

# ADVOCATE

First Presbyterian Church  
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Westerville, Ohio 43081-2103  
614-882-3155 Phone  
[www.westervillefirstpresbyterian.org](http://www.westervillefirstpresbyterian.org)

**December 2022**



## **Christmas Eve Worship Service** **Saturday, December 24, 7:00 p.m.**

Come and welcome the birth of the Christ Child with our candlelight Christmas Eve Worship Service. Sing the great Christmas carols, listen to the words of the Christmas story retold again. Hear the music of our organ and choir. Join with the First Presbyterian family as we celebrate and worship together on Christmas Eve. This service will also be livestreamed on Facebook.

## **Christmas Day Livestreamed Prayer Service** **Sunday, December 25, 10:15 a.m.**

On Christmas morning this year, we will livestream our Christmas Day worship service. Join us from the comfort of your home or from wherever you are traveling and hear the Good News of Christmas in the words and prayers of Pastor Gauen, in a Children's Message by Heather Hicks, and through the music of our organist, Lyn Meyer. There will not be an in-person worship service on Sunday, December 25, this year.

**To access our livestreamed services:** Go to the church's website ([www.westervillefirstpresbyterian.org](http://www.westervillefirstpresbyterian.org)). Click on "Worship Options" in the left column. On the next screen, click on the word "HERE" at the end of the second paragraph. That takes you to our Facebook page, where the service is livestreamed. You can also access recordings of previous services on this page. An audio recording is placed on our website soon after each service.

# Longest Night Service

**Wednesday, December 21, 7:00 p.m.**

For many, the holiday season is not filled with happiness and celebration, but rather it is a time of sorrow and grief. This is a time of year when the loss of a loved one is particularly painful. To help those who find December to be a difficult time of year, First Presbyterian Church will host a Longest Night Service. This service will last about 30 minutes and will focus on the message of hope, healing, and wholeness that Christ brings into the world. You can attend in person or via our livestream. Rev. Mary Jane Hitt and Rev. Mark Gauwen will lead this service.

## **Habitat for Humanity Progressive Christmas Concert Friday, December 9, 7:00-9:15 pm**

Don't miss the 13th Annual Progressive Christmas Concert, sponsored by Westerville Habitat Partnership! It will return in its original format on Friday, December 9, from 7 to 9:15 p.m. As before, guides will lead participants on a tour of three historic churches in the Westerville Uptown District - First Presbyterian Church, Church of the Master, and Church of the Messiah. Choirs will be performing from these three churches, along with choirs from Grace Lutheran Church and Central College Presbyterian Church.



A Soup for Shelter event will precede the concert at the Otterbein Campus Center (100 Home St.) from 5 to 7 p.m. Soup, bread, cookie, beverage, and a handcrafted bowl will be provided for \$15/person. The bowls were created by students at Columbus Academy. The Soup for Shelter event will also benefit the Habitat Partnership. In addition this year, we will have a silent auction for two beautiful quilts, donated by the Fabrics of Faith Ministry of First Presbyterian Church.

Tickets are \$10/person (children are free) and can be purchased by contacting Bernie Simpkins, Diana Westfall, Sue Ann Norton, or John Cameron. You can also get tickets online at [www.westervillehabitatpartnership.org](http://www.westervillehabitatpartnership.org). This is a walking tour, but transportation between churches will be provided if it is requested ahead of time.

Proceeds go toward Habitat for Humanity to build houses that are sold to qualifying families at a greatly reduced cost. The families help build their own houses and pay a mortgage that represents only materials, not labor.

# Martin Luther King, Jr., Celebration Breakfast

## Monday, January 16, 7:30 a.m.



Did you know that Westerville has been helping to sponsor the Martin Luther King, Jr. breakfast event since 2006? It began as a way to honor Dr. King and his work and to open a forum for Westerville residents to converse about issues of racial inequality and the acceptance of diversity in Westerville. In this way, Westerville could continue the work of bringing our town closer to the ideals of Dr. King's "Beloved Community." Dr. King believed that when individuals collaborate in the pursuit of

equality, equity, and justice, society as a whole will become stronger.

This year, the 18th annual Westerville Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Breakfast will be held on Monday, January 16, at Villa Milano, 1630 Schrock Rd. The doors open at 7:30 a.m., and the program starts at 8:00 a.m. Our Outreach and Missions Committee would like to increase the church's presence at this event and become a bigger part of these conversations. So our church will sponsor two tables at the breakfast, for a total of 16 spots. The church will cover part of the ticket fee, so that church members can purchase tickets for \$30. (This is also a fundraiser.)

The breakfast includes a panel discussion, awards for service, and interesting conversation. The theme this year is "The Dream (un)Realized: The Fight for Housing Equality." Please consider representing our church at this event. If you cannot attend, you might buy a ticket that will be given to a student so he or she can experience this very meaningful occasion. Make your reservations by calling the church office, 614-882-3155.

## **Eat BBQ!**

## **Support Habitat!**

### **Thursday, December 15 (all day)**

Here's a good deal: buy some delicious BBQ at City Barbeque on Shrock Road on December 15, and the Westerville Habitat Partnership will get 20% of the proceeds!

- If you're ordering in person, just show this post.
- If you're ordering using the City BBQ app or online at [citybbq.com](http://citybbq.com), use coupon code FundA at checkout.
- If you're ordering over the phone, mention "coupon code FundA" at checkout.

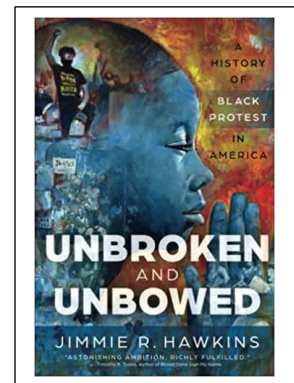


Giving back never tasted so good!

## ***Unbroken and Unbowed***

**by Jimmie R. Hawkins**

This author is the director of the Office of Public Witness of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and an ordained clergy member of the PC (USA). His book is the only account that covers the whole history of Black protest through recent 21<sup>st</sup> century events. Page after page offers new insights. For example, the first people of African descent arrived here long before 1619; George Washington's troops were the most integrated American military unit until the Vietnam War; Presbyterians ordained the first man of color in 1800; there was a Montgomery-like boycott of segregated stagecoaches; at one time, most racing jockeys were Black. You can find a copy of this book in the Social Justice section of our church's library.

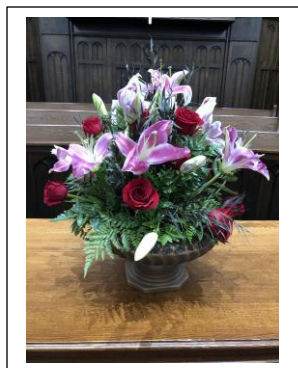


Mary Lee Jones

## **Volunteers Needed!**

We are looking for assistance with funeral set up, clean up, and meals. I know that many of you have previously donated food or your time, and I hope you might be willing to help again in the future. If so, please contact me, Jen Henson. Thanks for your help in advance!

## **Sanctuary Flowers**



Every Sunday, we enjoy the beautiful flowers that grace the sanctuary, and we appreciate the people who donated them. Do you have an event or a person you would like to celebrate by donating an arrangement? Call Olivia (614-882-3155) to reserve a Sunday for your flower arrangement. Or call Mary Lee Jones to request a planter. The 2023 calendar is now in the sign-up book in the Gathering Place. We need flowers for January, February, and March. Cost is \$35.00. Thank you!

The flowers pictured were donated on November 13 by the family of Emily and Robert Miner.

## **Year-end Annual Reports Due Sunday, January 8**

We are coming to the end of 2022, so this is a reminder to all church committees and groups to submit an article for the 2022 Annual Report. Groups are invited to share what they have been doing for the past year and their (maybe tentative) plans for 2023. The articles can be submitted to Pastor Mark at [pastormark@fpcw.us](mailto:pastormark@fpcw.us) or by putting a copy in his mail folder. The deadline for the Annual Report articles is Sunday, January 8.

# Remembering Janet Withers

Janet Withers died in October, 2022, at the age of 89. Janet was involved in many activities in the church and in the community, one of which was being a volunteer at Inniswood Metro Gardens. This year, the Columbus Metro Parks have been posting histories of all the Metro Parks on their website under the title “20 in 22.” Back in July, they ran an article about the history of Inniswood Metro Gardens Park. Part of the history included the work that Janet Withers did to protect the park back in the 1990s. Below is an excerpt from that article. The entire article can be found at the following link: <https://www.metroparks.net/blog/20-in-22-the-innis-legacy/>

## ROAD TROUBLE

The early 1990s presented Inniswood Metro Gardens with another threat, one that would imperil its hard-won status as a haven of beauty, peace and tranquility. The City of Westerville planned to extend Schrock Road through the northern edge of the gardens. The proposed 0.6-mile extension was claimed to be needed to cope with burgeoning traffic congestion in Westerville. A founding member of the Inniswood Volunteers, Janet Withers, became heavily involved with the public campaign to halt the road extension. “The gardens could have been ruined,” she stated, if that campaign had failed. The Inniswood Volunteers, gardeners, horticulture lovers, and masses of concerned citizens, voiced their objections stridently at public debates and via letters to newspaper and media editors. They argued that the serenity of the gardens would be permanently shattered by the extension, and that woodlands and wildlife would be severely harmed or destroyed. A public vote finally decided against the extension, with Westerville voters rejecting the city’s proposal in November 1994. Inniswood Metro Gardens was saved.

*(from 20 in 22 – The Innis Legacy, Columbus Metro Park Blog)*

This prayer on the next page was read at Janet’s funeral by one of her daughters, Lynn Cameron. The daughters had found it among Janet’s papers and wanted to share it with us. It might help explain why their mom was so generous with her time and talents.

# Admitting My Gifts

by John Van de Laar

I'm not really sure I want to admit it, God,  
but I am a person with gifts.  
Oh, I'm not one of those super-talented,  
can-do-it-all people.  
But there are things I'm good at,  
things that might even be useful to You and others.

But here's the problem:  
if I admit it, then I have to do something;  
Then there are no more excuses,  
No more comfortable inadequacies to hide behind.  
If I acknowledge the abilities and strengths  
You have placed in me,  
I'm going to have actually use them;  
I'm going to have to serve, and be accountable,  
And maybe even make commitments...  
And stick to them.

But if I pretend that I'm not gifted at all,  
I lose something of myself.  
I allow myself  
to be less than I really am,  
To experience less, to learn less,  
To be less alive.

So thank you, God, for making me a gifted person,  
And thank you that my gifts can make a difference,  
can, in some small way, help  
to make Your dream for my world a reality.

Amen

## Youth Services



Sunday School is in full swing! All children from birth to 5<sup>th</sup> grade are welcome to join us after the children's focus part of worship. We'll have a Bible study and fun activities.



### **Christmas Pageant**

This year, due to changing circumstances, we will not have a live Christmas Pageant performance, so we will also not have a rehearsal on December 3 or a potluck on December 4. Instead, you can watch a "Throwback" pageant on our Facebook page on Sunday evening, December 4 at 6:00 pm. Everyone can enjoy seeing our kids from a few years ago share the message of Christmas. If you have questions, please contact Rev. Hicks.



### **Discovery Zone in December**

December 4 will be the last Discovery Zone for the month – we will resume on Sunday, January 8<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. with programs for kids and adults.

# Event Update



## **Genealogy Club: Thursday, December 1, 7:00 pm**

At the Genealogy Club's November meeting, two friends of the Hitts explained how they wrote and published their autobiographies. At the next meeting, December 1 at 7:00, Ken will demonstrate how he found Linda Backus' grandfather in the 1950 census.

If you are interested or just curious, and have not contacted us before, contact Bill Hitt or Ken Bonvallet.

## **Dine Out with Nine: Friday, December 2, 6:30 pm**

Church members and friends, in December, we will be going to Lucky House (56 E. Schrock, 614-898-9860) for our favorite December event. Since the five-church Habitat Progressive Concert is held on our normal second Friday, we will dine on the **FIRST** Friday (Dec. 2) at 6:30 pm. Lucky House's Asian food is excellent. Let Jim Hines or Bob Place know that you are coming.

## **Ladies' Night Out: Tuesday, January 17, 6:30 pm**

We are not meeting in December but hope you will join us in January. The restaurant will be announced in the Sunday morning bulletin and in Pastor Mark's daily emails. Suggestions? Contact Diana Westfall.

## **Fabrics of Faith: Monday, January 23, 1-3:00 pm**

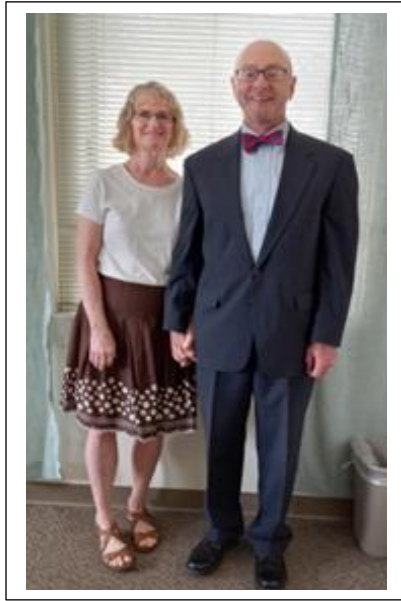
The Fabrics of Faith group will not meet in December, but please come to our next meeting on January 23. Questions? Contact Sharyl Weinberg.

## **Presbyterian 9-Patchers: Tuesday, January 17, 1-3:00 pm**

The P9P will not be meeting in December but will resume on January 17. Please contact Karen Hoggarth if you have any questions.



## Getting to Know You: Beth and David Wright



David and Beth both grew up in central Ohio, Beth in Columbus and David in Frazeytsburg (an hour east) and were married in September 1985. Prior to that momentous date, Beth had graduated from Otterbein University and Ohio State University. David had graduated from Ohio State University and was in graduate school in the Exercise Physiology Department.

Once David finally got through all the work required for his doctorate, he headed off to U.S. Army basic training at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio as a captain in the Army Medical Department. This was the start of a 25-year Army career that included moves to nine Army posts. The first of those was at Carlisle Barracks in Carlisle, Pa. Our daughters, Shannon (1990) and Sasha (1992) were both born in Carlisle Hospital. While there, we lived on a dairy farm for three years since no one would rent to us in town because we had an 85 lb., 30 inch

at the shoulder Gordon Setter named Shakespeare. We learned how hard dairy farming was by watching the family that ran the farm. Between the two families, 5 girls were born at the farm. We were all convinced it was the water.

We found great fun and friends throughout the nine moves and assignments. Yes, the moves were “adventures” too. Throughout all these years, Beth also served – Officer’s Wives Clubs and Family Support Groups as well as Commander-in-Chief at home. She kept all of us in line, on time and on task. Just what a commander is supposed to do.

We moved to Columbus in February 2014, and David started working in one of OSU Wexner Medical Center’s Physical Therapy Clinics in Hilliard, Ohio. We lived in Hilliard, close to work, until we found a house in Westerville. Three months after arriving in Hilliard, we celebrated Shannon’s OSU graduation and less than two months after moving to Westerville, we celebrated Sasha’s OSU graduation. We have lived in Westerville for nearly 8 years. This is the longest we have been in one place in 37 years as a family. As for the girls, Shannon is a professor in the Athletic Training Program at the University of Maine, and Sasha is in the film industry, working behind the camera in Los Angeles.

# Adult Growth and Development

| ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| Activity                                      | When  | Where  | What  |
| <b>Monday Seminar</b>                         | <b>Mondays</b><br>4:00-5:00 p.m.  | <b>Zoom Meetings</b><br>-If interested, contact Tom Jonard   | The Adult Class meets every week to read about and discuss the Christian faith.   |
| <b>Weekly Bible Studies</b>                   | <b>Tuesdays,</b><br>9:30-10:30 am<br><b>Wednesdays,</b><br>7:00-8:00 p.m. | <b>Zoom Meetings</b><br>-If interested, email Pastor Gauen at <a href="mailto:pastormark@fpcw.us">pastormark@fpcw.us</a> | <i>“Trusting God in Troubled Times”</i> is our theme as we examine the Old Testament Book of Isaiah. Contact Pastor Gauen if you would like to join in. Note: We will not meet on the third and fourth weeks of Dec.  |
| <b>4<sup>th</sup> Monday Discussion Group</b> | 4 <sup>th</sup> Mondays,<br>7:30 – 9:00 pm                                | <b>Zoom Meeting</b><br>-If interested, email Pastor Gauen at <a href="mailto:pastormark@fpcw.us">pastormark@fpcw.us</a>  | We are looking at a Christian approach to addressing homelessness with the book <i>Grace Will Lead Us Home</i> by Kevin Nye. Contact Rev. Gauen for more information. Due to the Christmas holidays, we will not meet in December. Our next meeting will be on the fourth Monday of January, Jan. 23, 2023. |
| <b>Circle 4 Women</b>                         | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursdays,<br>11:00 am                                    | <b>Zoom Meeting</b><br>-If interested, call Elaine Foley.  | Our Presbyterian women’s group meets monthly for fellowship and Bible study. <b>This month we’ll meet on the second Thursday of the month (December 8) in person in the Knox Room at the church.</b> Led by Elaine Foley.   |
| <b>Discovery Zone for Adults</b>              | <b>Sundays</b><br>5:00-6:30 p.m.  | <b>In-Person in the Library</b>  | This class is held in conjunction with the Discovery Zone program. Parents and anyone else who is interested are invited to join us as we consider topics on the practice of our faith in our world today. We will not hold any classes in December and will resume when Discovery Zone resumes on Jan. 8   |



## Pastor's Page

Dear Friends:

*The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him.” - John 1:9-10*

We are entering the season of Advent, although for most of the country, and most of the world, this is the Christmas season. For most of the world, as soon as Thanksgiving is over, we enter the Christmas season—with all the appropriate decorations, and music and gift buying. And celebrations. It is a fun time, and yet, I suspect that most people don't know what it is we are celebrating.

Awhile back I was at home, and the television was tuned to a cooking show. The host cook on the show was doing a demonstration on preparing a meal for Christmas day. She went through all the things we associate with a Christmas meal—turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, and the rest. She also showed off her table decorations of pine cones and gold balls. It was just what you might expect on a home cooking show on TV. Then, as she was finishing up, the woman said something that caught my attention. She said that it was important to remember what Christmas is all about. I was wondering if she was going to talk about the birth of Jesus, but what she said was, “Remember, the real meaning of Christmas is the family dinner.”

I won't argue that dinner with the family is an important part of Christmas. But the “real meaning of Christmas is the family dinner,” Really? Something is definitely missing when Christmas is celebrated without Christ. I hope that for all of us, we find our “real meaning of Christmas” in the birth of the Savior. I hope that with all that goes on in this season, we hold onto the reality that God cared so much for us that God came to us and lived among us. He came not as a prince, but as a healer; not as a warrior, but a peacemaker. Jesus came into the world as an ordinary child, born in a forgotten corner of the planet, yet he came as someone who would change the whole world and the lives of every human being.

As you go through this holiday season, I hope that you enjoy and find meaning in your activities—whether they be family dinners or children's Christmas pageants, or musical concerts, or finding that perfect gift—and I hope that you will find the real meaning of this season—that Christ came into the world to show us what real love and real meaning are all about.

Yours in Christ,

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

Pastor Mark