

DECEMBER 2022

STEEPLE NOTES

Upcoming Events Guide

A publication of First Presbyterian Church, Huron, Ohio



DECEMBER 3: HURON WINTER
FEST HOT CHOCOLATE
STAND, 11:30-12:15

DECEMBER 4: COMMUNION
SUNDAY AND CENTSIBILITY
OFFERING.

DECEMBER 5: ADVENT
CELEBRATION NIGHT WITH
SCOUTS, 6-8 P.M.

DECEMBER 11: MUSICAL
CHRISTMAS PROGRAM, 10:30
A.M.

DECEMBER 14: LITTLE WON-
DERS CHRISTMAS PROGRAM,
10:00 A.M. AND 2:00 P.M.

DECEMBER 18:
CONGREGATIONAL MEETING,
FOLLOWING WORSHIP.

DECEMBER 24: CHRISTMAS
EVE WORSHIP SERVICE, 11:00
P.M.

DECEMBER 25: CHRISTMAS
LESSONS AND CAROLS, 10:30
A.M.

Christmas Celebration Crafts, Worship, and Dinner

CHRISTMAS *celebration*

A special evening is planned for Monday, December 5th from 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. as the Scouts join us to celebrate Christmas. The festivities will begin at 6:00 p.m. with a pizza supper, sponsored by the Christian Education Committee. Next, there will be a brief worship service and re-telling of the Christmas story using drama and imagination. After worship is

over, everyone will be invited to visit craft stations, and to help make the Fellowship Hall look festive for the season. Finally, we will celebrate with our Cub Scouts with an advancement ceremony.

The Christian Education Committee encourages everyone in the church to come and participate. What a fantastic way to get to know some of the youth we serve, all the while celebrating the season. We hope to see you there!

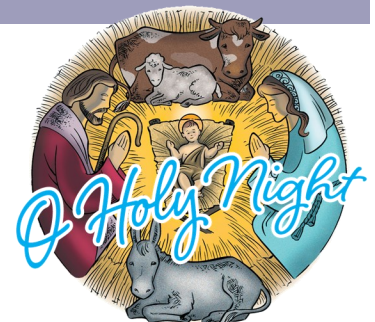
Pledge Cards are Due

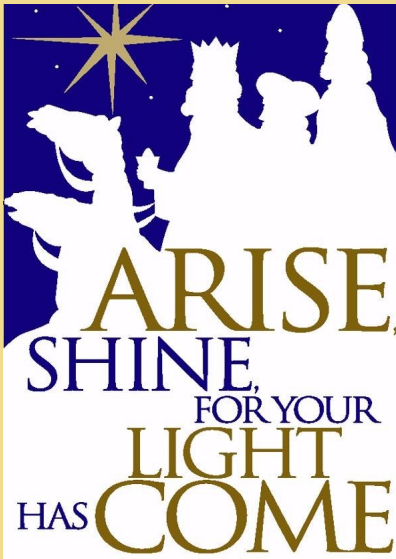
We will be receiving pledge cards on Sunday, December 4th. Please bring them with you to worship and place them in the offering plate. We thank you for your generosity!



Christmas Joy Offering

The Christmas Joy Offering provides assistance to current and retired church workers and their families in their time of need, and develops our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. We will be taking up the Christmas Joy Offering on Sunday, December 18, and Sunday, December 25.





Angel Tree Gifts are due to the church office on Wednesday, December 9th. Please bring them on Sunday, December 4th, or during office hours (9-3) on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday.



December 24th at 11:00 p.m. Join us for the Live Stream at www.facebook.com/fpchuron

Christmas Eve and Christmas Plans

Our Worship Committee has planned two Christmas services:

We will have a Candlelight Christmas Eve Service on December 24th at 11:00 p.m. The service will be a formal lessons and carols service with choir participation.

We will have a Lessons and Carols service on Sunday, December 25th at 10:00 a.m. This service will be more casual and light, with a brief meditation rather than a full sermon.

Please note, if there is interest in a 5:00 p.m. service on Christmas Eve, please contact Pastor Sara at sara.hodsdn@gmail.com, or 610-955-3075. She is more than willing to provide a brief worship service in the parlor for those wishing to celebrate Christmas Eve a bit earlier with a telling of the Christmas story, prayer, candles, and Christmas Carols.

Music Celebration Sunday

After a two-year absence, "Music Sunday" returns on December 11th. Please join us for this special Sunday as we will feature our own musicians along with special guests. Glorify God with us!



December Poetry Readings

On Sunday, December 11th at 3:00 p.m., the Nurture and Mission Committee will host the fall/winter poetry reading. The topic is "Bits and Pieces of Life."

One of the Huron Poet Laureates, our own Ron Ruble, will be the featured reader. Kimberly and Daniel Ryu will perform.

Are you a poet with an urge to share, or maybe you like to read poetry out loud? Contact Ron Ruble to be a reader at 419-433-3820. Leave a message if you would like to lend your voice.

Check out ChurchTrac

Have you visited Church Trac yet? It's a way of keeping us up to date with your address, phone, and email address, as well as check up on upcoming events. Church members are able to sign in and access a church directory for their convenience. You are also able to look at your current giving and print your annual giving statement. Check it out at <https://fpchuron.churchtrac.com/>



Thy Kingdom Come by Rev. Sara Hodsden

We Presbyterians have celebrated Advent only a short time. Our branch of the Reformation did away with church seasons in the 1500s. To break from anything ritualistic, the Puritans and others did not even celebrate Easter, let alone Christmas or Advent.

But in the 1970s, the liturgical renewal movement came to the Presbyterian Church. Ever since, traditions such as the Advent Wreath have become a part of worship on those four Sundays before Christmas Day.

Rev. Fleming Rutledge, a retired Episcopalian minister, has written *Advent: The Once and Future Coming of Jesus Christ*. She puts forward that Advent celebrates three “advents”:

- *Adventus redemptionis*: the incarnate Christ born of the Virgin Mary.
- *Adventus sanctificationis*: the presence of Christ in Word and sacrament.
- *Adventus glorificamus*: the coming in glory to be our judge on the last day.

According to Rutledge, we celebrate all three, but we have lost the primary focus of Advent--that Christ will come again in glory to bring the Kingdom of God in its fullness. A look at the lectionary readings for Advent shows that she is right. Instead, we hustle and bustle our way to “Silent Night, Holy Night” without taking time for self-examination and repentance. It’s not “Christmassy” to think about the end of the world as we know it. Christmas is about angels singing, gift-giving, and rejoicing in the Christ child. Advent is about burlap and sackcloth, ashes, and repentance.

Understand me--I want to sing Christmas carols all through Advent, and I like the sanctuary all pretty and bright. But to move from the joy of Thanksgiving to the

delight of Christmas so quickly denies us a deeper, richer understanding of the coming of Christ and what that means in the world.

Rutledge shares a story about the ongoing civil war in Yemen. In 2017, one of the consequences of the war was a complete shutdown of all businesses and services in Yemen. There was no food for anyone. There were no medical services and no water supply. No airports or seaports were in operation. Children were suffering from cholera, and there was nothing the parents could do. A man waited in a clinic with his six-year-old daughter, suffering from malnutrition. He said, “We’re just waiting for doom or a breakthrough from heaven.”

That’s us in Advent, in this in-between Christ’s first and second coming. There is either doom or deliverance. Either death or life. We are at this collision point between the hope of all hopes found in Christ and the punishment of estrangement from God. If it sounds like desperate times, it is because we do live in desperate times. As Rutledge points out, if you are comfortable as we Americans often are, then “Come, Lord Jesus!” may not ring as true as when it comes from the lips of a Yemeni, a Ukrainian, or a person who has just lost their home, or their spouse, or their health. These folks mean it.

Advent is when we can look at the world, notice the bad, see the good, and still say, “Come, Lord Jesus. Come because the blessings I enjoy will be nothing compared to what you have in store for the world. My Christmas celebrations are a mere foretaste; the fullest joy will come with your kingdom.” Amen.



Little Wonders News

Our Little Wonders ministry continues with a fun-packed and educational school year.

Tuesdays is “Big Play Day” in Fellowship Hall. Here, Ms. Kim and Ms. Amber evaluate motor skills.

Tuesdays is also Chapel Day. This fall, we’ve learned about God’s promises as experienced by Abraham and Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses. Now we are learning about God’s promises as found in Jesus.

The Christmas Program will be Wednesday, December 14th in the church sanctuary. All are welcome to attend, or to view the livestream at 10:30 a.m. or 2:30 p.m. on Facebook.

Little Wonders will also host a mitten tree, dedicated to providing donations of new hats and gloves for needy children in our area.

Christmas break will be December 21-January 2.

Thankful for Thanksgiving—And For New Chairs!

It took two years for Thanksgiving to return to Fellowship Hall, but we did enjoy our Thanksgiving meal together on November 20th. Many thanks to Bob and Marcie Muntz for spearheading the dinner, and to Sarah Blake-man and her Nurture and Mission Committee, along with Presbyterian Women, for all their help.

You will notice the new white chairs we have in Fellowship Hall. Thanks to a generous grant from the Schlink Foundation, we were able to purchase these chairs which will hold up much better to the wear and tear of so many who use our building as a meeting place. The chairs can bear 500 pounds each, and are very comfortable.

We are pleased to offer to anyone one of our older chairs. You may pick them up in Fellowship Hall, while supplies last.



Above: Our busy workers getting ready for the Thanksgiving meal.



Right: The fellowship enjoys the meal together. Please note the beautiful new chairs that will help us better serve our community. Thank you to the Schlink Foundation for their generous grant.

From the Prayer Group

Oswald Chambers, in his book *My Utmost for His Highest* writes: “Prayer is not an exercise, it is the life of the saint.” Would you like to stretch and exercise your prayer muscles? Contact Susan Martter or Pastor Sara at pastorfpchuron@bex.net to join our intercessory prayer group. Please let us know of any requests you might have.

Thankful for New Decorations, and Loving Donors

On Sunday, November 27th, we returned to the Sanctuary after Thanksgiving to find it adorned in great splendor.

The Growth and Preservation Committee, and the Session approved, the purchase and refurbishment of old Christmas Decorations for the purpose of beautifying the sanctuary for the season. Rachel Platt took on the task, and worked closely with Corso's to use much of what we already had with a few touch-ups.

Many volunteers shared in decorating the parlor and getting the Christmas tree up in the sanctuary. The tree is brand new, thanks to Bob and Marcie Muntz.

Thanks to an anonymous donor, a decorating assistant was hired in order to hang some of the roping and place other decorations in the sanctuary.

In the parlor, Patti Smith included several nativity scenes, all of which come from church members, while Kathy Kirby added her tasteful and creative touches to the mantle.

The Remembrance Tree will soon be placed by Jann Glann.

Thank you to Rachel Platt, Bob and Marcie Muntz, Chuck and Cindy Kaman, Kathy Kirby, Patti Smith, Jann Glann, Presbyterian Women, and all who volunteered.





DECEMBER 2022

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|-----------------------------|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 1 9:00am Quilting Group 10:00am Bell Choir 8:00pm AA | 2 | 3 |
| 4 Centsability Offering Communion Sunday 10:00am Worship | 5 12:00pm Christ's Community Meal 6:00pm Advent and Christmas Celebration 7:00pm AA 7:00pm Scout Troop 31 | 6 | 7 Angel Tree Gifts Due 6:00pm Women's Bible Study | 8 9:00am Quilting Group 10:00am Bell Choir 8:00pm AA | 9 11:00am Erie County Retired Teachers BYOL | 10 |
| 11 Music Celebration Sunday 10:00am Worship 3:00pm Poetry Reading | 12 12:00pm Christ's Community Meal 7:00pm AA 7:00pm Scout Troop 31 | 13 Little Wonders Chapel | 14 Little Wonders Christmas Program 5:00pm Christ's Community Meal 7:00pm Session | 15 9:00am Quilting Group 10:00am Bell Choir 8:00pm AA | 16 | 17 |
| 18 10:00am Worship | 19 12:00pm Christ's Community Meal 7:00pm AA 7:00pm Scout Troop 31 | 20 Little Wonders Chapel | 21 Little Wonders Christmas Party | 22 9:00am Quilting Group 10:00am Bell Choir 8:00pm AA | 23 | 24 11:00pm Candlelight Service |
| 25 10:00am Worship | 26 12:00pm Christ's Community Meal 7:00pm AA 7:00pm Scout Troop 31 | 27 | 28 5:00pm Christ's Community Meal | 29 9:00am Quilting Group 10:00am Bell Choir 8:00pm AA | 30 | 31 |