is December 3, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

Members of Session will continue to meet on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Please reach out to any of the Elders listed above with any 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



Greetings from the Resource Development Ministry (RDM)

By now your family should have received the 2026 First Presbyterian Church pledge card. Pledge Sunday is November 16. Between now and the 16th, the RDM has scheduled a number of Minute for Mission focuses each Sunday. Please listen and prayerfully reflect on all of the meaningful ways that your First Presbyterian Wooster family touches your life, and the lives of others, throughout the year. Together we can all combine our monetary, and non-monetary, resources to make a difference in our local, national, and world communities through our programming, missions, and structure.

If you haven't received your pledge card, please see one of the RDM members below. There is also a supply of cards in the gathering area, or call the church office and Donna will mail a card out to you.

Peace and blessings,

Tom Rumbaugh, Chair

Dana Brooks, treasurer, Stuart Miller, Laura Neill,

Mark Gordon, Steve Logiudice, Jeff Perkins, and David Rice, pastor



Check out the calendar below for events.

If you have a special activity you would like to do, please let Amy know!

Upcoming Events

These dates are subject to change based on weather,
so watch your email/text for updates.

November 9th
Youth Sunday

November 16th
Stewardship Sunday

November 23rd
Best Buddies Quarter Auction—Youth Help

December 7th
Children and Youth Christmas Program
Holiday Potluck and Youth White Elephant
Gift Exchange



A graphic with the words "YOUTH SUNDAY" in a bold, 3D, blocky font. The letters are orange with a white outline and a slight shadow, giving them a three-dimensional appearance. They are set against a plain, light beige background.

Join us November 9th at 10:30am for our annual Youth Sunday. Through music, storytelling, scripture and more, they will lead you in a morning of reflection, awareness, and worship.



On December 5th from 4:00-7:00pm we will be participating in the Historic Church Tour. We will need volunteers to welcome guests into the church, showcase our beautiful Sanctuary, and invite them to Bruch Hall for some light refreshments and spiritual practices. Please let Amy Baxstrom know if you can help!



ARISE Schedule For November

- Nov 2nd Regular meeting at 8:45am in the Chapel
- Nov 9th- No ARISE so we can meet for Youth Sunday at 10:30am
- Nov 16th- Gratitude Stations
- Nov 23rd- Gratitude Stations
- Nov 30- Advent- Hope





CONGRATULATIONS TO THE RUNNERS AMONG US!

Noah Shaffer: Advanced to State Cross Country meet as member of Waynedale High School Men's Cross Country Team.

Makena Conrad: Member of Women's Cross Country Team at Waynedale High School; competed at D4 Regional Cross Country Meet, placing 9th as a team.

Lydia Dunlap: Member of Women's Cross Country Team at Wooster High School.

Elli Gordon: Member of Women's Cross Country Team at Wooster High School.

Adelyn Conrad: earned 1st Team All-WCAL honors for finishing in the top 10 at the WCAL championships as a member of the Waynedale Middle School Women's Cross Country Team.

Hope Shaffer: also earned 1st Team All-WCAL honors for finishing in the top 10 at the WCAL championships as a member of the Waynedale Middle School Women's Cross Country Team.

And at the College Level:

Ashton (Bowdoin College) **Mattie Dunlap** (Hamilton College) are competing in the same cross country meet as representatives of their respective schools.



The world-famous Willy Wonka is opening the gates to his mysterious factory...but only to a lucky few. Young Charlie Bucket and four other golden ticket winners will embark on a life-changing journey through Wonka's world of pure imagination including chocolate waterfalls, nutty squirrels and the great glass elevator, all to be revealed by Wonka's army of curious Oompa-Loompas.

Based on the famous novel by Roald Dahl, the **new** *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* features an original score composed by Marc Shaiman with lyrics by Shaiman and Scott Wittman (*Hairspray*) and a book by David Greig. The score also pays homage to the Leslie Bricusse/Anthony Newley score from the 1971 film with songs from the motion picture including "The Candy Man," "I've Got a Golden Ticket," "Oompa Loompa Song," and "Pure Imagination."

First Presbyterian Involvement:

Nora Davis: Tech Crew

Lydia Dunlap: Mrs. Teavee

Elli Gordon: Grandma Georgina/Oompa Loompa

Aiden Hiner: Mr. Salt

Sara Lewellen (Mimi's Granddaughter): Artistic Stage Manager

Akshara Patil: Gum Chompin' Diva (exchange student living with the Webbs)

Acadia Webb: Grandma Josephine/Oompa Loompa

Ian Webb: Tech Crew

Lilee Webb: Ensemble

Steve LoGiudice/Megan Werely: House Managers

Kristi Hiner: Asst. Director

Rachel King: Vocal Director

Brett Hiner: Director

The Faith and Nurture Committee is holding a block of seats for FPC members/ friends to attend as a group on Sunday 11/16! If interested, reach out to Steve LoGiudice to get special First Church seating.



First Presbyterian Church Goes to the Theater!

Step into a *world of pure imagination* with your church family as we head to the Wooster High School Performing Arts Center on **Sunday, November 16th at 2:00 PM** to see *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*!

This golden-ticket event features **many of our very own First Presbyterian members**—on stage, backstage, and behind the scenes! Come cheer them on and enjoy a sweet afternoon of music, laughter, and chocolate-filled fun.

Ticket Prices:

\$12 for Adults

\$10 for Seniors & Students

A special **First Presbyterian seating section** has been reserved. To sit with the group, contact **Steve LoGiudice** at stevenlogiudice@gmail.com or text **646-203-5411**. He'll hold your seats—you can pay and pick them up on show night.

Can't make it on November 16th? Don't worry! Additional showtimes are **November 14, 15, 22 at 7:00 PM** and **November 16, 23 at 2:00 PM**. Tickets can be purchased online at the following address: <https://www.ticketpeak.co/whsdrama/events>

Don't miss this whimsical adventure—join us for fellowship, fun, and a little taste of chocolatey magic!





Faith & Practice is happy to announce that the Alternative Gift Market will again be held at First Presbyterian Church this year on Sunday, December 14.

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! We remember fondly how Don Beane purchased shares for over 20 members of his family each year!

In addition, we'll have goods from World Crafts of Kidron, 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, and all proceeds will go to a local not-for-profit.

We hope to see all of you there!



20 YEARS

20 Years. It's been 20 years since FPC began using a new Gathering area, kitchen, fellowship hall, office complex, youth center and more.

Those of you who've been part of this congregation for fewer than 20 years, these facilities are taken for granted.

Those of us who've been here longer than 20 years ----- OH, my—What an improvement in 2005. The entrance used by most was on the east side, from the parking lot up narrow steps into an entryway. Look at the present hallway to the Parlor ---- that was where everyone gathered to put coats on hooks; back-track to the sanctuary or proceed to the parlor. Doorways for 3 offices and a small women's restroom were on the left.

Fellowship Hall was downstairs---small --adjacent to a kitchen used mainly by Wee Care with an old dishwasher which only Rick Peterson of the congregation could operate. Compare all that to our beautiful, welcoming, spacious Gathering Area.

Think of our well used, well-equipped kitchen. The Rotary Club and its cooks use it weekly. Other local groups use the kitchen and beautiful Bruch Hall frequently.

FPC has held about 100 memorial service receptions in the past 20 years --- plus birthdays, anniversaries and other celebratory events.

The office complex is also well-designed and functional. We have fewer staff than 20 years ago, but the space has been flexible and serviceable.

The Youth Center also has undergone various transformations and uses, but is there for our Youth.

The Manse, home for the ministers, was demolished to make room for most of the addition. The front door of the Manse faced Bowman street.

Look back prior to the fall of 2025. Look at what we have, use, enjoy, take for granted now.

Celebrate the vision of our congregation 20 years ago.

Mimi Lewellen





Mike Schenk photo

GROUNDBREAKING — Gregg Short and son Fred, along with Daniel Kirk and Scott Perkins were on hand to toss some dirt at the First Presbyterian Church groundbreaking ceremony on Sunday morning after worship services. The church's 600-plus membership plans to almost double the 75-year-old facility's size through a \$3.5 million expansion on College Avenue. The addition will include a 300-seat fellowship hall, a state-of-the-art youth center with bathrooms and showers and a patio and courtyard.

8-30-04

OUR NEW ADDITION



1927

2005

First Presbyterian Church of Wooster Presents:

BROTHER HEINRICH'S CHRISTMAS

A FABLE WITH MUSIC BY JOHN RUTTER

An illustration of a monk, Brother Heinrich, with a shaved head and a small tuft of hair, wearing a brown robe. He is hugging a grey donkey from behind. The donkey has a white muzzle and a gold halter. In the background is a church with a tall, square tower and a red roof. The scene is set on a green hill with some red flowers in the foreground.

Sunday, December 7, 2025
during the 10:30 Worship Service

**A combined effort of the FPC Sanctuary Choir and
FPC Children's Music Programs**

Interested in participating?
Contact Rachel at rking@firstpreswooster.org

Faith and Worship

Faith and Worship has begun planning for Advent and Christmas.

Below are the dates and activities we are sure of right now.



ADVENT and CHRISTMAS SEASON

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

Chancel Poinsettias: Call the church office or fill out an order form to **order In Honor/Memory Of poinsettias** for the chancel.

- 11/21:** **Fluffing** wreaths, swags, and garlands.
10:30 am in the Parlor; help appreciated.
- 11/23:** **Decorating** the church **after 10:30 worship service;** help appreciated.
- 11/30:** **12/7, 12/14, 12/21: Advent Sundays;**
children and youth participation during lighting of Advent candles.
- 12/7:** **Children's Avent Service**
- 12/24:** **Christmas Eve Service (Candlelight):**
Music at 6:45pm; Service at 7:00pm
- 12/28:** **Shared worship service** with Westminster Presbyterian Church.

JANUARY 2026

- 1/4:** **Undecorate** the church **after the 10:30 service;** help appreciated.



Help Decorate the Church

Faith and Worship will need help to decorate the church for
Advent and Christmas on **Sunday, November 23.**

If you can mark your calendars and donate a little time after the 10:30 service to
hang door swags, wreaths, put up the sanctuary and mitten trees,
or drape garlands, your help will be **so** appreciated!

We will also need help to UN-decorate on **Sunday, January 4**
Many hands make lighter (and quicker) work and are such a blessing!



Help “Fluff” Swags, Wreaths, and Garlands

Do you have a little time to help the Faith and Worship team “fluff” our Christmas swags, wreaths and
garlands this year? We have found that fluffing these decorations prior to hanging them makes
decorating the church goes much more quickly. If you would like to help us, we will be meeting in the
Parlor on **Friday, November 21 at 10:30am. The more hands, the merrier!**



UNITED WAY
Wayne and
Holmes Counties

PROJECT SNAP GAP

Starting November 1, 2025, SNAP benefits for millions of Americans will be delayed. In response, United Way Wayne and Holmes Counties has launched **PROJECT SNAP GAP**, a community-powered emergency initiative to address the growing needs that will follow.

This isn't just about food or diapers. It's about the stress on families, the strain on local agencies & businesses, and the increased demand for basic needs, from meals to mental health support.

PROJECT SNAP GAP exists for:

- Funding local food programs
- Promoting food donations & special discounts
- Supporting volunteers at food banks and pantries



YOU CAN HELP FILL THE SNAP GAP!

Donations are tax-deductible and help feed families in your community **TODAY!**

- **Online:** secure.givelively.org/donate/united-way-of-wayne-and-holmes-counties-inc/2025-project-snap-gap
- **Text:** SNAPGAP to 44321
- **Mail:** United Way Wayne & Holmes Counties, 215 S Market St, Wooster, OH 44691



GIVE NOW!

LOCAL PANTRIES & FOOD BANKS:

Let us know your:

- Most needed items
- Volunteer opportunities
- Hours of operation

RESTAURANTS & BUSINESSES:

Share with us any:

- Discounts
- Specials
- Collaboration Ideas

CONTACT US @

✉ ashley@uwwh.org
☎ (330)264-5576



**DO YOU WANT TO VOLUNTEER OR DONATE SUPPLIES?
DO YOU NEED FOOD ASSISTANCE?**

Call 2-1-1 or visit uwwh.org/get-help for a list of local food resources.

WE
ayne **HELP.**
olmes

WHY UNITED WAY?

We work alongside local agencies and community donors to respond quickly and effectively. **We recognize** the urgent need. **We mobilize** resources. **We help** so frontline teams can stay focused on helping families through crisis. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, **United Way delivers fast, flexible support where it's needed most, right here in Wayne and Holmes Counties.**



The congregation extends its sympathy to the family of Mark Beckler of Arlington, Virginia who died September 22, 2025. Mark was the son of Shirley Beckler and brother of Joel Beckler of our congregation.

Mark was born in Wooster and graduated from Wooster High School in 1988. He earned a BA in political science from the University of Chicago, a JD from the University of Akron, and four additional master's degrees.

Mark served in the U.S. Army for 28 years. Among other assignments he participated in multinational peacekeeping in Egypt and Israel, led humanitarian relief efforts in Central America after Hurricane Mitch, and commanded an Army Combat Aviation Brigade in the Middle East. He also served as an Army Congressional Fellow and a Senior Legislative Affairs Specialist at the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency. Following retirement he worked as a Congressional Affairs Coordinator with Booz Allen Hamilton.

Mark had wide-ranging interests including cycling, skiing, diving, music, and travel. He was an accomplished cellist and semi-professional guitar player, taught scuba diving and maritime law, and was part of an archaeological team that uncovered a pre-Revolutionary War battlefield. He was an active member of the Explorers Club of Washington D.C. and the Wooster Duck Club.

Mark attended Central United Methodist Church in Arlington, Virginia. Rev. Sarah Harrison-McQueen, senior pastor at Central UMC, co-officiated with David Rice at the memorial service held at FPC on October 11, 2025.



The congregation extends its sympathy to the family of FPC member Carol Young who died on October 13, 2025. Carol was married to FPC member Chuck Young, who preceded her in death in 2018. Carol was a long-time resident of Danbury Senior Living in Wooster. She is survived by her three daughters, Natalie, Amy, and Roxanne, and several grandchildren.



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

November 1	Cy Morgan, IV, Richard Odenkirk
November 3	Mark Elderbrock
November 5	Troy McMillen
November 6	Janet Calhoun
November 7	Donald James
November 8	Kennedy McMillen
November 9	Karmon James
November 11	Matthew Call, Gwen Short, Calin Baxstrom
November 12	Diana Day
November 13	Laura Scott
November 15	Kristi Hiner
November 16	Jon Neill
November 17	Marcus Ladrach, Beth Ladrach, Charles Pfeiffer, Amy Baxstrom
November 18	Vince Giffin
November 21	Susan Clyde
November 23	Rick Peterson, Abrielle James
November 24	Tricia Vossler
November 26	Scott Buehler
November 27	Saran Wright
November 28	Mark Gordon
November 29	Eleanor Davis
November 30	Ken Madick



LITURGIST SIGN-UP - YEAR 2025 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!



FLOWERS IN THE SANCTUARY SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP YEAR 2025

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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