

ADVOCATE

First Presbyterian Church
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January 2018

Annual Meeting **Sunday, February 25** **11:15 a.m. – Following the Worship Service**

The Annual Meeting is the time when our congregation gathers to review the year past and to look forward to the year to come. This year, we will also have an update on the building project and give thanks to God for blessing us with this gift. We will also receive the 2018 operating budget and vote on the terms of call for our pastor.

Members are asked to come to this meeting, and visitors and guests are welcome to attend.

Copies of the 2017 Annual Report will be available at the church beginning on Sunday, Feb. 11.

Annual Reports Due **Sunday, January 14**

A reminder to all committee chairs, group leaders and organization coordinators: Articles for the Annual Report are due on Sunday, January 14. They may be sent to pastormark.wfp@sbcglobal.net or put in Rev. Gauen's mailbox. This year we are encouraging fellowship and service groups to put an article in the Annual Report describing your ministry over the past year. If you would like to include your group in the Annual Report, just submit an article to the church office by Jan. 14.

Youth Sunday **Sunday, January 28**

Each year the youth of our church deliver the Good News of Jesus Christ in their own special way, this year on the last Sunday in January. Be sure to be there to hear this message and to support our young people in their walk of faith. Youth participating in the service will need to arrive at the church at 8:30 a.m. on that morning. Thanks to everyone who is involved in this presentation.

Building Transformation What's Under the Parking Lot



The City of Westerville requires that new parking lots have a water retention and release system underneath the surface. These yellow half-domes were installed under our new parking lot in November. Though you can't see them now, they are helping to retain rain water runoff and release it slowly into the city storm sewer system. This helps to prevent flooding in our city. Soon the new parking lot will get its base coat. The final coat of asphalt for our new parking lot will have to wait until the temperatures warm up this spring.

Friday Dine-Out Group Friday, January 12, 6:30 pm

Everyone is welcome to join us to celebrate the end of the holidays. Please come at 6:30 pm on **FRIDAY, January 12, at El Ranchero Alegre**, 6211 Cleveland Ave. (614 523-2604) for excellent Mexican food. Location is just south of I-270 on west side of Cleveland Ave. Many plates and salads are \$9-\$13. Please call Jim Hines or Bob Place for more information or to say whether you are coming.



Ladies Night Out

Tuesday, January 16 – 6:30pm

Wendell's Pub, 925 N. State St., Westerville

Tuesday, February 20 – 6:30pm

Time & Change, 1186 County Line Rd., Westerville

(Windsor Bay Shopping Center)

Join us the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:30pm for food and fellowship. Bring a friend!
Please RSVP to Kim Hunt.

Fabrics of Faith

New Meeting Day; New Meeting Time!

By popular demand, Fabrics of Faith will meet during the day on the 3rd Monday of January, April, July, and October, from 1:00 – 2:30, in the church rumble seat for now. (We'll hope for heat in January!)

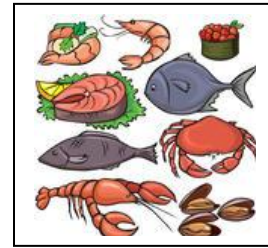
Our next meeting: Monday, January 15, 1:00 – 2:30, at the church.

Who's invited? Everyone who's interested in doing needle projects, supporting church members and/or friends, and socializing with others from our church. Come; bring your friends and projects.

Questions? Call or email Beckey Stamm. See you there!

January Men's Breakfast

Saturday, January 27 – 8:30 am

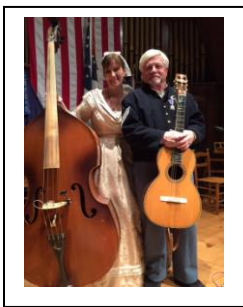


Something 'fishy' is up for the January Men's Breakfast on January 27. Our own Matt Borth works in the world of restaurant food supply and is associated with Catanese Classic Seafood. (This organization donated the fish for our special event dinner last January.) Matt and one of his associates will give us a behind-the-scenes look at the food industry....and maybe more! Don't 'flounder' around and forget to sign up by Wednesday, January 24, so you can 'catch' the fun. It should be a 'whale' of a good time. (Sorry - So many fish puns available....so little time.) '*Carp' - e Diem* – seize the day! The food will be regular breakfast fare.

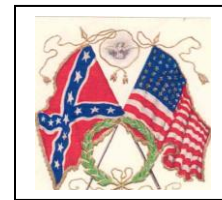
Special Event: Sunday, February 18

Steve Ball

Musician Performer & Historian



Concert at 4:00 pm
Potluck Dinner following



A special program & dinner are being planned for this date with musician performer and historian Steve Ball. His program will connect with Ohio, as well as Westerville's history, including the music of Benjamin Hanby.

Steve Ball is from Columbus and specializes in the music of the American Civil War and the music and life of Stephen Foster. Steve has studied the Civil War since his teens and has devoted the past twenty years to studying the music of this era. He has also performed for many years for a variety of groups all around the United States. He has several programs that he presents, but ours will focus on the Civil War, tying it in with our Westerville history.

The Civil War presentation begins with tunes from the mid 1850's that reflect the climate of the country before the war began in 1861. As the presentation unfolds, Steve will offer patriotic songs cherished by both sides, a sing-along, and finally tunes that reflect the loss and melancholy the war produced. The history and influence of each tune is shared, as well as the progress of the war itself.

Several members of our congregation have seen Steve's performances, along with his wife Lisa's vocal harmonies and her accompaniment on the string bass. Our audience is sure to be moved and entertained by their performance.

For more information, see his website: <https://www.steveballcivilwarmusic.com>

Please plan on bringing a dish to share for the potluck. Please sign up by February 11 so we may plan seating and table settings.

Presbyterian Educational Event

Saturday, January 6, 9:30 am- 3:00 pm

The Presbytery of Scioto Valley will hold its annual Partners In Education event on Saturday, Jan. 6, from 9:30 to 3:00 p.m. at the Hilliard Presbyterian Church. This event includes several workshops for elders, deacons, clerks, and other church leaders and members. Many of our members have gone in the past and have found the event to be both educational and interesting. The cost for this event is only \$5.00, and that includes lunch. For more information, visit the presbytery website: www.psvonline.org or talk to Rev. Gauen.

Three Opportunities to Serve Our Church!

1) Help in the church office: On January 19, our Church Secretary, Linda Lemity, will be having knee surgery. She will be out of the office for six weeks. During that time, Barb Klingman will take over her typist duties, but we will need several volunteers to help answer the phones, greet visitors, and handle the mail while Linda is out. We are looking at shifts for the morning (9 a.m. – Noon) and afternoon (Noon—3:00 p.m.) on each weekday, Monday – Thursday, beginning January 22 and continuing through March 1. If you can help with one or more shifts during this time, please talk to Rev. Gauen. Thank you—your help will keep the church running smoothly while we wait for Linda to return.

2) Help with the budget: As we start the new year, are you looking for a new way to help our congregation? Have you ever balanced a budget or reviewed a bank statement? Could you offer 1-2 hours of your time per month? If some of those answers are “YES,” then we would welcome you to join the Stewardship and Finance Committee. We meet once a month, review church finances (reports prepared by our Treasurer), and discuss recommendations to Session related to Stewardship and Finance. Most months our meetings last about an hour. If you think you could help, please talk to one of the current committee members: John Simpkins, Dave Stamm, Jim Hines, or Lori Lampel or call Barbara Klingman or Mark Gauen.

3) Help with communion preparation: Kay Mackan will be retiring after many years as the coordinator of communion preparation, effective March 30. You could take her place! Your job will be to find two preparers each month, hand out (already prepared) instructions, and assist as needed. Kay has helped train many church members in performing this meaningful service to the church family and will provide a list of possible preparers. Interested? Please speak with Kay or the Worship Committee Elder, Phil Nussdorfer.



2017 Habitat Progressive Concert December 8

Despite the hassles of the construction project, First Presbyterian Church once again served as one of the three host churches for the annual Habitat for Humanity Progressive Concert. The concert is one of the highlights of the Advent season, not only for the church but for the entire community. Our choir, led by Earl Linhart and accompanied by Lyn Meyer, provided wonderful music and helped to raise thousands of dollars to support the work of Habitat.

Youth and Family Activities

Discovery Zone Wednesdays, 5 pm

Wish you had super powers? Want to know how you can be amazing like Wonder woman, Spiderman, or another favorite super hero? Come join us on Wednesday nights at 5pm for our Discovery Zone program. If you need to get homework done, come early (4:30pm) and get some help. We start at 5pm with fun, music, Bible Study, and dinner. There is no cost to attend. We ask only for \$1.50 donation per person for the meal. We can't wait to see you there as we learn to be SUPER!

If you would be willing to make dinner for the youth on a Wednesday this year, please see Rev. Heather Hicks or sign up at the back of the sanctuary.

Special Thanks

I want to say a special thank you to all of you who gave a special gift to the Hicks family over the holidays. Each one is much appreciated. My family and I have felt so welcome and so appreciated over the last year and a half. Thank you so much for your continuing warmth and welcoming of my little family. Many blessings to you all in the coming year.

Rev. Hicks



Youth Sub Sale



Enjoy a sub sandwich while watching Super Bowl LII. Let the youth do the work for you! We will again be creating delicious subs for you to enjoy for \$7 each. Order as many as you would like! **Orders are due January 28 to Audra Hauff. (Alternately, email them to Audra or put them in Heather Hick's mailbox.)** Subs will be paid for and picked up on Sunday, February 4, following worship. Proceeds from this sale will go towards summer camp and mission trips for our youth

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Meat Choice

Cheese Choice

Veggie Choices (please circle your choices)

Sub 1: ham or turkey

American, Provolone
or Swiss

onion, lettuce, mild yellow pepper,
tomato, pickle, black olive

Sub 2: ham or turkey

American, Provolone
or Swiss

onion, lettuce, mild yellow pepper,
tomato, pickle, black olive

Sub 3: ham or turkey

American, Provolone
or Swiss

onion, lettuce, mild yellow pepper,
tomato, pickle, black olive

Sub 4: ham or turkey

American, Provolone
or Swiss

onion, lettuce, mild yellow pepper,
tomato, pickle, black olive

Pike County: 40 Years of Outreach!

The Pike County Outreach Food Pantry, the only pantry in that county, is open every day of the year except December 25. On each of those days, 50 to 70 people arrive, hoping to get enough food to sustain their families for a few more days. They patiently sit in a waiting room, as one person at a time visits the pantry to choose one breakfast item, two cans of vegetables, a loaf of bread, a meat item, and so on. During the summer, local farmers bring in fresh vegetables, a treat for families in need. Pantry staff help the families make selections and keep a record of what each person takes. Every seven days, families can return for more food.

You know that our church also donates hats, gloves, socks, and other warm clothing in the late fall. These items and other donations, such as paperback books, are offered to families when they are available.

Sharon and John Davis have been helping with the Pike County Pantry for as long as they can remember. They are sure that the church has been supporting the pantry for at least 40 years. The Davises make the 90-minute trip to Pike County about every other week, year round, carting down boxes and bags of food donated by our members. “A full car makes us smile,” Sharon says. You might recall that recently, she asked the congregation for cereal. You responded! One Thursday, the Davises took down 161 boxes of cereal! Sharon remembers that the pantry staff gasped when they saw the stacks and stacks of cereal. However, by Saturday, all of the cereal was gone, brightening the mornings for hungry families in Pike County.



Sharon readies cans for hungry families.



Recent food drives by local schools have helped fill often-empty shelves.

John Davis grew up in Adams County, next door to Pike, so he has seen firsthand the need for help in this part of our state. In recent years, this need has increased drastically, often resulting in empty pantry shelves. The pantry gets some help from a food bank in Cincinnati. Local grocery stores also donate food nearing its expiration date.

Often other church members make the trip to Pike County with Sharon and John, including Denny and Sue Ann Norton, Mary Lee Jones, Bonnie Moses, and others. Lately, these church members have been driving down one day a week to help check people in, stock shelves, and do whatever else is needed. Sharon says they will not be traveling to Pike County during the winter because of the weather, but they will return one day a week in the spring—and she welcomes more volunteers who are willing to make the trip one or many times!

Sharon says, “We take food down to Pike County because it needs to be done, but it’s heart-warming to donate time for someone who really, really needs it.”

New Deacon Introduction: Elaine Foley

I am very excited to have recently been ordained a Deacon here at First Presbyterian, and I am looking forward to getting to know everyone here better. I was born in Dundee, Scotland, and raised in the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. As a youth, I was very active in church groups and choir. In my adult life, most of my time and energy has been devoted to my career as a registered nurse and to caring for my late husband, who received a double lung transplant and unfortunately died from cancer 11 years later in 2009. I moved to Westerville in 2014 to marry my late husband's best friend, Michael Foley. In North Carolina, I was in my church choir, active in the knitting group, a Liturgist, and co-leader of the Women's Bible Study. Here at First Presbyterian, you can meet me at Tuesday Bible Study, Ladies' Night Out, Dine Out, Fabrics of Faith, Sunday morning discussion group, or the 4th Monday discussion group. You can also see me in the soprano section of the choir. You may recently have heard me as a new Liturgist on Sunday mornings, and I am the new leader of the Circle for Women on 3rd Thursdays at 11 am. We usually meet at the MCL Cafeteria, but we just learned that it is closing. I will let you know our new meeting place asap. All women are welcome to join us.

Michael and I enjoy flower gardening, bird watching, and spending time with our two-year-old granddaughter Elodie and her parents, Mykaila and Matt, in Washington DC. We also have a brand-new grandson.

Thank You!

The Westerville Habitat Partnership (WHP) would like to say a BIG Thank You to all who supported our recent Progressive Christmas Concert and our Soups for Shelter. We netted about \$6000 from concert ticket sales and about \$3000 from the soup dinner. Every penny will go to upcoming Habitat building projects to help provide homes for deserving families.

We couldn't do this without you! Thanks so much!

Bernie, John, SueAnn

Adult Growth and Development

ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

With the construction, several Adult Education Classes are meeting in new locations. Please note the changes for your class. If you have questions, contact Rev. Mark Gauen.

Activity	When	Where	What
Tuesday Morning Bible Study	Tuesdays, 9:30 am	Raisin Rack 2545 W. Schrock (at the corner of Schrock and Cleveland).	“The Queen of the Letters”-- so wrote William Barclay about the New Testament book of Ephesians. Join us in a new study of this special book. Led by Rev. Gauen.
4th Monday Discussion	4 th Mondays, 7:30 p.m.	Fellowship Room	We will meet on January 22 as we continue to explore the stories in the book <i>My So-Called Biblical Life</i> . Led by Rev. Gauen.
The Library Class	Sunday Mornings 9:00-10:00 a.m.	Fellowship Room	An adult discussion group that explores the application of our faith to the challenges of living in our world today. Beginning Sept. 10, we will study the book <i>Healing the Heart of Democracy</i> by Parker J. Palmer.
Circle 4 Women	3 rd Thursdays, 11:00 am	???	Our Presbyterian Women’s Group usually meets monthly for fellowship and Bible study at the MCL Cafeteria. However, the cafeteria is closing, so we will announce a new meeting place in time for our January 18 meeting. Join us for an insightful look at the gospels’ wonderful fellowship. Elaine Foley is our study leader.



Pastor's Page

“Why do you pass judgement on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgement seat of God. For it is written, ‘As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.’ So then, each of us will be accountable to God.”
- Romans 14:10-12

Dear Friends:

About this time last year, there was a story on NPR and thanks to the Internet, I was able to find it in the NPR archives (Jan. 15, 2017) The story is about the Coventry Cathedral in England. In 1940 during the Blitz, it was nearly bombed to destruction. The ruins of the medieval tower and the outer wall have been kept as a space for remembrance, and the only thing added was an inscription on the wall behind the altar that says simply, “Father, forgive.” The congregation built the new cathedral next to the remains of the old. But now, many decades later, in the middle of a world that seems primarily bound together only by fear and by disdain of others, Coventry Cathedral has erected another sign, this one on the front door of the church. The sign says this:

We extend a special welcome to those who are single, married, divorced, widowed, straight, gay, confused, well-heeled, or down-at-the-heel. We welcome wailing babies and excited toddlers. We welcome you whether you can sing like Pavarotti or just growl quietly to yourself. You are welcome here if you are just browsing, you just woke up, or just got out of prison. No matter what color you are, you are welcome here. We don't care if you are more Christian than the Archbishop of Canterbury or haven't been to church since Christmas ten years ago. We extend a special welcome to those who are over sixty but still not grown up yet and to teenagers who are growing up too fast. We welcome keep-fit moms, football dads, starving artists, tree huggers, latte sippers, vegetarians, junk-food eaters. We welcome those who are in recovery or still addicted. We welcome you if you're having problems, are down in the dumps, or don't like organized religion. We're not keen on it either. We offer welcome to those who work too hard, don't work, can't spell, or are here because Granny is visiting and wanted to come to the cathedral. We offer a special welcome to those who could use a prayer right now, had religion shoved down their throats as kids, or just got lost and wound up here by mistake. We welcome pilgrims, tourists, seekers, doubters, and you.

When asked about the sign, the current rector said in the interview, “It's simply about being a place where people can leave their differences at the door and come into conversation with one another and with God.”

I wonder if the Coventry Cathedral congregation isn't on to something...that in a world where we talk at each other rather than to each other, the church can be a place where we can learn to be together no matter what our differences are. For what is a church other than a gathering of those who are seeking Christ in one way or another? Within the church, so many times we focus on our differences—theological differences, worship differences, sacramental differences, structural differences—that we often forget what we have in common. So often we worry so much about being right that we forget to be loving. Coventry has a history that shows just how destructive we can be when we let our differences come between us. As we enter this New Year, I hope that we can find ways to welcome all to our fellowship, and together we might find new and fruitful ways to understand and follow Christ.

Yours in Christ,