

# ADVOCATE

First Presbyterian Church  
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**January 2020**

## **Reaching out to Refugees Sunday, January 19, 11:30 am**

Our church has a long history of reaching out to others. As one example, during the Vietnam War, some of you helped establish a counseling service at our church. It is now Concord Counseling Center and employs 115 counseling professionals. Its website says it was founded in 1972 by “a group of concerned citizens with determination and vision.” That’s us!

Right now, it’s difficult to hear about the obstacles facing people who, fleeing violence and persecution in their homelands, are attempting to immigrate to our nation. How would it feel to be separated from your children for years—with only a slight chance of seeing them again, without knowing where they are or who’s taking care of them? That’s even hard to imagine!

The refugee crisis seems overwhelming. So many people, so many needs. But do you remember the story about the starfish marooned on the beach? A man walking by sees a woman throwing the starfish back in the water, one by one. He asks what she is trying to do. Can’t she see that there are thousands of dying starfish and only one of her? What difference can she make? But as she gently tosses another starfish into the water, she says, “I made a difference for that one!”

In the same way, we can make a difference to a refugee family—maybe only one family, but one for sure. An organization called CRIS, Community Refugee and Immigration Services, can provide the guidance we need. This group offers case management and core services to newly arriving refugee families from a range of cultures, languages, and countries. The team helps the refugees meet their basic needs, connect to the appropriate services, and learn the skills that will support them in their new lives in our nation. In this photo, the 6-year-old son of a CRIS client is reunited with his family after being held overseas for three years.



Facing depleted staff and budgets, the CRIS team needs help. Can we provide it? Please come to an exploratory meeting on Sunday, January 19, in Fellowship Hall, right after the service. A representative from CRIS will be here to explain ways that our church might help. It will be a working meeting, with goals set—and limitations noted. And we’ll have lunch! Please sign up in the Gathering Place so we know how many of you to expect.

# **Annual Meeting**

## **Sunday, February 23**

### **11:15 a.m. – Following the Worship Service**

At our Annual Meeting, our congregation gathers to review the year past and to look forward to the year to come. We will also receive the 2020 operating budget and vote on the terms of call for our pastor. Members are asked to stay after the service for this meeting; visitors and guests are welcome to attend as well.

## **Annual Reports Due January 12**

A reminder to all committee chairs, group leaders and organization coordinators: Articles for the Annual Report are due on Sunday, January 12, so the report will be ready before the Annual Meeting on February 23. They may be sent to [pastormark@fpcw.us](mailto:pastormark@fpcw.us) or put in Rev. Gauen's mail folder in the Knox Meeting Room. This year, we are encouraging fellowship and service groups to put an article in the Annual Report describing their ministry over the past year. If you would like to include your group in the Annual Report, just submit an article by the Jan. 12 deadline.

**Copies of the 2019 Annual Report will be available at the church beginning on Sunday, Feb. 9.**

## **Presbyterian Educational Event: PIE**

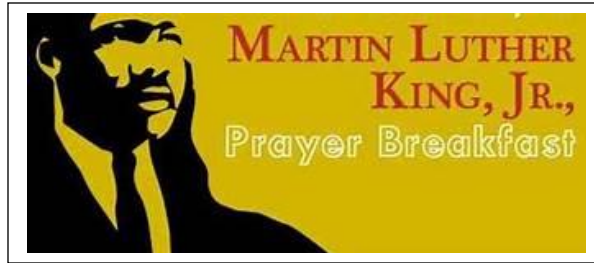
### **Saturday, January 11, 9:30 am to 3:00pm**

The Presbytery of Scioto Valley will hold its annual "Partners In Education" Event on Saturday, Jan. 11, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Worthington 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 \$10, and that includes lunch. For more information, visit the presbytery website: [www.psvonline.org](http://www.psvonline.org) or talk to Rev. Gauen.



## **January 13 Session Meeting**

The regular meeting of the Session of First Presbyterian Church will take place on Monday, January 13, at 6:30 p.m. This is a half hour earlier than the regular meeting time due to the College Football National Championship Game. Rev. Gauen has promised to make sure that the meeting is a short one.

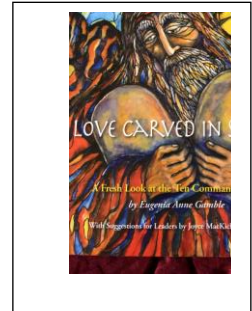


## **Westerville Martin Luther King Breakfast** **Monday, January 20, 7:30-9:30 a.m. at Villa Milano**

Each year, Leadership Westerville sponsors the Westerville Community Martin Luther King Breakfast on Martin Luther King Day. The breakfast features music, awards, and a keynote speaker, Rev. Vaughn Bell. This year, First Presbyterian Church has a table at the breakfast. If you would like to join us for this breakfast, please talk to Mary Lee Jones or Rev. Mark Gauen. The cost for the breakfast is \$35.00.

## **Circle 4 News** **Thursday, January 16, 11:00am**

The Women's Circle 4 will meet on the third Thursday at 11:00 am in the Knox Room for study and fellowship (weather permitting) with lunch from Jimmy Johns. We will start a new study, "Love Carved in Stone." If you would like to participate, contact Elaine Foley. Or you can also just show up. We would love to have you! If you would like a study book, they cost \$10.00.



## **Men's Breakfast** **Saturday, January 25, 9:00 am**

Rob Rankin will be the guest speaker for this breakfast, sharing information about the Columbus Furniture Bank. This nonprofit organization uses donated, gently used furniture to turn empty houses into warm homes. Men, please come and learn about this group. You'll enjoy a delicious breakfast and good fellowship!

# **Welcome to Our New Members Who Joined This Fall**

## **Judy Smith**

We welcome Judy, who is transferring to us from the Columbus-Eastminster Church, which recently merged with Unity Presbyterian Church in Reynoldsburg. Judy now lives in Worthington and found a new and closer home at our church. Judy is a friend of Dorothy Butz from the days when Dorothy's husband, the Reverend Bob Butz, was pastor at Eastminster.

## **Norm and Cindy Tinkham**

Norm and Cindy, who have been worshipping with us for a while now, have formally joined with the church. They are active in our outreach programs and with our Health Ministry Team. They especially like the size of the church and its location in Uptown Westerville.

## **Dave and Sharyl Weinberg**

Dave and Sharyl moved to Westerville from Punta Gorda, Florida, and while they gave up the warm weather in the south, they found a warm welcome at First Presbyterian. They hope to continue to get involved in the mission and ministries of our church.

## **Scott and Liz Reichley**

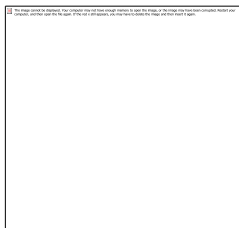
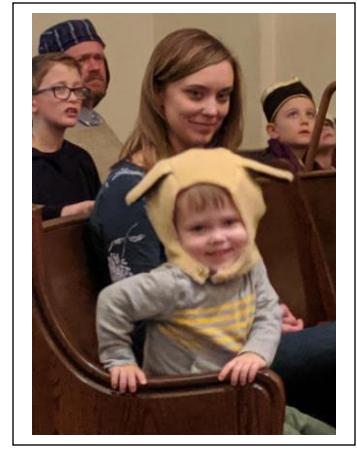
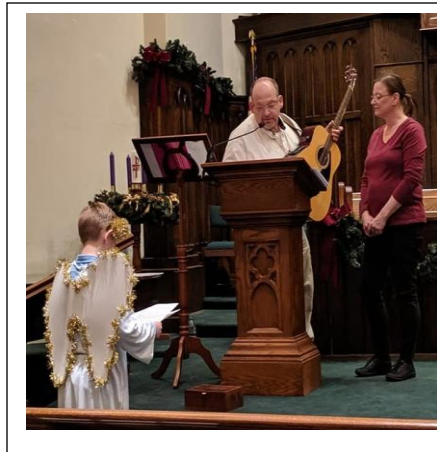
Scott and Liz moved here from Dublin, where they were members of the Dublin Presbyterian Church. Now with their new home in Westerville, they have found a new church in First Presbyterian. The family recently lit the Advent Candles and have plunged into our children's ministry and family programs.

# Youth Activities

## “The Littlest Angel”

### December 8

On December 8, our children and youth presented “The Littlest Angel,” complete with a live Baby Jesus (thank you, Fullers!). If you weren't there, you missed an amazing presentation!





## Discovery Zone

**Wednesdays, 5:00 pm**

Our Discovery Zone has begun. Come join us as we engage in Bible Study, fun, and a meal. The program is for children ages preschool through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Adults are welcome to join us for dinner at 6:30pm. This year our program will feature the “Growing in Grace and Gratitude” lesson plan from the Presbyterian curriculum. We hope to see you and your kids as we learn about God and enjoy time in God’s presence.

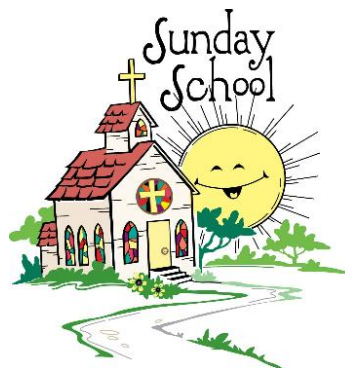


## Jesus and Me (J.A.M)

**Sundays during the service**

Our Sunday School program for children ages kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade has also begun. On the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays for each month, we meet during worship time, after the children’s message. Please bring your child with you into the service, and we will move upstairs following the children’s message. This year, we are engaging in the *Deep Blue* Curriculum in which we are learning how to be good neighbors and community members according to God’s word.

We invite you to bring your child on the 1<sup>st</sup> (and any 5<sup>th</sup>) Sundays of the month in order to experience a full worship service, including communion on the first Sunday. We have bags of material to help the children stay engaged during the service, and we encourage you to quietly explain the parts of the service and the importance of worship in our lives (this is a part of them learning also). We look forward to seeing you and your children this year!



## **Sunday School: Sundays, 9:15 am**

Sunday School for adults and youth is also available starting at 9:15 on Sunday mornings. We have Adult Sunday School in our library (2<sup>nd</sup> floor by the elevator) and a class for adults with special needs starting in the Heart Room (childcare is provided in our nursery). Our middle and high school youth are invited to meet in their recently renovated classroom for Sunday School at this time also. Please join us and learn more about what it means to live as Christ calls us.



## **Kids, Youth, and Family Sign-up Sheet**

Dear families, as a church we recognize that although our children will grow into the church of tomorrow, they are also part of the church today. We want to make sure they feel that way by participating in several options for community participation and service.

For our young families, we are asking that two children sign up to greet other children each week during worship. We will need a child (and parent) at each entrance to our sanctuary to pass out the activity bags and welcome children and their families into our worship space.

Older children (3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grades) are invited to be Acolytes. Each Sunday morning, we begin our worship service with the lighting of the worship candles by our Acolytes. Acolytes must be trained to properly light the candles. If your child or grandchild, would like to become an acolyte, please talk to Rev. Gauen.

For our middle and high school youth, we are asking that they sign up to lead the children's focus or read for our opening once a month.

Our youth have so much to offer our church, and we want them to know that they are just as much a part of our community as our liturgists, elders, and ushers. Please see the sign-up book in the main lobby of the church to reserve your child's spot. (Look under the acolytes tab.) Thank you so much for being a part of our church family!

## **Two Big Thank You's!**



On behalf of Pike County Food Pantry, Thornville Clothes Closet, and Rehoboth Used Clothing, recipients of your generous giving of food and clothing etc., we say a very big THANK YOU!!! Keep up the good work! John & Sharon Davis

Partners in Conservation of the Columbus Zoo and the people and animals of Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo thank you for your support at our recent sale. Your purchases of \$2420 in hand-crafted items will give us the opportunity to help more people and animals. Thank you!! Partners in Conservation

Linda Ayers and Judy Hunt

## **Fabrics of Faith**

### **Monday, January 20, 1-2:30 pm**

Happy New Year, Everyone! "New year, new project!" That's a good motto for Fabrics of Faith.

Also, New Year, new people! We've had some additions to the congregation, and Fabrics of Faith invites anyone with even a hint of curiosity about our group to join us: **Monday, January 20, 1:00 – 2:30**. Bring a project if you have one; come see what others are doing—whether you have a project or not.

Come ready for laughter, conversation, hearing what we've done and planning what we might do for the church, and cookies. Contact Beckey Stamm for information.

### **Quotes collected by Olivia Hodorowski:**

If you must complain, please do it in a rhythm I can dance to. - Rumi

Molly Ivins, who died of breast cancer in 2007 at the age of 62, once wrote: "Having breast cancer is massive amounts of no fun. First they mutilate you; then they poison you; then they burn you. I have been on blind dates better than that."





## **Monthly Dine-Out Group**

### **Friday, January 10, 6:30 pm**

The Monthly Dine-Out Group includes ALL church members and their friends. On Friday, January 10, we will be going to **Don Tequila** at 6:30 pm at 6211 Cleveland Ave. (west side of Cleveland, just south of I-270, 614-523-2604). These dinners are a great opportunity to meet and get to know other church members. Don Tequila has Mexican food, modestly priced. Contact Jim Hines or Bob Place to ask questions or say whether you can attend. In December, 35 of us had a great time together at Lucky House!

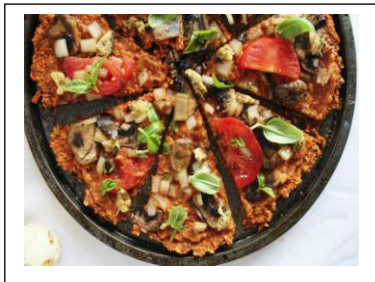
## **Ladies' Night Out**

### **Tuesday, January 21, 6:30 pm**

The January Ladies Night Out will be at the Rusty Bucket (614-890-3663), 400 Polaris Parkway, near the intersection with Cleveland Avenue. All women of the church and their friends are welcome. Please contact Diana Westfall to tell her you are coming. Ladies of all ages, don't miss a good time!

## **Vegetarian Dining Group**

### **Saturday, January 18, 6:00 pm**



Looking for something different to eat? Tired of chicken? Come join our Vegetarian Dining Group. We have a couple of true vegetarians—and the rest just like to see what tasty treats people eat when they don't eat meat.

We have 12-16 people who come, not always at the same time. And, because we've been meeting in Fellowship Hall, we can grow by many more! YOU could be one!

Please note: we're not weird (or *too* weird); we don't expect people to forego meat for always. But we enjoy the tasty and nutritious meals that result from the variety of dishes we bring to each dinner.

Our next dinner is Saturday, January 18, at 6:00, in Fellowship Hall. Please join us! For more information, contact Beckey Stamm. You'll be in for a treat. (Did I say that the people are great, too?)

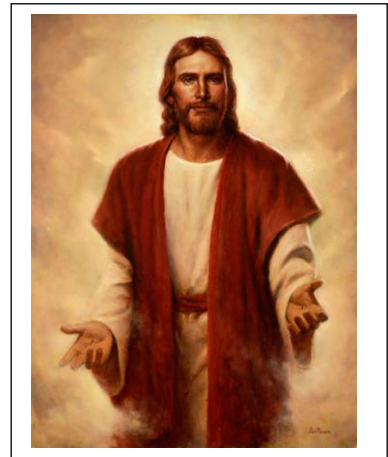
# JESUS – Not Just for Christmas!

I sometimes find myself laughing at the ironies of life when in the midst of them. One such case was when Christmas was over a few years ago, and I was putting away the decorations.

I especially enjoy having a nativity scene as part of Christmas, portraying the true meaning of Christmas. Years ago, I acquired a *Department 56* (a brand) collectible nativity set and several other pieces depicting ancient Bethlehem and Jerusalem. Each object and the tiny Mary, Joseph & Baby Jesus, shepherds, angels and wise men all are carefully protected with the accompanying building in separate styrofoam containers. Each of those is then put into a cardboard sleeve. I store the entire set in a large plastic box on wheels. It does take a little time to set this up, but it continually reminds me of the birth of Jesus all through the Christmas season.

Getting the pieces out of the large container each year is exciting as I prepare to set up the display. However, when it comes time to put the boxes back into the large storage container, I can't remember how I had previously arranged the smaller boxes inside. They vary in size so some maneuvering is necessary.

That year, I had all but one box back in the storage container, but it seemed to be just a bit too wide to fit, no matter what direction I turned it. I struggled over and over taking out and replacing boxes to get this one box in with the others. I *had* to pack these up. Christmas was over, and I couldn't have a lone box separated from the others where it could get broken. I noticed that the troublesome box was the one that contained Baby Jesus. Jesus refused to be packed up for the year!



That is when the irony of the situation made me laugh. Of course! Jesus isn't just for one short season! He isn't supposed to be 'put away' where he is forgotten. He is meant to be 'out in the world' always, not just at Christmas. That is what Christmas is all about! During the coming Lenten season, we are reminded that the Baby Jesus grew up to save us from our sins and make us worthy before God. Jesus came for all us, and we live as Easter people, all year long!

❖ BEV ETLING – January 2016

Readers: please do share other poems or short articles that will help inform or uplift us! Send them to lindabarr.

ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN			
Activity	When	Where	What
<b>Tuesday Morning Bible Study</b>	Tuesdays, 9:30-11:00 a.m.	<b>Knox Meeting Room</b>	The Book of Matthew. Join us as we explore the first book of the New Testament, where we find the Beatitudes and the Great Commission. Led by Rev. Gauen.
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Monday Discussion Group</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> Mondays, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.	<b>Knox Meeting Room</b>	We are looking at the formation of the Bible through the book <i>Inspired</i> , by Rachel Held Evans. Our next class will be held on Monday, January 27.
<b>Sunday Seminar (formerly called the Library Class)</b>	Sunday Mornings 9:15-10:00 a.m.	<b>Library</b>	The Sunday Adult Class is studying the book <i>Holy Envy: Finding God in the Faith of Others</i> , by Barbara Brown Taylor.
<b>Circle 4 Women</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursdays, 11:00 a.m.	<b>Knox Meeting Room</b>	Our Presbyterian Women's Group meets monthly for fellowship and Bible study. Please join us on January 16. Led by Elaine Foley.

## Adult Growth and Development



## Pastor's Page

*“Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, ‘Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.’”*

– Matthew 2:13

Dear Friends:

What happens after Christmas? For Christians today, it is coming home from our trips, saying goodbye to visiting family members, taking down the decorations, and in general getting back to our regular routines. For Mary, Joseph and Jesus, according to Matthew, after Jesus was born, an angel came and told Joseph that they were to flee their homeland and find refuge in a foreign land. And so, after Christmas, Jesus became a refugee.

We are well aware of the refugee problem in our country and in the world. People are on the move all over: whether they are fleeing war in the Middle East, famine in Africa, economic hardship in eastern Europe, or political oppression in Central America—people are moving to save their lives, to protect their families, to find a better life for their children. Just like Joseph and Mary and Jesus did two thousand years ago.

The Bible is full of stories of refugees on the move: From Adam and Eve forced from the Garden of Eden, to Abraham leaving his homeland to start a new life in Caanan, to Joseph sold into slavery in Egypt by his brothers, to the Hebrew people fleeing that same slavery across the Red Sea, to Jesus' family seeking protection in Egypt. The Bible is also full of instructions on how we should treat the foreigner in our midst. For example, in Deuteronomy we read these words:

*“For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes. He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing. And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt.*

*-Deuteronomy 10:17-19 (NIV)*

The care and nurture of the foreigner, the refugee, is a commandment of our God, one we at First Presbyterian are preparing to live up to. On Sunday, January 19, our Outreach Committee has invited Tyler Reeve of Community Refugee and Immigration Services (CRIS) to explain how we can help welcome and support immigrant families in the Columbus area. It is a new challenge for us, but one that we are capable of meeting. I hope that you will come to hear what Tyler has to say and have lunch on January 19, and I hope that you will join in this life-giving ministry.

Yours in Christ, Mark

*Presbytery duties for January:*

*January 11 - I will be working with the Ministry Initiatives Program at the P.I. E.*

*January 21 - I will attend a meeting of the Presbytery Coordinating Team at the Presbytery.*

*I will also have several other individual meetings during the month.*