

ADVOCATE

First Presbyterian Church
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March 2020

Reaching out to Refugees **Next Meeting: Sunday, March 1, 11:30 am, Fellowship Hall**

Our church is one big step closer to helping a refugee family settle in the Columbus area! On February 25, eighteen of us attended the Community Refugee and Immigration Services (CRIS) training at the CRIS offices. Now we have a more detailed idea of what to expect and can get ready to welcome a refugee family. The meeting on March 1 will allow us to identify the resources we have and those we need to contact or obtain. Any financial support necessary for this outreach will come from the church's Mission Fund.



Right now, we don't know where the family will be coming from or how many adults and children it includes. (It might be just one person.) When we are as ready as we can be, we will inform CRIS. Then we'll wait for a time, ranging from a week to months, to be assigned a family. Next, we will quickly work with CRIS to find an appropriate place, probably an apartment, for this family to live. CRIS, of course, has many contacts to help with this. We will also help furnish this apartment, as needed. CRIS and the Furniture Bank will help with this, too.

Here are some other ways we will support this family:

- **Airport Arrival:** We will be at the airport to greet and welcome the family members as they arrive. The assigned CRIS caseworker will be there, too.
- **Welcome Meal:** We will provide a culturally appropriate hot meal immediately upon the family's arrival at their new home.
- **Welcome Kit:** Our church's first task is to gather the many items for this kit, such as plates and silverware, a vacuum, and toothbrushes. We'll talk about that on March 1.
- **Rental Assistance:** We are asked to provide a deposit and the first month's rent, which we will take from our Mission Fund.

Our main goal will be to form a relationship with this family. We will serve as guides, advocates, and friends. Although CRIS will support the family for 90 days as it resettles, our church's commitment is for six months and can continue beyond that time.

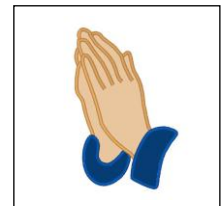
If you would like to be involved in this project, please come to the March 1 meeting. Your help will be much appreciated! Or you can ask Linda Barr, Bill McCormick, or Mary Bricker for more information. We'll share the news about our assigned family as soon as we get it!

LENT 2020 AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

Wednesday, Feb. 26	7:00 p.m.	Ash Wednesday Worship
Sunday, Mar. 1	10:15 a.m.	Worship – “A Tour of the Gospels: Mark”
Sunday, Mar. 8	10:15 a.m.	Worship – “A Tour of the Gospels: Matthew”
Sunday, Mar. 15	10:15 a.m.	Worship – “A Tour of the Gospels: Luke”
Sunday, Mar. 22	10:15 a.m.	Worship – “A Tour of the Gospels: Acts”
Sunday, Mar. 29	10:15 a.m.	Worship – “A Tour of the Gospels: John”
Sunday, Apr. 5	10:15 a.m.	Palm Sunday Worship
Thursday, Apr. 9	7:30 p.m.	Maundy Thursday Worship
Friday, Apr. 10	Noon	Community Good Friday Worship at Church of the Messiah
Sunday, Apr. 12	6:30 a.m.	Easter Sunrise Service
	7:00 a.m.	Easter Breakfast
	10:15 a.m.	Easter Worship with Communion

Secret Prayer Partners

Do you have a Secret Prayer Partner yet? To get one, look for the basket in the Gathering Place marked “Secret Prayer Partners” and take out a slip of paper. Write your name and any special prayer requests on the slip and put it back in the basket. On Sunday, March 1, you will pick a name out of the basket and have someone special to pray for until Easter. The person you pick may have a special request or just need you to ask that God watch over him or her. Our “snow birds” can also become Secret Prayer Partners by emailing Diana Westfall. She will add your name to the basket and later pick a name for you and send it to you. The Worship Committee hopes this project will provide a wonderful opportunity for all of us to spend some time praying for a member of our congregation.





Walk to Jerusalem by Easter

Our group is off and “walking” to Jerusalem. We have over 40 people signed up to track their walking and activities to accumulate enough miles to get us to Jerusalem by Easter. It’s not too late to sign up. After you do, each week, we will send you a devotion as well as a geography lesson (thanks to our tour guide, Sue Bonvallet) for stops we make each weekend.

We are on track to make it to Jerusalem on time. Thank you to Linda Backus for keeping track of the distance or time everyone walks, runs, swims, or exercises. Weekly mileage can be logged on the chart that will be posted on Sundays or emailed to Linda Backus. Put your name and email on the list and get moving.

In Christ, The Health Ministry Team

2020 Per Capita *A Presbyterian Community Fund*

Per capita is a set amount of money per member that each congregation pays to the larger Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It is like a Presbyterian community fund--part of the glue that holds Presbyterians together. Sharing our financial resources with one another is one of the ways that we demonstrate God’s love and trust and connection. Sharing enables us to reach beyond what we can see. This year, our church will pay \$37.75 per member (*per capita*).

The Session encourages each of us, if we are able, to contribute the *per capita* amount for our own membership. Doing so allows the Session to use more of our financial resources for mission, programs, and operating expenses. To contribute the \$37.75 *per capita* amount for your membership, just write 'per capita' on your check.

Welcome!

We now have a special way of welcoming first-time visitors to our worship service. Welcoming scrolls, which include a copy of the *Advocate* and other information, are located at the College Avenue entrance and in the Gathering Place near the sign-up book. If you are aware of a first-time visitor, please get a scroll and present it to them. This kind gesture will be warmly received.

Update on 29 West College Property (February 2020)

First Presbyterian Church and the City of Westerville have agreed upon terms for the construction of a new parking lot on the site of the 29 West College property. The written agreement between FPC and the City was approved by Session at its meeting on February 10 and was presented to the congregation at our Annual Meeting on February 23.

What's next:

- Once approved by the congregation, the agreement will then need to be approved by the Presbytery of Scioto Valley. This will occur at the Commission for Presbytery Operations meeting on March 9.
- Once approved by FPC and the Presbytery, the agreement will then go before Westerville City Council for its approval.

In the meantime:

- The Uptown Review Board needs to approve the demolition of the house. This may be a challenge since its role (goal) is the protection of historic structures within the Uptown District, and it has identified 29 West College as a "significant structure" within Uptown.
- The parking lot plan must also be approved by the Westerville Planning Commission, but we don't anticipate this approval to be nearly as challenging as the approval from the Uptown Review Board.

Our estimated timing (to the best of our collective knowledge):

- Uptown Review in March 2020
- Planning Commission also in March 2020
- City Council approval in March or April 2020
- Demolition (tentatively) in LATE SPRING or EARLY SUMMER
- Parking lot construction in MID-to-LATE SUMMER 2020

As a side note, we are having the legal agreement (lease agreement) with the City reviewed by Attorney Bill Patterson (son-in-law of Bernie and John Simpkins).

Jim Hines

Lenten Calendar from Habitat for Humanity



The Lenten season means becoming aware of not only the suffering of Christ, but also the suffering of others. Westerville Habitat Partnership (WHP) has a wonderful Lenten idea for you: a special calendar that is now available in the Gathering Place. On each of the 40 days of Lent, the calendar offers a "giving" opportunity. This calendar reminds us of how truly rich and blessed we are. On Easter Sunday or the Sunday after, please give your calendar and a check to celebrate your blessings to Bernie Simpkins or Diana Westfall. Please make checks payable to WHP.

EASTER LILIES

Easter Lily Order Form



Easter is April 12 this year, so it's time to order lilies! If you wish to donate a plant to decorate the sanctuary, please leave the completed order form (below) and a check made out to First Presbyterian Church in the offering plate or on the secretary's desk in the Gathering Place. Order forms will also be printed in the Sunday morning bulletins. You are welcome to take your plant(s) home after the Easter service.

Deadline to order is Palm Sunday, April 5. Easter lilies are \$8.00 each.

I/We will donate _____ lily/lilies Total donation \$ _____

Name _____

Phone _____

Dedication (Name of person/s you wish to remember/honor)

In memory of _____

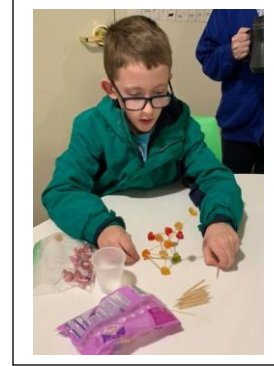
In memory of _____

In honor of _____

In honor of _____

Sharing the Love

On Sunday, February 9, the children had a Valentine's Day party and made special Valentines for church members who are unable to attend our services. Sharing their creations below are some of the Valentine makers: Emmet Koppitch, Lyla Koppitch, and Noah Miller.



Youth Sunday February 16

Many thanks to our youth, who inspired us with a special service on February 16. Marissa Braskett opened the service by lighting the candles. Hannah Hauff led the Call to Worship, and Lucas and Garrett Fuller read the scripture lessons. Cole Wright presented the children's message. Drew Wright and Jack Bates offered a thoughtful message, based on stories of kindness. Brayden King led us in the Litany of Dedication. Ushers included Ella Armentrout, Savana Davis, Cole and Mason McConaha, and Delany Simmons. Alaina and Marissa Braskett helped Vicki Moon with fellowship after the service. Thanks also to the adult leaders, Audra Hauff and Lizzie Gauen, and, of course, our Director of Youth and Family Ministries, Rev. Heather Hicks.



Women's Retreat Committee Meeting

Saturday, April 18, 2pm

All ladies wishing to contribute to the planning and preparation of our fall retreat, please see Rev. Heather Hicks. You are also welcome to attend an organizational meeting on Saturday, April 18, at 12 pm. We will be announcing the dates for the retreat shortly. Stay tuned!

Amy Interfaith Lecture Series

Featuring Dr. Eboo Patel

Thursday, March 12, 7 pm

The Amy Interfaith Lecture Series is proud to present a public lecture by author Dr. Eboo Patel. The lecture, "Diversity Is Not Just the Differences You Like: Interfaith Leadership in the Time of Identity Politics," will be held at 7 p.m. on Thursday, March 12, at Church of the Master, 24 N. Grove St., Westerville. It is free and open to the public.

Patel is the author of *Acts of Faith*, *Sacred Ground*, *Interfaith Leadership: A Primer*, and *Out of Many Faiths: Religious Diversity and the American Promise*. He holds a doctorate in the sociology of religion from Oxford University, where he studied on a Rhodes scholarship. His books will be available for sale, and a book signing will follow the lecture. For more information, visit <https://www.ifyc.org/eboo>.

The Amy Lecture Series was established by the children of Dr. Bill and Flo Amy in honor of the lifelong interfaith ministry of their parents. Dr. Bill Amy was professor of World Religions at Otterbein College from 1962-1978 and 1993-2005. This event is co-sponsored by Otterbein University, Church of the Master United Methodist, and the Otterbein Department of Religion, and Philosophy's Robert F. Berkey '52 Endowed Lectureship.

Inclusion and Diversity Event

Friday, March 27, 7:30 pm

Mark your calendar for a special event at the Westerville Library on March 27, 7:30 p.m. Tuskegee Airmen Greg Edmonds and Anthony Gibbs will speak. Questions? Ask Mary Lee Jones.

Youth Activities



Discovery Zone Wednesdays at 5:00 pm

Come join us for Discovery Zone as we engage in Bible Study, fun, and a meal. The program is for children ages preschool through 5th grade. Adults are welcome to join us for dinner at 6:30 pm. 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. Our last Discovery Zone for the season will be on Wednesday, March 18. Thanks to everyone for a great year!



Jesus and Me (J.A.M) Sundays during the service

Our Sunday School program for children ages kindergarten through 5th grade has begun. On the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Sundays of 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 will learn how to be good neighbors and community members according to God’s word. We also invite you to bring your children on the 1st (and 5th) Sundays of the month so that they can experience a full worship service. We have bags of activities to help the children stay engaged with 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 for Adults and Youth

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 (2nd floor by the elevator) and a class for adults with special needs in the Heart Room (childcare is provided in our nursery). Our middle and high school youth are invited to meet in their 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 (3rd through 5th grades) will be called upon to be acolytes (lighting our worship candles) for the opening of worship.

Our middle and high school youth can sign up to lead the children's focus or read for our service 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 Gathering Place (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.



Family Fun

Sunday, March 1 – 6pm-7pm Family game night. Please join us for a family game night, where we will play board games and enjoy some quality family time.

Sunday, April 12 -Easter morning Egg hunt and family picture. We will host an egg hunt for children birth-5th grade after the Easter service on Sunday morning, about 11:30am. Please bring your children for this fun time. We will also have a booth set up for taking family pictures.

Sunday, May 17 -Graduation and teacher recognition during the service. We have much to celebrate this year. Please join us Sunday morning for worship at 10:15am as we recognize our graduates and our teachers. We will also have a celebration downstairs following the worship service to continue the festivities.



Summer Camp

Application Deadline: May 1

Yes, it is that time of year again. Summer camp is right around the corner, and the deadline is May 1, so if your child would like to go, please make sure you get the necessary information in on time. We have camps for young people in 2nd through 12th grades. Scholarships are available. For more information, please see Rev. Heather Hicks, Director of Youth and Family Ministries.

What's in Your Future?

If you are a high school senior, matriculating college student in a bachelor degree, associate degree or similar level of education, and a member of our church, it is time to think about applying for a First Presbyterian Church of Westerville Education Scholarship.

Scholarship applications are available in the Knox Meeting Room. Applications are due on **Monday, May 18**, and the scholarships will be awarded on Sunday, July 12.

If you wish to be considered for a 2020 Scholarship, the Scholarship Committee must receive all of the following requirements by May 18:

- A fully completed application form (Incomplete applications will not be considered.)
- Two letters of recommendation, one academic and one personal/character
- A copy of your recent grade transcript

An application for a scholarship may be submitted every year you are a student, but a maximum of two annual scholarships will be awarded per applicant.

We encourage all who are considering post high school education to take advantage of the church's scholarship program. For further information about the program, contact Kathy Krotz.

Another Fundraiser??

Yes, but we hadn't planned on this one. Still, you can't look a gift horse in the mouth.

Who: Westerville Habitat Partnership (WHP)

When: Thursday, March 26, from 10:30 am - 9 pm

Where: Panda Express, 85 Maxtown Rd., Westerville

What: WHP gets receive 50% of event sales!

How: Get a paper or electronic flyer and show it to the cashier. Or enter the promo code during online checkout.



Look for flyers in your church bulletin or find them at Westerville Habitat Partnership on Facebook or westervillehabitatpartnership.org.



Friday, March 13, 6:30 pm

The Monthly Dine-Out Group is for ALL church members and friends. On Friday, March 13, we will enjoy dinner together at O'Charley's Restaurant, 1425 Polaris Parkway (in front of Target, 614-846-9744). Check online for the menu, which is extensive and varied enough to suit almost anyone. Contact Jim Hines or Bob Place for questions or to say whether you can attend.



Ladies' Night In?

Tuesday, March 17, 6:30 pm

For March, we're trying something different. Instead of going to a restaurant, we're meeting at Holly Harvey's house. Carpooling is encouraged. We'll order pizza and have fun being together. 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, March 14, 6:00 pm



Looking for something different to eat? How about heart-shaped four-cheese ravioli? That's just one of the dishes you can enjoy at our next Vegetarian Dining Group. We have a couple of true vegetarians—but the rest of us just like to share and eat tasty treats that don't happen to include meat.

We usually have 12-16 people for these potluck dinners, but not always the same people. Because we meet in Fellowship Hall, we can grow by many more! YOU could be one!

Our next dinner is Saturday, March 14, at 6:00, in Fellowship Hall. Please join us! For more information, contact Beckey Stamm. You'll be in for a treat.

Adult Growth and Development

ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN			
Activity	When	Where	What
Tuesday Morning Bible Study	Tuesdays, 9:30-11:00 a.m.	Knox Meeting Room	<u>The Book of Matthew</u> . 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.
4th Monday Discussion Group	4 th Mondays, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.	Knox Meeting Room	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, March 16.
Sunday Seminar (formerly called the Library Class)	Sunday Mornings 9:15-10:00 a.m.	Library	The Sunday Adult Class is studying the book <i>The Universal Christ</i> , by Richard Rohr.
Circle 4 Women	3 rd Thursdays, 11:00 a.m.	Knox Meeting Room	Our Presbyterian Women's Group meets monthly for fellowship and Bible study. Please join us on Thursday, March 19. Led by Elaine Foley.



Pastor's Page

"For in the gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, 'The one who is righteous will live by faith.'" – Romans 1:17

With the beginning of March, we also come to the beginning of Lent, one of the most significant seasons in the life of the church. Lent traditionally has been a time for spiritual formation and renewal—a time to rededicate ourselves to the practice of our faith. Among the practices that we are called to do is the regular reading of scripture. How else are we to know the teachings of Jesus, the stories of the saints and the basics of our faith if we don't go to the source—our Bible? And yet, many of us are lax in our reading of scripture—not because we don't want to or we don't have the time, but because we are intimidated by the task. The Bible is a big book, and it is full of all sorts of things, many of which are hard to understand. Many have opened the Bible to begin reading it, only to put it down again after struggling through an odd chapter.

However, given that Lent is a time of refocusing our spiritual devotions, I am going to encourage each of you to read part of the Bible for Lent. And I want to start you out with the best part first—the Gospels. The four Gospels tell the story of Jesus in four different ways, and yet they all point to the same conclusion—that this Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, who was sent to be our salvation. The Gospels form the basis of our faith, and as such, they are the best place to start when reading the Bible.

To help us get into the Gospels, I will focus my preaching on each of the Gospels during the weeks of Lent. I will also add the Book of Acts to the list, because Acts is a continuation of the Gospel of Luke, a sequel, if you will. I will give you an introduction to each of the books and give you some hints on how to read them to get the most from them. My hope is that you will read one or more of these books during Lent...and after Lent you will read the rest of them.

Yours in Christ, Mark

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark L. Gauer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Presbytery Moderator duties for March:

March 16 – Presbytery Leadership Retreat.