

MISSION @ FIRST

Each month we are highlighting one mission project of First Presbyterian Church on the front page of PresbyNews. This month: **Christmas Baskets.**



It's that magical time of year again! It's time to work together to make sure that families have gifts and food this Christmas season. We have agreed to provide gifts and vouchers for 30 families in Middletown through the Salvation Army.

Each basket will include a grocery voucher of \$100, Christmas presents provided by church members, and a tin of holiday popcorn.

There are plenty of opportunities to contribute. You can sponsor the toys for one of the families and deliver the baskets. You can make a financial contribution to offset the cost of the grocery vouchers.

Delivery this year is scheduled for the morning of December 21. Please call the office to sign up for a family or with any questions.

One way everyone can contribute is to pray for the families who are receiving our baskets. As you prepare to serve in this way, try a prayer like this one:

Gracious Lord, as we prepare for the Season of Christmas, we ask that you bless the family that will receive the basket. We thank you for this family, and we trust that you provide for all people. May the gifts we give be seen as a sign of your generosity. May our kind intentions be multiplied by your kindness. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Christian Education and Faith Formation



Children's Ministries

Children are always welcome in worship! Wiggle bags are available at each Sanctuary entrance to help children feel included and engaged during the worship service. Additional resources for parents and guardians are also available - look for the pinwheel and enjoy!

A loving, Christian environment is provided year-round from 9:45 a.m. - 11:15 a.m. for infants and children up to 5 years old.

Sunday School (children ages 6-12) meets most Sundays following Circle Time, in the Godly Play Room (see schedule below). Children will be dismissed in the Gathering Area following worship.

Sunday School will meet November 10, 17, and 24, December 8 and 22. We especially want to include the children and youth in special worship celebrations of Communion and the Christmas Cantata; Sunday School will not meet November 3, nor December 1, 15, and 29.



With Gratitude, Dinner Church in October



Thank you to all who participated in the October series of Dinner Church! We enjoyed exploring the Psalms while worshipping and breaking bread together. We are especially grateful to dinner hosts and all who participated in song and prayer and storytelling!

Log College Project - prepare to launch!

During worship on October 27, the Design Team shared our idea for a new form of ministering *with* youth in the form of a purple pop-up table. We want to share a sense of acceptance—rooted in God's grace and love—with the world.

The reality is many of our youth have had to withstand bullying, questions of identity, and other forms of crises. The team decided to take our ministry of accepting presence out into the community by way of a pop-up welcome ministry that shares a simple "feast" in places where people feel unwelcomed or hurt. We'll host three different types of pop-ups around a portable purple table--for healing, for affirmation, and for community-building.

What might this look like? When there are places in our community that experience some type of trauma, there is interest in going to that space with our Purple Table to witness God's welcome, and to help change the story. We would also like to take the Purple Table to community events such as First Fridays, Sparkles 5K, etc. We also will take the Purple Table to city parks for random pop-up picnics to build community.



Will you join us at the table? Contact Lisa Kaufer to learn more about the many ways you can support the launch of the Purple Table next spring.

Advent Luncheon

All are welcome Sunday, December 1, from 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. for an afternoon of Christmas fun! The Christian Education Team will provide lunch, a daily Advent Devotional, and activities for all ages! Make your own Advent Calendar, hear the Christmas story, and enjoy festive goodies and hot chocolate! Contact the church office to sign up.

Music & Worship

Come, let us sing to the Lord!

Let us give a joyous shout to the rock of our salvation!

Let us come before him with thanksgiving.

Let us sing him psalms of praise. - Psalm 95:1-3

Many thanks to all who helped create another exciting and inspiring Kirkin' of the Tartans Service!

The Tenth Annual Festival of Organ Music featuring our "mighty Moeller pipe organ" will be performed on Friday, November 8, at 7:00 p.m. The many sounds of the pipe organ will be presented by organist Joyce Zigler, guest organists, voices (both adult and children), handbells, trumpet and piano to create an evening of music "From Classical to Jazz". This concert is sure to delight all music lovers with its unique variety of music! The concert will be preceded by Appetizers and Mocktails served in Fellowship Hall. Tickets (\$10 for adults, \$5 for children under 12) for Appetizers and Mocktails are available in the church office or at the door. All proceeds for the evening's events will benefit the Organ Support Fund and Choralfest 2020 (children's sacred choir festival).

The Central State Choir will be making a return visit on Sunday, November 10, for our 10 a.m. worship service. You will certainly want to be here for this exciting and music filled worship service.

Looking forward to an inspiring December:

Sing Christmas—Christmas Cantata

Composers Joel Raney and Mary McDonald have joined together to create an exuberant and dynamic cantata that is certain to delight and inspire you. The narration knits the music together in a thrilling and complete re-telling of the Christmas story.

"Sing Christmas" will be presented on Sunday, December 15, during the 10:00 a.m. worship service by the Sanctuary Choir, soloists, chamber orchestra, and sacred dancers from *The Academy of Dance Arts* with choreographer Melanie Malicote. *Be sure to mark your calendars to be part of this inspiring morning.*

Time Travelers of Christmas Past---Children's Christmas Musical

Join the voices of *Joyful Noize* and *Joyful Noize Jr.* as they have a "Star Trek" type adventure. These young space travelers experiment with a time machine and find themselves travelling across early America where each group of travelers experiences Christmas being celebrated in different ways. Come, join us on this exciting journey of discovery. The true message of Christmas, as told in this delightful way, will be delivered by the voices of the *Joyful Noize* and *Joyful Noize Jr.* Choirs in Fellowship Hall on Sunday, December 22, at 4:00 p.m. during our Family Worship Service.



November Birthdays!

02.....Lara Moon	15.....Bill Wilson
05.....Jessica Weber	16.....Ronda Nisbet
07.....Peggy Dobrozi	17.....Julie Nickell
07.....Jack Newlin	17.....Josh Biddle
09.....Sandi Templeton	18.....Josh Fuerst
10.....Neila Barnes	19.....Helen Haass
11.....Carol Minge	19.....Chuck Minge
11.....Nancy Shafer	19.....Tony Susco
12.....Fearn Gerber	19.....Wyatt Kaufer
13.....Mary Enochs	25.....Ron Sutter
13.....Sharon Perkins	25.....Annie Brehm
14.....Paul Nisbet	26.....Martha Robertson
15.....Tim Biddle	28.....Jim Harris
15.....Barbara Steel	30.....Catherine Taylor

Men's Monthly Meeting

The Men's Monthly Meeting is an opportunity to get together and socialize over a meal outside the church. You're welcome to join them on **Tuesday, November 12 and December 10**, at Clubhouse Sports Grille, 250 N. Main Street in Monroe @ 5:30 p.m.



Ladies Night Out

ATTENTION: ALL CHURCH GALS
AND FRIENDS!

You are invited to a good meal and casual evening at
The Olive Garden on **Tuesday, November 19**, at 6:00 p.m.

We extend our Christian Love and Sympathy to the family of:

Jim Bruner, who died on September 5.
Dr. Craig Johnson, who died on September 20.
Rev. Richard Schechter, who died on September 27.
Hazel Dennison, who died on October 28.

Evotional

The Evotional has returned this fall. The Evotional is mid-week devotional with a few reminders that is sent to your e-mail. We were delighted to have contributors from throughout the congregation reflect on their favorite Psalm. The short reminder of church events is a helpful way to stay connected. If you'd like to sign up, please go to <https://www.fpcmiddletown.com/weekly-evotional> or e-mail Sandy.

Thank you to everyone who made the Kirkin' of the Tartan service special this year.
Enjoy a few pictures throughout PresbyNews.

Tuesday Morning Bible Study

Our next Bible study, mostly in November, will be on the Book of Philippians. Philippians is an unusual letter written by Paul. It is a letter full of gratitude. It does not offer as much correction as other of Paul's letters. Even as Paul writes from prison, he tells the church in Philippi to "rejoice always."

October 28 – Philippians 1
November 5 – Philippians 2
November 11 – Philippians 3
November 18 – Philippians 4
November 24 – No Bible Study

For our Advent Bible Study, we are going to study angels in scripture. This one will be challenging for the pastor, because there are so many angels throughout the seasons of Advent and Christmas. What are we to do with them? This will tie into the Advent sermon series on the different encounters with these messengers during the birth stories.

December Bible study will meet on Dec. 3, 10, and 17.



December Birthdays!

01.....Linette Curless	21.....Richie Dempster
01.....Brody Nein	22.....Madelyne Rogers
04.....Luke Cox	22.....Bob Selby
07.....David Banker	23.....Barb Landis
07.....Loren Curless	26.....Sharon Dowden
08.....Dave Francis	27.....Jeff Moore
12.....Jo Flowers	28.....Dolly Howard
12.....Tony Lyons	28.....Allyson Irving
17.....Lou Christy	29.....Carol Burns
17.....Kimberli Steele	29.....Greg Gerber
19.....Tina Newlin	29.....Linda Heagen
19.....Joan Rice	29.....Eldon Mattick
21.....Paul Becker	31.....Robin Becker

Introducing our Community Listener

Hello! My name is Jonathan Sparks-Franklin. I am the new Community Listener here at FPC. Pastor Michael, along with the Session and the Vision and Strategy Committee, have taken a strong interest in reimagining the church's relationship to the surrounding neighborhood.

The primary goal is to shift our missional thinking from a posture of scarcity to a posture of abundance. Whereas churches have historically taken a *needs-based* approach to the community, focusing on its *problems* and how the church can *fix* these, the leaders at FPC have alternatively decided to focus on the community's *strengths, talents, and giftings*. What are some of the specific assets unique to *this* particular neighborhood? How is God already creatively working here in Middletown? And most importantly, how can we as a church support and partner with the good that is already happening all around us?

This is where I come in. As a community listener, my role is to not only establish relationships with local people and organizations, but to *listen* to their particular visions, values, and dreams. Over the next six months I will be meeting with as many folks as possible as I attempt to discern the exciting ways in which God is already working here in Middletown. My goal is to provide a comprehensive map of our community's assets and talents so that we as a church know how to best invest our time and resources in creative ways that genuinely serve and benefit our surrounding neighborhood. I would love to speak with any of you about this project, be it to hear about your own perspective on the community's assets or if you have a recommendation of someone I should meet with. Please do not hesitate to reach out! I can be contacted by phone at 770-617-5072 or email at Jsparksf@indiana.edu.

THANKS FOR GIVING: First Presbyterian Church is a collection of our time, talents, and resources. In the Spirit of stewardship, join us for a *Thanks-for-Giving Celebration* following worship on November 17 in Fellowship Hall.

Worship Services

Sunday, November 3

Communion & All Saints Sunday

Philippians 1:1-11

Music by the Sanctuary Choir

Sunday, November 10

Philippians 2:1-13

Central State University Choir

Sunday, November 17

Philippians 3:12-4:1

Sanctuary Choir

Sunday, November 24

Philippians 4:1-9

Sanctuary Choir

Sunday, December 1

Communion & First Sunday of Advent

Guest preacher Jackie Nowak

Sanctuary Choir

Sunday, December 8

Second Sunday of Advent

Sanctuary Choir & Joyful Noize

Sunday, December 15

Third Sunday of Advent

***"Sing Christmas"* by Joel Raney & Mary McDonald**

This cantata will be presented by the Sanctuary Choir, Soloists, Chamber Orchestra, Liturgical Dancers and Narrators

Sunday, December 22

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Renaissance Ringers

Sunday, December 22

Family Christmas Service

4:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall

"Time Travelers of Christmas Past"

This musical will be presented by the Joyful Noize & Joyful Noize Jr. Children's Choirs.

Tuesday, December 24

Christmas Eve

6:30 p.m. *Christmas Eve Recital of Music*

by a variety of musicians

7:00 p.m. *Christmas Eve Candlelight Service*

Music presented by Sanctuary Choir, Renaissance Ringers and Soloists

Sunday, December 29

Guest preacher David Fleming

Music by Susan Beagle, pianist

A very special Christmas remembrance. . .

Christmas trees adorned with beautiful ornaments create some of our most special Christmas memories. The Music/Worship Ministry Team invites you to join us once again to create a *Memorial Christmas Tree* in the Gathering Area. This year our tree will be aglow with many gorgeous *Red Stained Glass Crosses* measuring 4 3/4 inches tall and almost 3 inches wide.

May one or more of these lovely *Red Stained Glass Crosses* find a home on your tree or as a sun catcher in your window. These beautiful crosses can also be a gift for that special person. The *Red Stained Glass Cross* will be on display in the Gathering Area and the church office.

You have the opportunity to purchase a *Red Stained Glass Cross* in honor or in memory of a loved one. After the Christmas season you may take your lovely ornament home to adorn your tree next year. You may also purchase extra ornaments as beautiful gifts. Just fill out the form below and for only \$10.00 each, you'll help to create our beautiful *Memorial Christmas Tree*.

Proceeds from the sale of the *Red Stained Glass Cross* will go to the Organ Support Fund.

Christmas Red Stained Glass Cross Ornament

I will purchase _____ *Red Stained Glass Cross (s)* for the Memorial Christmas Tree.

In honor/memory of _____
(Circle your choice.) (Please print information exactly as you would like it listed.)

Given by _____
(Please print information exactly as you would like it listed.)

Phone _____ Payment Enclosed _____

Please detach this section and place it in the offering plate on Sunday, or send/bring it to the church office by **Sunday, December 15.**



This is my Father's World



I recently asked a check-out clerk at a local supermarket how often customers asked to use paper bags rather than the thin plastic bags routinely used to package groceries. She said “not very many.”

All of us want a healthy climate but wishing for it won't get us there. Trash disposal increases every year. We are filling up our landfills with plastic grocery bags and other items that can be recycled if we take the time and have the knowledge to ensure our waste goes to the proper place.

My goal in this “green column” is to pass along information to promote recycling. That's the easy part, but disposing of our trash isn't always as easy or convenient.

You and I are the first level of recycling. Our trash hauler Rumpke is the second, and there are numerous other recycling centers that can dispose of much of what Rumpke cannot.

With each green column we hope we can offer what you and your neighbors need if you feel a greener world is important, and who doesn't.

Just using common sense can help reduce the waste stream. Here are a few suggestions:

Food waste can be placed in a compost bin and used in your vegetable and flower gardens.

You can purchase items at the store that are not packaged in plastic. Use a reusable bag to carry them home.

A good first step by anyone interested in a greener world is to obtain a recycle bin from the city by picking one up at your city building. In the City of Middletown, you can call 513-425-7960 for either a red small bin or a larger green one on rollers. They are free.

Diagrams on the bins show what to recycle and what not to recycle. Or, you can use recycle drop-off boxes around town. You can get a list by calling 513-887-3653. We will give you specific locations in a future column. You can also go to “recycle.bcoho.us” and look under “community drop off box.”

Tip of the Day: Stuff all your thin plastic grocery bags into a bag and return them to your Kroger or other major grocery store. They recycle the bags.

In the meantime, always remember, by not crowding the earth with our waste products, a greener world can help save wildlife and maybe even us. Have a good green day!

Gene Schaefer

Sunday Night Live [SNL], will be studying the Great Courses series “Thinking about Religion and Violence”. The course explores the persistence of religious violence, its scriptural justifications, and how its perpetrators perceive the world. The series looks at the roots, causes, and circumstances of religious violence the world grapples with today. The presenter is Dr. Jason Bivins, Professor of Religious Studies at North Carolina State University and the author of “Religion of Fear”. Coming programs are:

- 11/3 The Apocalyptic Outlook
- 11/10 Radical Violence and Religion
- 11/17 Religion and Violence against Women
- 11/24 Sexuality, Morality, and Punishment
- 11/31 Religion and Just War Theory



Rosa Parks Elementary noted the needs for November and December are laundry detergent, toilet paper, hand soap, deodorant, and shampoo. We have tubs in the Gathering Area and office to drop items in.



Our Mission

...to **SHARE** the good news

...to **NURTURE** the Spirit

...to **SERVE** members and neighbors



First Presbyterian Church
2910 Central Avenue
Middletown, Ohio 45044
(513) 422-6365
Return Service requested

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Middletown, OH
Permit No. 52